

# CALIFORNIA INDIAN HERITAGE CENTER

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

January 18, 2008

This document has been prepared jointly by the staff of the City of West Sacramento and California State Parks Indian Heritage Center project.  
A list of contacts is included at the end of the document.

### **1) What is the highest and best use of the West Sacramento riverfront parcel?**

Highest and best use is defined in a variety of ways. In real estate appraisal, it's a use that is legally allowable; physically possible; financially feasible; and produces the highest dollar value. For publicly owned land such as the East Riverfront Property, a community might also look at what use offers the greatest value for the community, in terms that are not related to dollars.

The most recent formal planning process for the property – the Riverfront Master Plan, adopted in July 2003 – recommended that the site be used for a state park. (See more detail about the allowable uses in Attachment A).

At the suggestion of neighborhood residents, the city proposes to undertake an analysis of highest and best use for the property. Some alternative uses that have been suggested include sale of the property for private development, water-side opportunities such as restaurants, or use for a city-owned park and playing fields. These alternatives will be examined by an outside consultant.

### **2) A 1991 Study for a future State Indian Museum contemplates transfer of ownership of the park to a non-state entity, such as a tribe. What will the ownership status of the property be if it is used to develop the California Indian Heritage Center?**

The State of California Department of Parks and Recreation will be the owner of the property and the improvements on it. The terms of the proposed conveyance agreement will state that ownership may not be transferred to another entity, and that it would revert to the City of West Sacramento if the State ever relinquished it.

The concept has always been that the facility will be a State Park throughout its existence, owned and operated by the State of California. Both the 1991 study and current plans suggest the establishment of a foundation governed by a board of directors including tribal representatives to raise funds and to plan for programming, educational outreach, publishing and operations.

One model for this type of relationship between a private foundation and State Parks is the State Railroad Museum. The facility is owned by State Parks and operated as a unit of the state park system. A private foundation is involved in fundraising, programming, and interpretive services at the museum

**3) What is the General Plan for the CIHC and how will it be developed? How does the neighborhood get to be involved in the process?**

The General Plan is the guiding document for the operation of units of the State Parks system. State Parks prepares General Plans for all park units. The General Plan for the CIHC will provide enough information about the planned improvements, programs, and operations so that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) can be prepared, but is not the final design. The General Plan is ultimately approved by the State's Parks Commission. Once adopted, any changes would require a general plan amendment which would have to be approved by the State Parks Commission at a public meeting.

State Parks is just getting started on its plan for the site; the planning process is expected to take a year, during which there will be at least three major public meetings. (See Attachment B for the Planning Process Flowchart.)

In addition to scheduled public meetings, the city has suggested to State Parks that they form a Community Advisory Group that will allow West Sacramento residents greater opportunities to participate. Other ways the public can participate are through written comments, smaller workshops or meetings that focus on particular subjects, CIHC Task Force meetings, newsletters, and through the City and State Parks websites.

**4) What is the relationship of the CIHC Task Force to the community?**

The CIHC is a group formed by state legislation in 2002, with membership specified in the statute (Senate Bill 2063). Members include the Director of State Parks and the Executive Secretary of the Native American Heritage Commission; three members from separate California Indian tribes appointed by the Director, and two appointed by the Executive Secretary; the State Librarian; and the Secretary of the Resources Agency.

The Task Force was created to advise on location, preliminary interpretive and architectural planning, marketing and fundraising, and the overall operating plan for the CIHC.

**5) What are the CIHC plans for development/use of the JTS parcel?**

The JTS parcel is viewed as a gateway to the facility and site. It is envisioned that the JTS parcel could be used for some of the auxiliary facility components to support the operation of the Center. Given the importance of the JTS parcel to the local communities and neighbors, planning and design will be sensitive to the surrounding communities. (See Attachment C for a list of the Programmatic Elements of the CIHC.)

**6) What are the CIHC plans for the use of the CIRC property just south of the West Sacramento riverfront parcel?**

The goal for the CIRC property is to incorporate it into the overall operation of the Center, and to conduct outdoor interpretive programs and habitat restoration in the area.

**7) Can the CIRC property ever be used to develop a Casino?**

No. This land is not held in trust for a California tribe that historically resided in the area, therefore it is not sovereign land. Nor does the CIRC property meet the basic criteria for use as a casino. Moreover, any attempt to use the CIRC property as a Casino would be opposed by the City of West Sacramento and State Parks.

