
Chapter 2: Framework



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“A good city is like a good party - people stay for much longer than really necessary, because they are enjoying themselves.”

Jan Gehl
Professor of Urban Design, School of
Architecture, Copenhagen, Denmark

A. Urban Design Vision

Vision

The vision for the River District is to transform a light industrial and warehouse area into an urban community of diverse uses exhibiting an architectural character that celebrates its unique place in the city at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers. The District has tremendous potential for urban waterfront development emphasizing pedestrian and cycle friendly streets to provide access to more than 2.5 miles of riverfront. This is an unique opportunity to guide development of the area with a strong circulation plan and urban character that will evolve and capitalize on the opportunity to expand its downtown to the banks of two major California rivers. Few inland cities in the United States can offer transit-oriented, dense urban development directly adjacent to nearly three miles of waterfront in a central city area and within a mile of the Downtown Center and State Capitol (See Figure 2.1).

The River District Design Review Area comprises approximately 1,500 acres of which the 770 acres is planned in the River District Specific Plan (RDSP). As a comparison of scale to a city known for strong pedestrian-transit supportive system and defined waterfront linkages, inner city Portland, Oregon equates to the area of River District Specific Plan, from the north end of the Pearl District to University Place at the southern end of downtown (See Figure 2.2). Understanding the scale of area allows us to

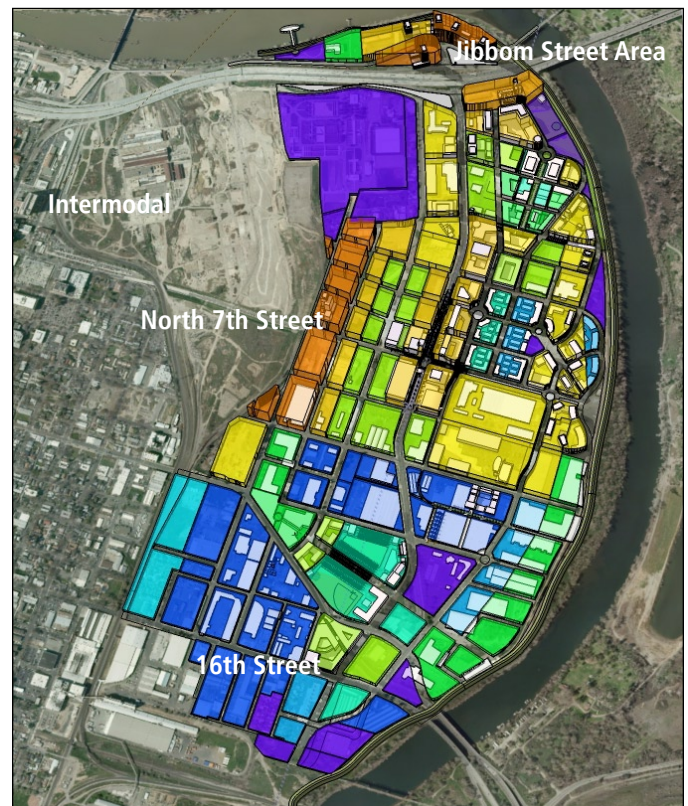


Figure 2.1. River District Specific Plan block height envelopes delineate overall form and scale of district blocks. See Height Map in Chapter 4 for specific height detail.

consider a vision for the River District which is diverse and responsive to its urban and natural geography and its unique urban potential, which will evolve for decades to come, for an exciting infill expansion of the Central City.


The River District lies at the mouth of the American River Parkway, one of the nation's important urban greenways west of the Mississippi. The strong juxtaposition between dense urban developments alongside scenic natural systems provides the River District the opportunity to evolve as a rich urban waterfront community over the next several decades.




Figure 2.2. Outline of River District Block Plan overlaid on aerial map of Downtown Portland, Oregon, provides scale comparison. (Map source: Google Earth).

B. Urban Design Concepts and Goals

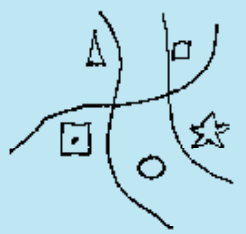
Four fundamental concepts of urban analysis address the key urban design issues in the River District: Form, Edges, Orientation, and Places. These four concepts serve to organize design intentions for the district and address the basic issues facing the district’s transformation into a series of livable and distinctive places which are well connected to the Central City. The overall Concepts and Goals outlined in this section are applied specifically for each area of the plan in the Urban Design Framework and carry forward into the specific guidelines found in Chapter 3 – The Public Realm, and Chapter 4 – The Private Realm.




FORM The form of the urban skyline will express the desired balance of competing expectations placed on the land from the market-driven economic value, the scale and context of the surrounding built and natural environments, and the functional response to factors such as climate and human comfort.



EDGES Edges may exist as abrupt divisions in the urban realm but can also provide a contrasting interface to highlight exceptional circumstances that can create unique and positive opportunities.



ORIENTATION The ability to recognize one’s precise physical position in a city helps ensure comfort and security through identifiable landmarks that help humanize the scale of the city into discernible segments.



PLACES Places are identifiable as neighborhoods, streetscapes, parks and plazas, that evoke positive human emotions and feelings of comfort arising from positive interactions with the built environment and natural landscape which serve to be retained in memory.

FORM

A DISTRICT WHERE THE BUILT FORM SHALL RESPECT AND ACCENTUATE ITS SURROUNDING CONTEXT

As the northern boundary of the Central City, the River District will absorb moderate to high densities and maintain a modest skyline with some buildings of more dramatic height. Form and massing will respect the context of natural areas and established neighborhoods with a street pattern that transitions from an industrial scale to a neighborhood, pedestrian-serving circulation pattern.

Goal 1.1: Implement pedestrian-scaled Central City sized blocks.

The City Plan of 1873 (Figure 2.3) illustrated a desire of the City to extend the Sutter Grid north through today's River District. The recent Railyards street grid carries that vision forward to the southern boundary of the District with streets which closely approximate the historic Sutter grid (Figure 2.4).

The RDSP street network has sought to maintain the scale of the downtown grid while responding to recently approved plans and built conditions and embodying a pedestrian scaled network. Development pressures to abandon rights-of-way and expand block size should be reviewed in recognition of the Guiding Principles of the 2010 RDSP.

Prior land consolidations in the district may prevent through streets in some areas, however, future opportunities should be sought to subdivide large parcels and facilitate connectivity of pedestrian and vehicular movement throughout the district and move closer to the realization of the urban grid plan.

Goal 1.2 Implement urban form and pattern that contribute to a healthy community environment.

Behavioral science has found that the form and patterns of a city can have a direct bearing on the health of individuals. Neighborhoods and business districts which have street and land use patterns to promote walkability, along with quality physical environments that are safe and invit-

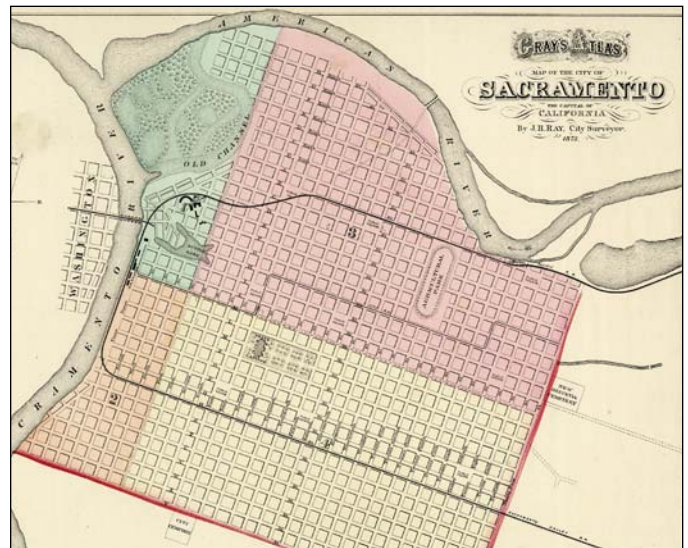


Figure 2.3 (top). 1873 City Plan shows Sutter's street grid extending north to American River.
Figure 2.4 (bottom) Street grid of RDSP and Railyards to connect to river.

ing, promote more healthy activities. The form and pattern of blocks and open space will influence the environment for walking, biking and general recreation which will benefit everyone living in the River District, and Central City.