**8) How will the Northgate Property be used in the development of the CIHC, and why didn't the entire project get built there?**

California State Parks worked with the City of Sacramento for three years on the development of the CIHC within the City of Sacramento. The Center in Sacramento was envisioned as a "split" facility with the primary facilities on the south side of the American River at Richards Blvd, and facilities for major events and programs on the north side of the river at Northgate. In mid-2006, efforts were concluded with the City of Sacramento to locate the facilities at Richards Blvd due to the inability to assemble the needed parcels for the Center. The CIHC Task Force voted unanimously to begin site selection again and chose the West Sacramento East Riverfront Property as the preferred location for those facilities which were planned for Richard Blvd. The Northgate site is still critical to the development of the CIHC, and efforts continue with the City of Sacramento to make this property available for major events and programs which cannot be accommodated at the West Sacramento site.

**9) How does the CIHC project propose to mitigate traffic impacts in the community?**

Minimizing traffic to the site is the first and most important effort. A more accurate estimate of potential visitor types (e.g., school groups, local residents, out of town visitors) and numbers of vehicles needs to be developed. Current estimates are "back of the envelope" estimates without a specific location or site constraints known. We expect visitation to be lower given the specifics of this site. Off-site parking and the use of shuttles from other locations will be an important feature; the city has already indicated that providing all of the parking on site is not compatible with the Riverfront Master Plan or community desires.

Access points and parking areas will need to be designed and located so they have minimal impact on surrounding neighborhoods. Loading and parking areas for buses will need to be provided on site. Access to the site and circulation within it will be designed to avoid spillover effects. Information about the park should include directions and routing that use streets with adequate capacity and designed for through traffic.

All these issues will be examined in the general planning process.

**10) Who pays for transportation to and from the CIHC?**

How visitors will get to the site will be studied in the general plan. A shuttle service may be one among other ways such as driving, walking, bicycling, or boat service on the Sacramento River. State Parks will be responsible for any shuttle service between remote parking areas and the site. If additional public transit service is provided to the site that would be accomplished by a partnership among State Parks, the city, and Yolo.

**11) What are the plans for a continuously connected path along the Sacramento River for pedestrians and bicycles, and others?**

A continuous public path along the Sacramento River is an absolute requirement of the city and a high priority for State Parks. A continuous path is one of the highest priorities in the Riverfront Master Plan and a key component of planning for this site. This path will be connected at both the upstream (north) and downstream (south) ends of the property to a continuous trail network. It may be necessary to separate the pedestrian and bicycle paths; the final design and location of the trails will be subject to city approval.

**12) What are the plans for securing the site?**

Security on the site will be provided by State Park Rangers and the West Sacramento Police Department. An initial coordination meeting has already occurred to begin to evaluate needs at the site. State Parks proposes to extend its responsibility along the riverfront from the Broderick Boat Ramp upstream to the DWR property. Specific plans about level of staffing and frequency of patrol haven't been determined, but will be addressed during planning for the site.

**13) What are the programs of the CIHC?**

Plans for the facility include formal exhibit galleries for historic and contemporary exhibitions and programs. The Center will house the State's extensive collections of California Indian baskets and other cultural treasures and will provide a research center, meeting rooms, museum store, and food service facilities. The grounds will accommodate seasonal outdoor programs and ceremonial areas for special events and traditional gatherings, native plant gardens, demonstration areas, and interpretive trails. (See Attachment C for a list of Programmatic elements of the Center.)

**14) What overnight uses are planned for the CIHC?**

Limited overnight use would be in conjunction with defined interpretive programming for children and adults, such as an overnight stay inside a reconstructed traditional structure as an environmental education or cultural experience. These functions would be

defined in the General Plan. There will not be any camping for the general public, no RV hookups or campground facilities, and the General Plan will specifically exclude such uses.

**15) What are the design concepts for the CIHC?**

Design for the CIHC is still at the conceptual stage. To date, the Task Force, State Parks and California Indian advisors have identified broad concepts for the site. It is intended that CIHC structures will blend into the environment and complement the site and surrounding areas. Currently EDAW, the consulting design firm to the project, is working on alternative site layouts which will be further refined through the General Plan process, and in discussion and consultation with the stakeholders and the general public. Extensive effort has been put into defining the program - which means figuring out what activities and functions will take place in buildings on the site, how much space each of those will need, and how they should be positioned relative to one another. Architectural building style has not been determined, but would be through the Design phase as outlined in Attachment B: the Planning Process Flowchart.