Goal 1.3: Building Form at Riverfront will balance urban and natural environments.

As determined during the public process of the River District Specific Plan (RDSP), the public and stakeholders supported a concept of a transition in development form from a vertical massing along Sacramento River to a moderate edge progressing eastward along the American River Parkway.

General consensus concluded that the eastern bank of the Sacramento River should offer opportunities for high-

rise development in concurrence with adopted plans for the Railyards Plan and Docks Area Plan, which both allow for buildings of 30 floors and above. The recognition of the Sacramento River as a true urban waterfront warrants intensity of development to satisfy the demand for spectacular river views for hotel and residential suites. Therefore, tall buildings are encouraged along the Sacramento River and at the mouth of the American River, however, they shall not form a visual barrier to the interior blocks of the district.

To respect the transition from urban riverfront to the more natural scenic qualities upriver along the American River, the RDSP sets a transition of building height and massing. Desirable views south to Downtown and north to the American River may entice broad building flanks with an



Figure 2.5. Allowable height diagram of RDSP blocks illustrates 250 ft height envelope (orange) at confluence of Sacramento and American Rivers, and lower height envelopes along American River Parkway.

east-west axis. Therefore, along each riverbank, the design of high rise towers will follow slender massing principles to maintain view apertures from buildings and the public trail and to reduce ground shadows on adjoining parks and public spaces.

Goal 1.4: Maintain vistas along riverbanks.

Vistas across both the Sacramento and American Rivers should be maintained by orienting the major axis of buildings perpendicular to riverbanks and a slender profile on the minor axis. This orientation is consistent with the major view line facing south towards the bridge crossings and downtown skyline.

At the pedestrian level, the base of highrise building should be reduced in floor area and story height in order to maintain the open view lines from the levee trail. Good site planning that results in towers offset to one another, whenever possible, will increase the potential for view lines (See Figure 2.6).

Goal 1.5: Height and bulk of buildings will transition between sub areas.

Height transitions within the District shall balance the need for density along major corridors and transit-oriented developments with the form and character of adjacent neighborhoods. Transitions in height designations serve to define the character of each sub area by the types of uses anticipated (See Area Character in the second half of this chapter).

Goal 1.6: Maintain variety of block sizes to accommodate diversity of land uses.

The transformation of the River District to a more mixed-use, pedestrian-scaled district relies on smaller block sizes than currently exist. The RDSP street grid accommodates existing large scale light industrial and warehouse business operators and provides some of the largest parcels in the Central City while maintaining an overall pedestrian-scaled district (See Figure 2.7).

Goal 1.7 Each block should have a variety of scale and massing

Development that accommodates a variety of building types and forms within a block creates a rich living environment and provides a greater economic mix of businesses and residential opportunities.



Figure 2.6. Orientation of tower elements along the river should maintain open aperture to river and distant views.

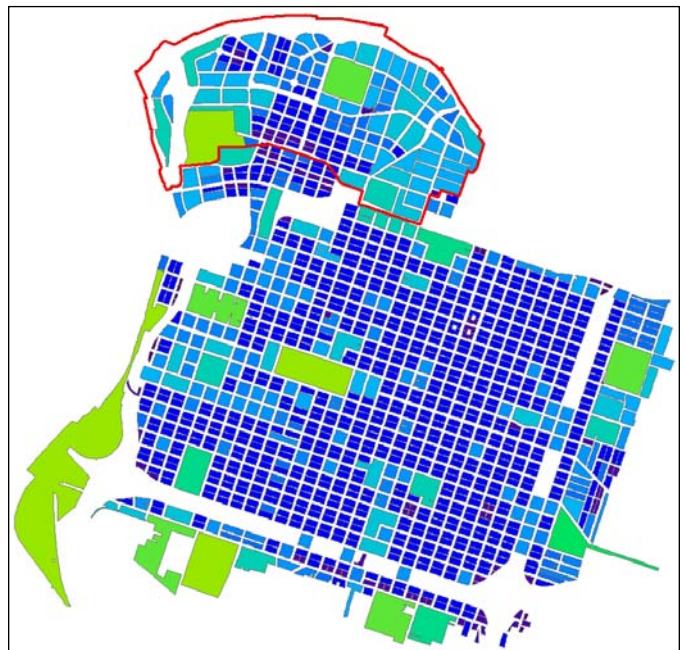


Figure 2.7. Color code of block size. Dark blue represents smallest block area while bright green indicates the largest area

Goal 1.8: Maximize opportunities for Green Energy generation

RDSP grid is oriented with the original Sutter Grid of the Downtown. This grid is approximately 18 ½ degrees west of true north-south. This orientation for solar technologies, particularly solar photovoltaic peak power generation in summer months. While the blocks west of 5th Street provide optimal true north-south orientation.

Existing large blocks and large floor plate buildings serve as excellent opportunities for capturing solar energy (Figures 2.8 to 2.11). To ensure proper solar access, vertical heights for new buildings should be designed to allow proper solar penetration onto existing rooftops to be utilized for power generation.

Goal 1.9 Facilitate the implementation of Green Roofs

Green roofs provide opportunities for elevated open space, gardens and recreation while providing the environmental benefits of reducing heat-gain from roofs, and reduced stormwater surges into the municipal drainage system in heavy rain events. Existing warehouse buildings in the District provide opportunities for Green Roof retrofits.



Figure 2.8. Roof gardens in dense urban areas provide visual relief while decreasing roof heat loads, filter run-off and abate storm water surcharges.



Figure 2.9 The existing warehouses in the River District, exhibiting good orientation and large unobscured roof areas, present a great opportunity for investments in solar energy generation.



Figure 2.10. Solar photovoltaic panels cover the roof of a transit station in New York City is similar in profile to some warehouses in the River District.



Figure 2.11. Solar photovoltaic panels cover the roof of a warehouse with accessways for roof-mounted mechanical equipment.

EDGES

A DISTRICT WHERE EXISTING BARRIERS DISSOLVE AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES ARE EMBRACED

The River District historically has been walled in by levees on all sides. The lowering of the railroad levee embankment and the engagement of buildings along the river levees will open exciting opportunities for the District and the City of Sacramento.

Goal 2.1: Develop an active and accessible riverfront

While development adjacent to the levees is highly desirable, visual and physical public access to the levee trails and riverfront must be maintained by each development plan along these edges. When building next to a levee trail, the active elements should be viewable from the trail and major program areas should be visually linked to connecting streets and to the interior grid.

Every opportunity shall be taken to increase access to the river's edge, including creatively providing accessible compliant access to the river banks inside the levees.

Goal 2.2 Extend internal streets to river trails

Street connections to the Two Rivers Trail are limited. North Fifth and North 10th Streets and the extension of Jibboom Street at Tiscornia Park provide the only public access to the River Trail. The extension of North 7th Street to the river will be a welcome celebration of the linkage from Downtown to the river. The RDSP street network provides for additional opportunities to create strong connection with Two Rivers Trail and the river.

Goal 2.3 Provide transitional landform from street elevation to levee

The approved development plan for Township 9 takes advantage of the elevation difference between the street level and the desired views from atop the river levee by grading the ground form gradually up to Riverfront Drive, allowing for parking to be tucked under the new grade

level. Wherever possible, development should seek to minimize the abrupt transition which occurs at the levee embankment and provide accessible paths (Figures 2.12 and 2.13). Parking garages may serve as podiums to raise pedestrian building access at new grade levels behind levees.



Figure 2.12. New Orleans Washington Artillery Park steps leading to levee embankment of the Mississippi River.



Figure 2.13. Public event at Washington Artillery Park, New Orleans.

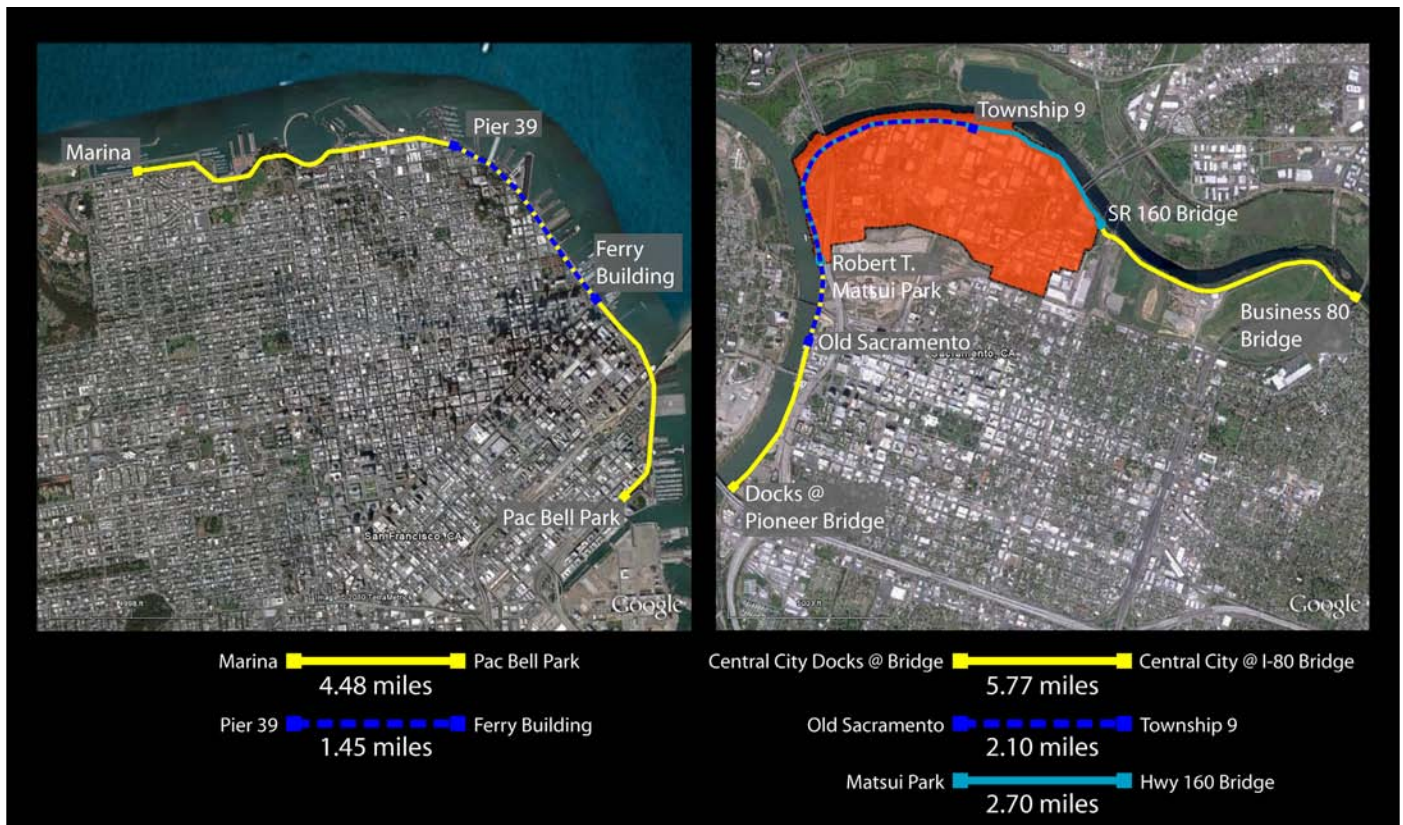


Figure 2.14. Waterfront opportunity comparisons between San Francisco’s waterfront (left) with the riverfront length of Sacramento’s two bounding rivers.

Goal 2.4 Provide public access to the river

Public access to the river is a high priority of the RDSP and all development shall strive to incorporate attractive and secure passage from public streets to the Two Rivers Trail. Public access easements, or “Riverways”, for pedestrian and cycling access to the river provide other opportunities to activate the riverfront. All site design and architectural design shall maximize the visibility of the public river trails with consideration for pedestrian safety, way-finding and high quality material treatment of walkways and landscape elements.

Goal 2.5: Create opportunities for a variety of conditions for unique linear pathway experiences

With limited recreational use of the riverfront, the extent of river frontage in Sacramento is little understood. The

2.7 miles of river frontage in the RDSP alone is nearly double the length of San Francisco’s Embarcadero from the Ferry Building to Pier 39. (See Figure 2.14) Such a significant opportunity to connect the community to two vast riverfronts, the RDSP has identified as a central concept the development of active and passive points of interest along the American and Sacramento Rivers. (See Figure 2.30) These uses would be spaced an approximate walking interval of five to ten minutes. New riverfront developments, such as the Powerhouse Science Center, will be encouraged to incorporate programming that will establish relationships with the river and the natural environment.

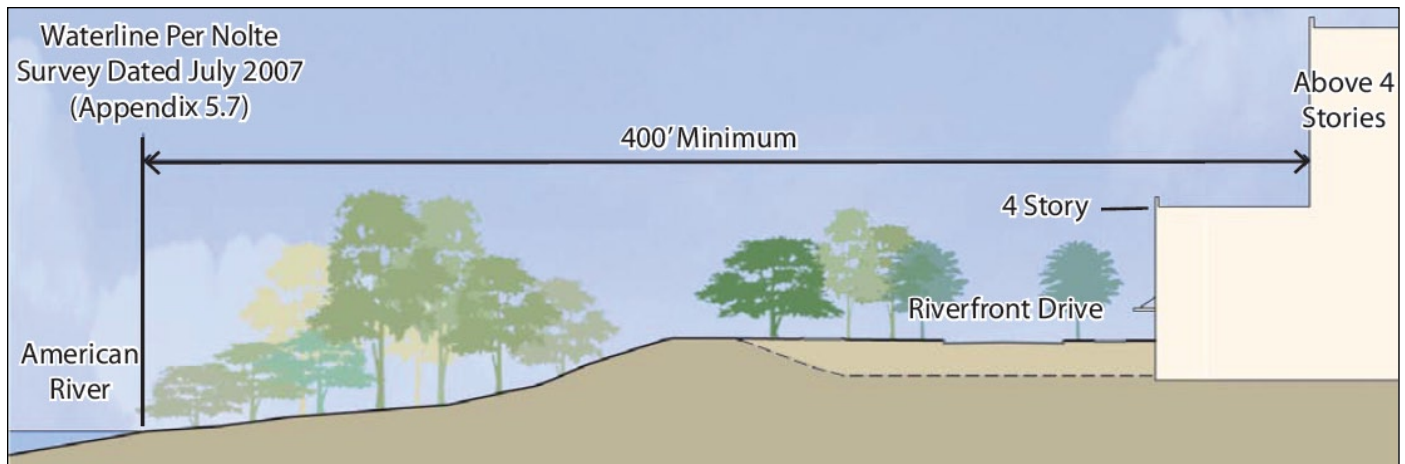


Figure 2.15. Township 9 levee condition at Riverfront Drive. (Carter Burgess).