**16) What is the timeline for the development of the CIHC?**

The consultants are preparing a document that will explore alternative site plans. A preferred alternative would be selected and consultants would begin preparation of a draft environmental impact report in Spring 2008. Preparation of the draft General Plan and EIR is scheduled through Fall 2009. The final General Plan would be adopted by the State Park Commission and issued in Spring 2010. Specific plans and designs would be created in 2009. Construction documents would be prepared in 2010, and construction would commence in early 2011.

The overall project would probably be constructed in phases; the Phase One project would include enough project elements and improvements to allow the park to open to the public. No schedule has been set for later phases.

**17) How will the project be funded?**

State Parks has \$5 million in seed money right now for planning and design activities. Public sources are expected to provide about one third of the total project budget, with the balance from private fundraising. The public sources are primarily Prop. 40 and Prop. 84 bond funds (park development funds). State Parks has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to create a business plan and fundraising strategy.

The conceptual project budget for Phase 1 is approximately \$30 million. The total project is expected to cost between \$70 and \$80 million.

## **ATTACHMENT A: ALLOWABLE USES FOR EAST RIVERFRONT PROPERTY**

The most recent formal planning process for the property – the Riverfront Master Plan, adopted in July 2003 – recommended that the site be used for a state park. The current general plan designation is RMU (Riverfront Mixed Use), which is the same as the designation for the Triangle and Raley’s Landing areas, and The Rivers. This designation allows a wide variety of uses including major recreation facilities, office buildings, retail, and residential. The current zoning designation for the property is WF – PD 29. Various portions of the East Riverfront Property are shown on PD 29 as Marina Commercial, Tourist Commercial, Marina, Single Family, and Open Space. The State is not required to conform with local zoning codes.

In addition to planning and zoning regulations, the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (formerly known as the Reclamation Board) of the State of California and the Army Corps of Engineers have a big role in determining what is legally allowable on the river side of the levee. Section 107 of the CVFP Board regulations ([Title 23, Division 1, California Code of Regulations](#)) allows a variety of uses, including “structures that are designed to have a minimum effect upon the flow of water and are firmly anchored to prevent the structure from flotation, provided that normally no structures for human habitation will be permitted.” This provision is what made the Governor’s Residence infeasible, but could allow other improvements on the property.

What’s physically possible on the site is quite broad. Soils and geotechnical analysis of the site conducted in 2003 concluded that major structures were possible, but that a commercial, off-stream marina was not. Hydraulic analysis concluded that for much of the site, there would be negligible effect on flow of water.