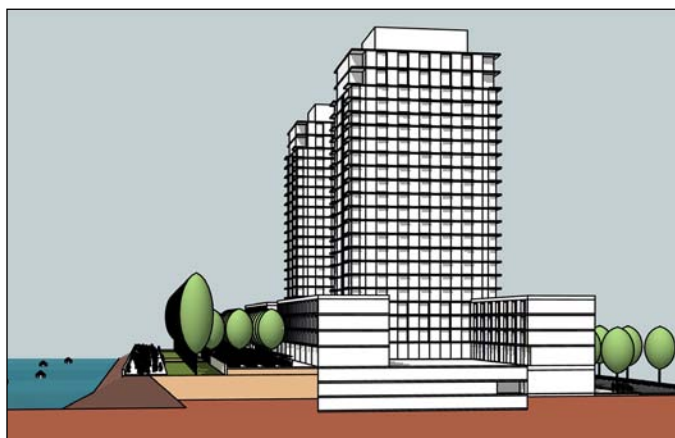


Figure 2.16. Riverfront promenade extension along Sacramento River.



Figure 2.17. Open-air pedestrian bridge at Portland Union Station creates a viewable environment for pedestrians to cross over rail facilities.

Goal 2.6: Provide safe and activated pedestrian linkages across railroad facilities.

Grade separated undercrossings are typically perceived as unsafe environments for pedestrians and bicyclists. Throughways should be well lighted and free of obstructions to allow a clear line of sight before entering and while in these passageways. Active uses should be developed at each end to integrate undercrossings with frequent users and avoid isolated situations.

Goal 2.7 Implement a bikeway along the Union Pacific Railroad

Linkage to the East Industrial Area and future Sutter’s Landing Park is desirable along the track rights-of-way owned by Union Pacific Railroad. With the removal of secondary tracks which once served the railyard shops, the excess right-of-way may present opportunities for an east-west trail north of the railroad mainline deck facilities over 12th and 16th Streets. The RDSP has identified this area as a potential easement for Class I bicycle trail and pedestrian facilities which would link the Railyards Park Blocks, through the River District and the Blue Diamond properties to the bike trail from C Street and onto the future development to the east.

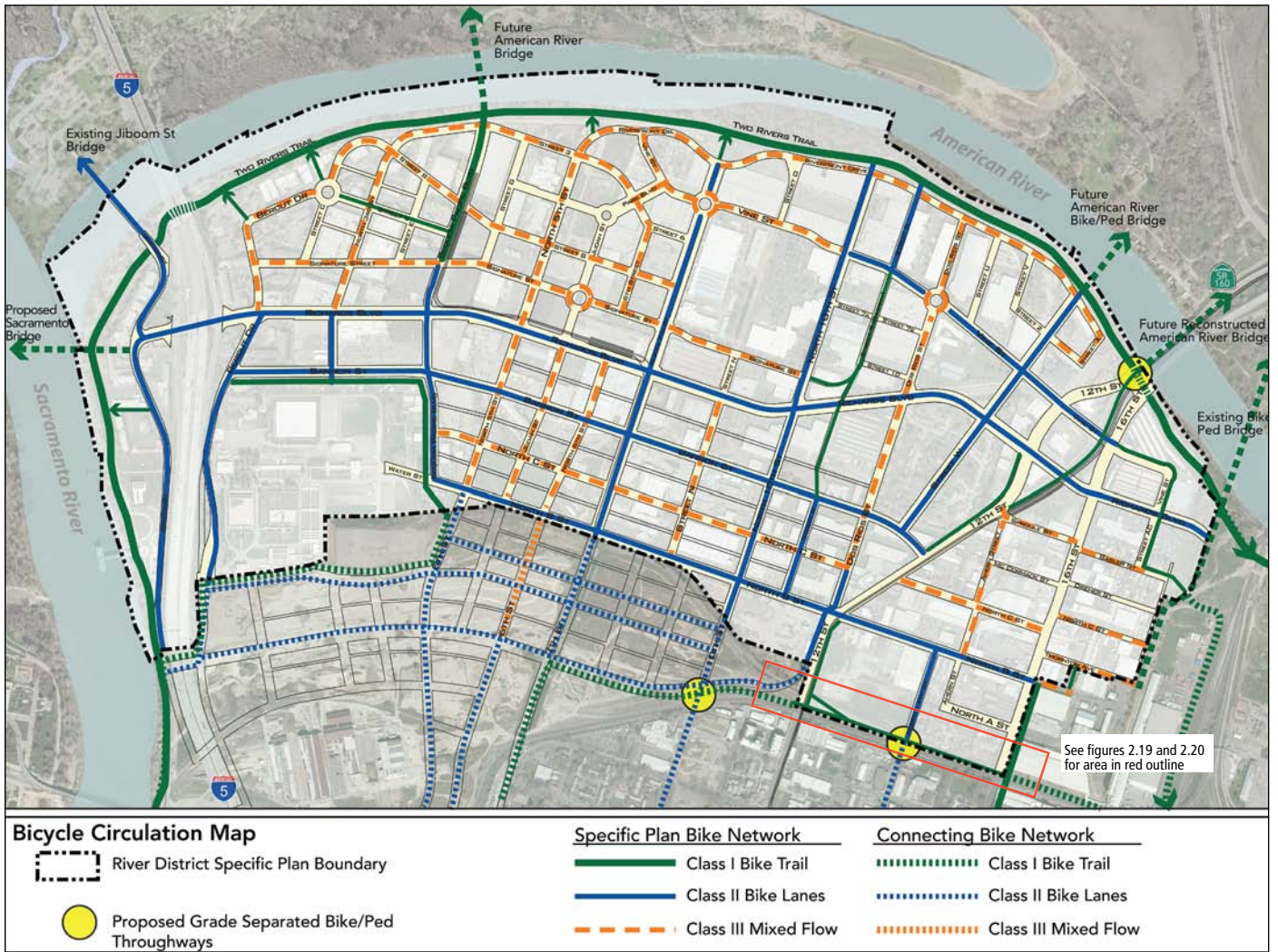


Figure 2.18. Bikeway Plan illustrating proposed Class I bike facilities along north boundary UPRR mainline tracks. Also see Specific Plan



Figure 2.19. UPRR bridge over 12th Street showing future surplus track area in red. Siding track at right to be removed with future Railyards development.

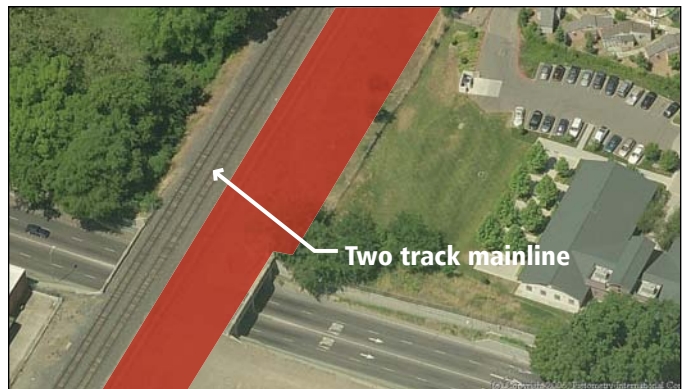


Figure 2.20. UPRR bridge over 16th Street showing future surplus track area and embankment in red.



Figure 2.21. The 14th Street tunnel was closed soon after opening. When sufficient development occurs around this crossing, significant re-design will be needed to ensure better security and usability for pedestrians and cyclists.



Figure 2.22. Bikeway along rail line.



Figure 2.23. New York's new elevated parkway along abandoned subway line.

ORIENTATION

A DISTRICT OF VIEWS, VISTAS & GATEWAYS

The sensory experiences of visual connections, destinations, and sense of entry and departure within a city serve to locate us in an environment and mark our experience with heightened meaning and importance of place.

Goal 3.1: Implement streets which integrate the inner grid to the Riverfront

The street network of the RDSP carefully weaves together the intention of the historic Sutter Grid with new networks such as the approved plan for Township 9, and the

desire for a strong transit centered plan at Sequoia Station.

The RDSP plan seeks to develop streets that circulate the grid to the river and provide numerous opportunities to reach the river without relying on the rigid framework of

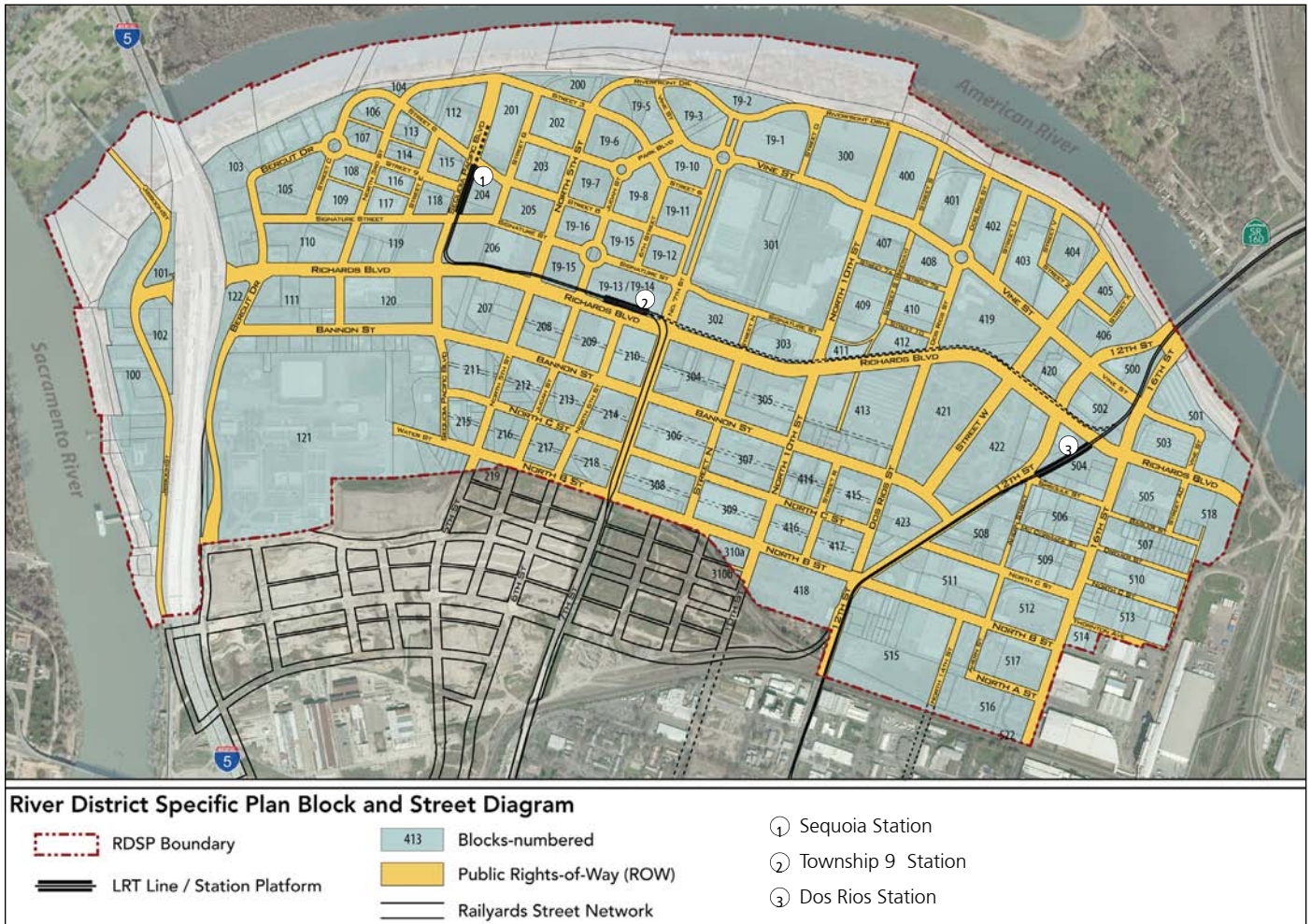


Figure 2.24. Park linkages from the downtown and the Railyards and future development to the parks of the River District and surrounding areas.

the rectangular grid. This is a particularly unique urban design strategy for Sacramento. These streets will be articulated to convey that they are primary “River Routes” connecting the district street network with a ribbon of parks along the river edges.

Goal 3.2: Accentuate Gateways

The sense of arrival and departure heightens the significance of a place, and is an important to understanding one’s place in a locale and celebrating the transitions between places in a city. Physical edges, whether natural or contrived, are often more psychologically important than administrative boundaries that exist solely on a map. The River District is an area distinctly defined by natural edges (the rivers) and man-made edges (the railroad and highways). These features pose design opportunities for highlighting the River District as an unique place within the Central City Community Plan Area.

With the development of the Railyards, the removal of the railroad levee along North B Street and the flood gates at 7th Street will open the street grid connecting these two districts.¹ New crossings of the railroad proposed in this plan provide for points of entry/departure that can be artfully celebrated. Tenth Street and Fourteenth Street undercrossings can serve as important linkages between Alkali Flat, the River District and the Railyards. These connection points can be designed as more than circulation links; they can be treated as a vibrant part of the street experience.

Currently, two bridges at the east and west ends of the District cross the American River. The Interstate 5 and Highway 160 bridges carry high vehicular demand along the edges of the district each day. The addition of notable features could distinguish these sections of roadway as gateways to the River District and the Central City and provide more significant river experiences.

The first gateway feature for the District will be installed in

¹ The levee, known as the Secondary Levee, will be taken down in this location and re-graded to a finish grade within the Railyards Plan area that will provide the same elevation protection as currently exists.



Figure 2.25. Pedestrian promenade, populated with major retailers and restaurants, passing under highway bridge with architectural treatment along the Yarra River, Melbourne, Australia.



Figure 2.26. An example of street continuity under major infrastructure elements in Berlin, Germany. Each example illustrates open ground level expanse with storefronts integrated with the infrastructure and directly adjacent.

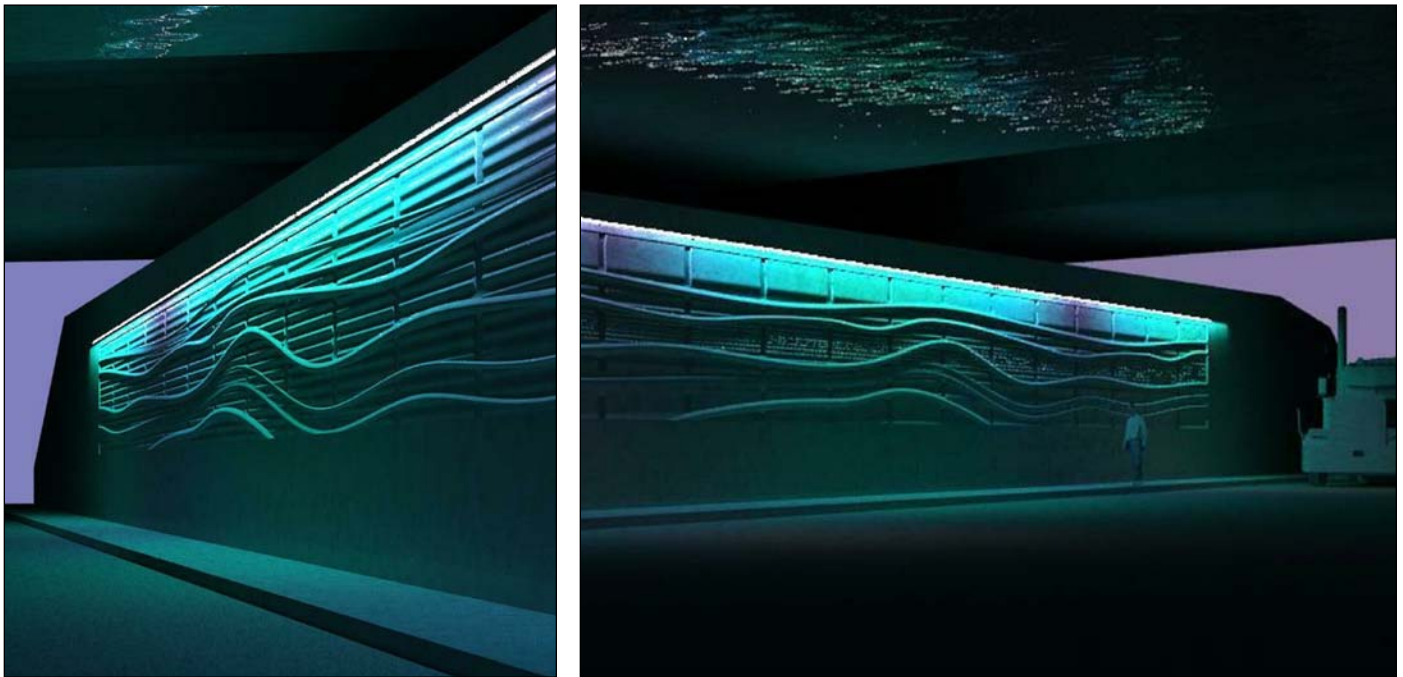


Figure 2.27. Wall art and lighting design for Richards Blvd undercrossing at Interstate 5 (City of Sacramento-Urban Design Group).