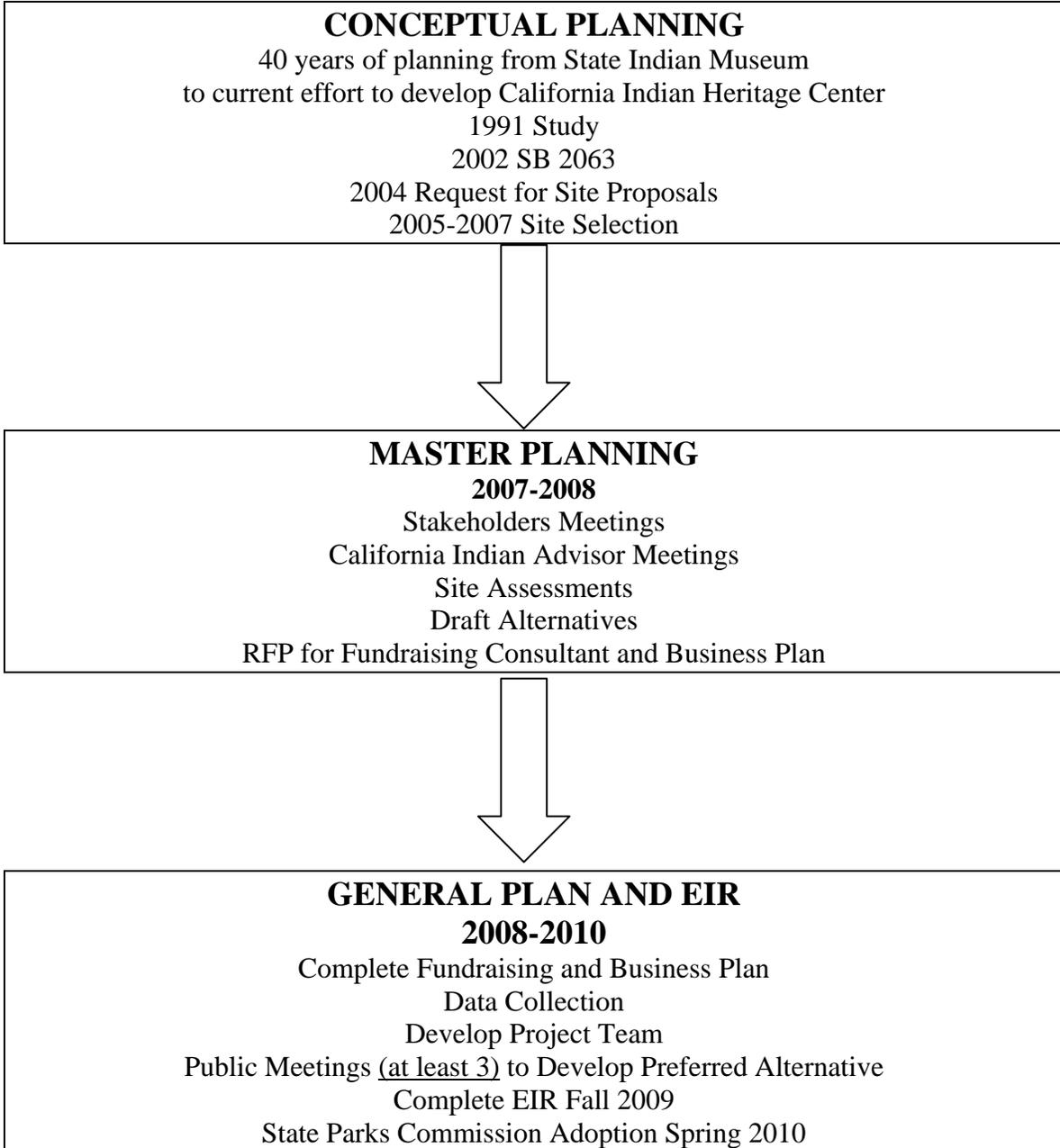
Alternative uses that have been considered for the site since the city has owned it include sale to a developer for a mixed use residential and commercial development; sale to a private school; and a residence for the Governor, combined with a museum and state park. The residential, commercial, and school uses were determined by the developers to be financially infeasible. The Governor’s Residence faced regulatory challenges at this site, and is currently not being pursued at any location.

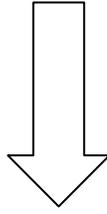
At the suggestion of neighborhood residents, the city proposes to undertake an analysis of highest and best use for the property. Some alternative uses that have been suggested include sale of the property for private development, water-side opportunities such as restaurants, or use for a city-owned park and playing fields. These alternatives will be examined by an outside consultant.

A public workshop is tentatively scheduled for Monday, February 11 at the City Hall Galleria to discuss the background of the site and various alternatives. The consultants working on the highest and best use analysis will make a presentation and be available to answer questions.

**ATTACHMENT B**

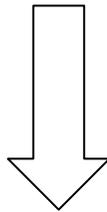
**CALIFORNIA INDIAN HERITAGE CENTER  
PLANNING PROCESS FLOW CHART**





**DESIGN  
2009-2010**

Issue RFQ for Architectural Design Services  
Retain Consultants  
Schematics Development  
Design Development  
Working Drawings in 2010



**PRE-CONSTRUCTION  
2010-2011**

Capital Fund Raising Campaign  
Permitting  
Bidding and Award  
Commence Construction 2011

**OPENING IN 2012**

# ATTACHMENT C

## CALIFORNIA INDIAN HERITAGE CENTER PROGRAM ELEMENTS

### BUILDING CHARACTER CONCEPTS

Three concepts are under discussion:

**Village:** CIHC functional spaces defined below would reside in more than one structure arranged in close proximity.

**Courtyard:** Facilities would radiate from a central outdoor courtyard.

**Atrium:** In this concept there would be a central indoor atrium and CIHC functional spaces would surround it.

### INDOOR PROGRAMS

#### Exhibits

#### Content Spaces

Archives

Collections: Conservation and

Preservation labs

Library

Research

Storage

#### Forum & Entry Spaces

Indoor-Outdoor transitions

Gathering Areas

Museum Store

Lobby and Visitor Service areas,  
restrooms

Restaurant potential

#### OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

Gathering Areas

Games and Multi-Use Event Space

Fire Circles

Amphitheater

Traditional Meeting Area

Special Events

#### Learning

Demonstration Areas

Interpretive Trails

Traditional structures

#### Support

Outdoor Kitchen for Special Events

Parking Delivery and Loading areas

## ATTACHMENT D

### CALIFORNIA INDIAN HERITAGE CENTER CONTACTS

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