the segment of Richards Boulevard under the Interstate 5 overpass. The lighted graphic will announce to motorists and pedestrians the District's connection to the rivers (See Figure 2.17).

The proposed future multi-modal bridge (not a part of the RDSP), connecting Sequoia Street and Truxel Avenue as it crosses the American River Parkway, should take advantage of scenic vistas to the City and the design should celebrate this important crossing.

Goal 3.3: Celebrate vistas and view lines

Views to prominent landmarks within a city serve to orient and provide reference for people moving through the city. With the exception of Capitol Mall aligned to the State Capitol, the gridiron plan of Sacramento's downtown leaves little opportunity to capture terminal vistas. In contrast, the RDSP street plan provides many opportunities for an architectural response to terminal street views, or significant corners where diagonal streets intersect with the orthogonal grid. The elevated levee system and elevated Vista Park in the Railyards also provide unique opportunities for vistas and distinguishing landmarks.

These short distance terminal view lines serve the pedestrian and motorist alike in the orientation of the city and provide perceptual markers for way finding. The architectural response of individual buildings should celebrate and accentuate form, signature architectural elements, and lighting to enhance the expression of place.

The boulevard plan for North 7th Street as it terminates at

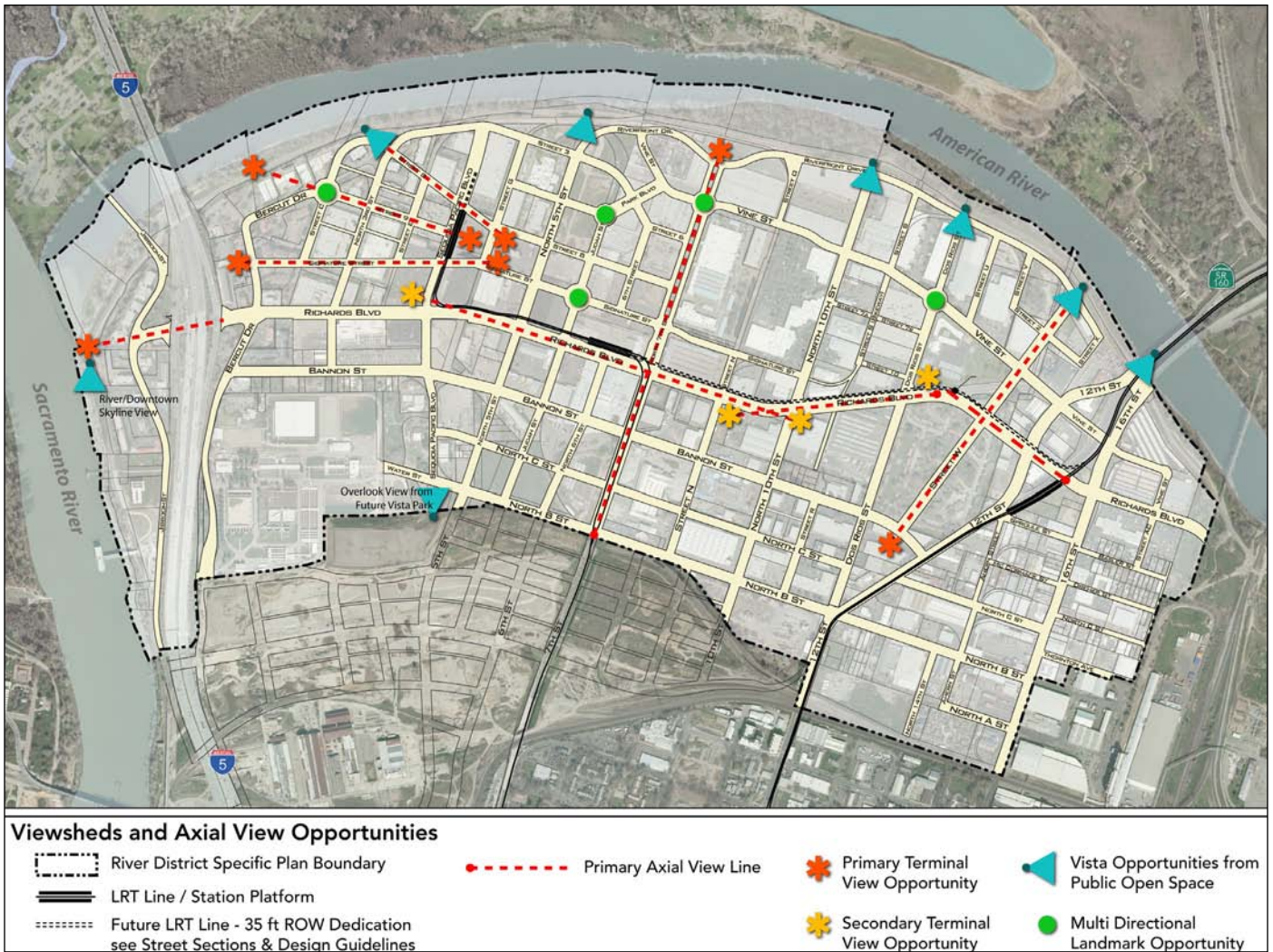


Figure 2.28. Visual orientation in the River District Specific Plan area.

Riverfront Park will artfully signify this strong street-river connection. As development occurs in the District, other opportunities should be utilized to visually connect destination points within the District.

Many view opportunities exist along the Two Rivers Trail, from the eastern gateway of Highway 160, to the axial alignment of 7th Street, and onto the vantages from the Sacramento River. Opportunities to capture select views must be of high priority to designers engaged in future projects.

Streets that terminate to the river – describe from Central City context (e.g. 5th Street that travels from Broadway’s warehouse district, through the Railyards overlook of the Central Shops and the new Intermodal to edge Vista Park to terminate into Riverfront Drive.

PLACE

A DISTRICT OF ECLECTIC EXPERIENCES AND MEMORABLE PLACES

Unlike most other precincts in the Central City, the River District has unparalleled opportunities, manifest by location and time, to create unique places of distinctive character.

Goal 4.1: Maintain Scale of Sutter's Grid

The historic blocks of the Central City have a distinctive scale and orthogonal pattern. Measuring approximately 320 feet on a side, these blocks have had few changes, other than consolidation with street closures, provide a very uniform spatial experience and sense of place defining the Central City. The Railyards street grid is largely patterned upon this historic grid, maintaining the distinct pedestrian character, but will have nuances unique to its development pattern. The River District will evolve to a pattern of streets in proportion to the historic grid, and the Railyards, providing a more common pedestrian experience akin to the Central City as a whole.

Goal 4.2: Bring the river into the grid

Creating memorable urban places necessitates capturing the unique natural elements of a place including the native flora and fauna. The inclusion of plant types native to the river shed will anchor the public realm spaces to this unique area. Landscape design in both the public realm as well as private open space shall seek to incorporate appropriate native plants on the parkway and attract native species of fauna into the developed areas.

Goal 4.3: Establish the riverfront as a destination experience for the Sacramento region

The Sacramento and American Rivers are regional amenities, actively used for water-related activities centered on limited number of public access locations. The development of the desired active promenade with strong connec-

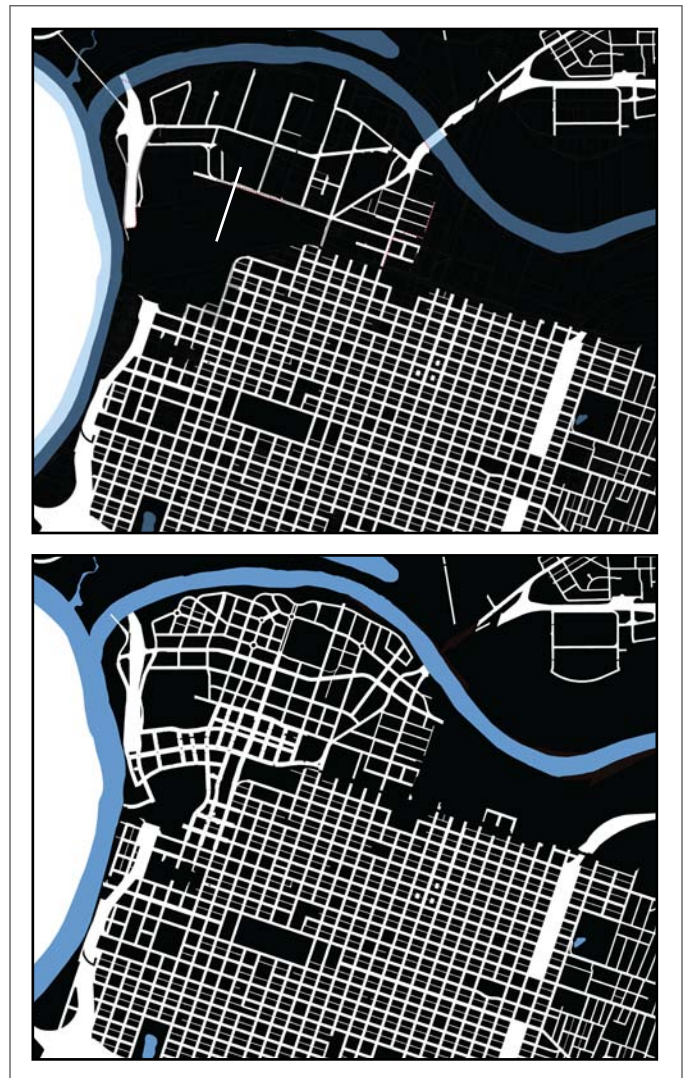


Figure 2.29. Transformation of circulation network in the Central City.

Top: Figure ground diagram of existing blocks in the Central City. The paucity of streets in the River District is evident in this illustration, with only 7th Street linking the downtown with the River District.

Bottom: Figure ground diagram of the Central City with the street grids as planned in the Railyards Specific Plan and the River District Specific Plan.

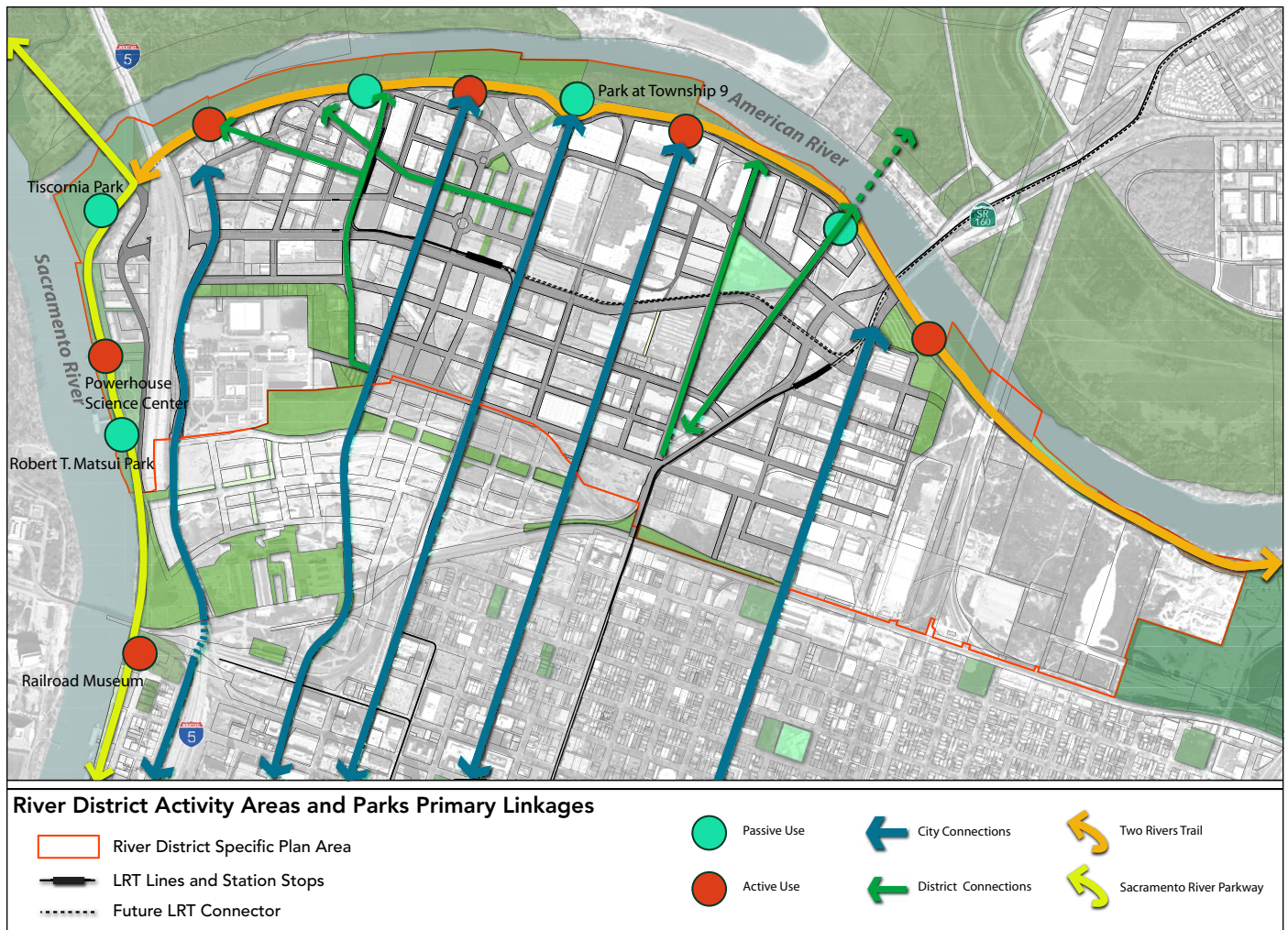


Figure 2.30. Primary linkages within the District and from Downtown which pass through the Railyards and along 16th Street that coincide with activity nodes along the river edge. Also see Specific Plan.

tions from the grid will promote active and passive uses and will serve to reconnect Sacramento to its riverfronts.

Goal 4.4: Develop active street edges

A high quality pedestrian street experience relies heavily on the quality of the building frontage directly adjacent to the pedestrian path. The principles of street design and building articulation are outlined in Chapter 3, and guide the establishment of active retail and service commercial uses at the street level that will help ensure an vibrant pedestrian street environment.

Goal 4.5: Preserve eclectic character and image

The RDSP identifies areas which should be maintained and enhanced by the design of streetscapes and the integration of new buildings with existing buildings in a manner that preserves and reinforces the character and image of the area.

Goal 4.6: Preserve buildings of distinctive character & promote adaptive reuse

Many older buildings in the district have distinctive characteristics that create a ‘sense of place’ within the district. Not all are historically significant, but they add to a distinctive character that enhances the sense of uniqueness in the District and should be retained and adaptively reused wherever possible (See Figure 2.31).

Goal 4.7 Create Complete Communities and complete streets

Business districts and residential neighborhoods will be served with streets which provide for multiple modes of mobility and contain a mixture of active frontages with a diversity of destinations, ranging from neighborhood to regional. Neighborhoods which support local shopping

needs as well as larger regional needs create a healthy mix of economic activity and community cohesion along public streets.

Goal 4.8 Create excitement around transit hubs

Light Rail provides the River District access to Downtown, employment centers, and regional connections. The density of people locating and interacting around transit stations provides the opportunity for intensive small retail outlets as well as quality public gathering spaces for people watching, interacting, and gathering.

Creating strong centers of activity at transit hubs with a diverse mix of retail, entertainment, housing, and office mixes will attract users to transit hubs and feed the District



Figure 2.31. An industrial building on North 10th Street (top) and a similar building type in Berkeley, CA adapted for a contemporary office use (bottom).

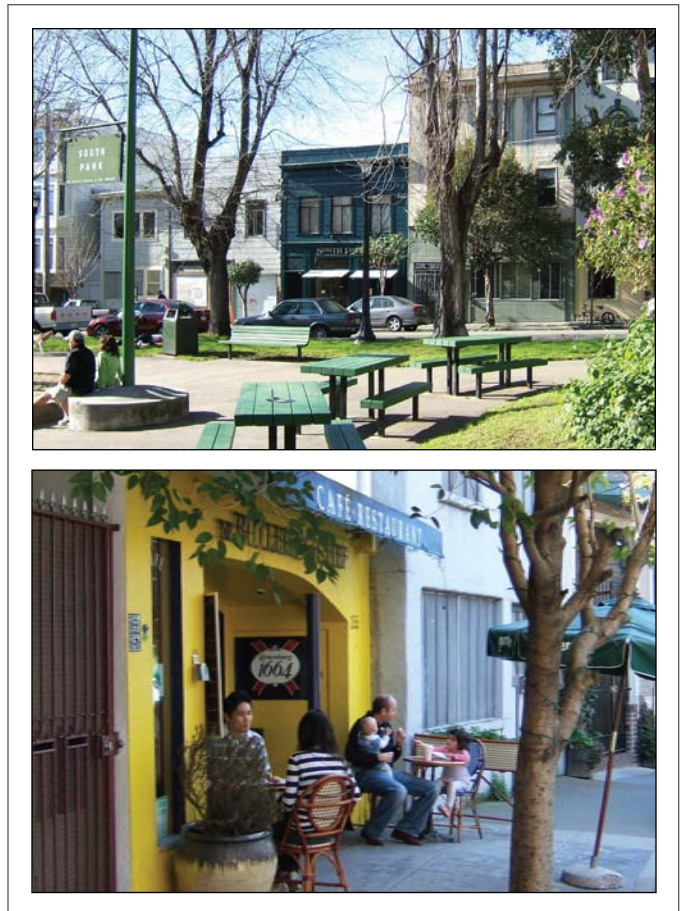


Figure 2.32. San Francisco’s South Park, once a location for small industrial business, has transformed to a central place of mixed uses around the park.

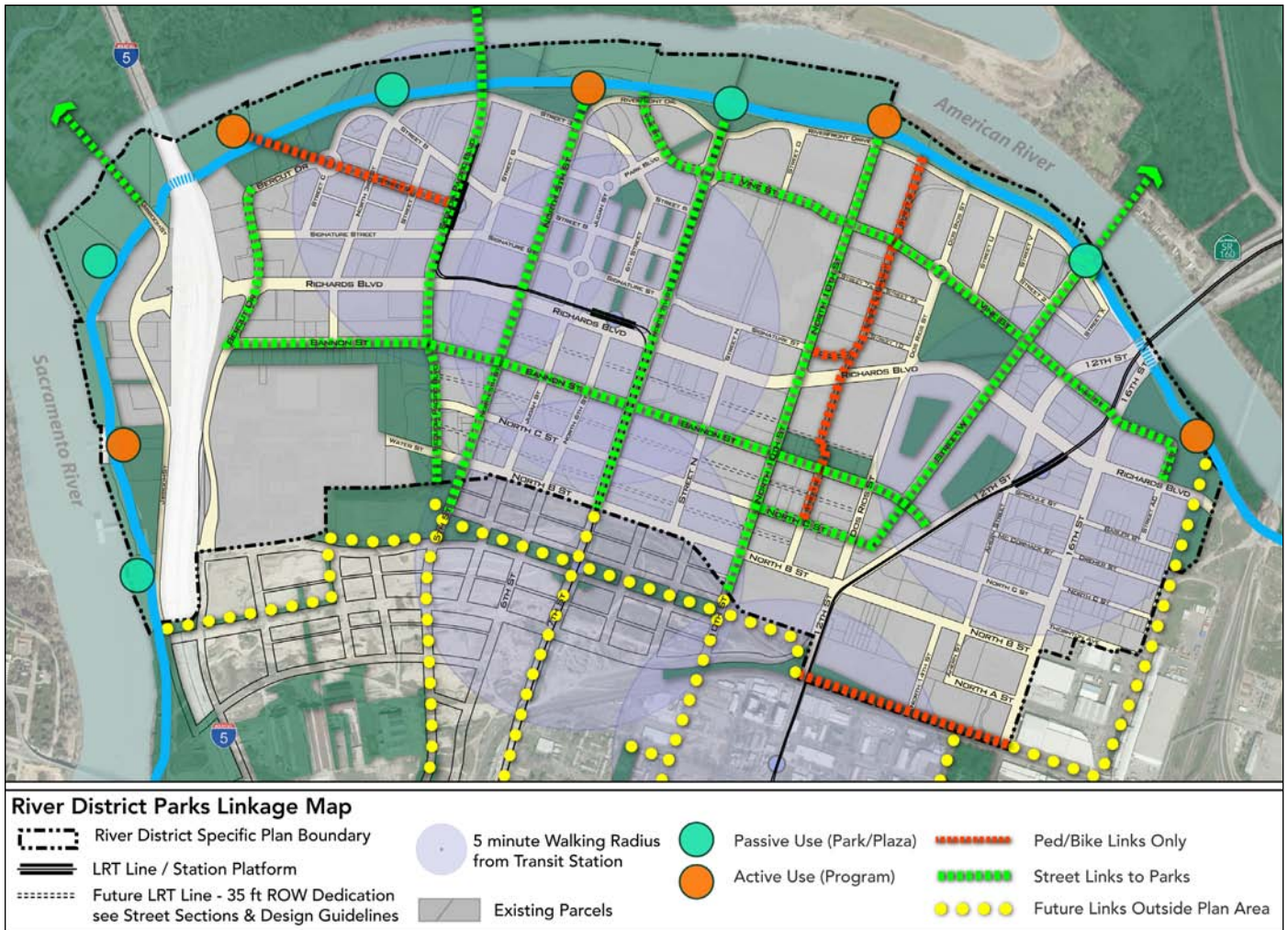


Figure 2.33. A variety of links to parks within the street grid and links from the street grid to the surrounding river edge parks with anticipated program uses. This diagram shows potential links which are not a part of the River District Specific Plan but which may be considered with other planning endeavors.

with excitement and a place to experience a sense of community.

Goal 4.9 Create visually appealing places

It is in the economic interest of the River District to invest in well designed and executed places that will provide a comfortable and enriching environment for people to live, work, and play.

The creation of visually appealing places relies on invest-

ments from both the private and public sectors to create urban environments which add value through the design of spaces and buildings, the provision of streetscape amenities, and the selection of durable materials that add contribute to the expression of the area and will endure over time.

The early investment in planning and execution of quality in the Public Realm will generate economic value for subsequent Private Realm investments.

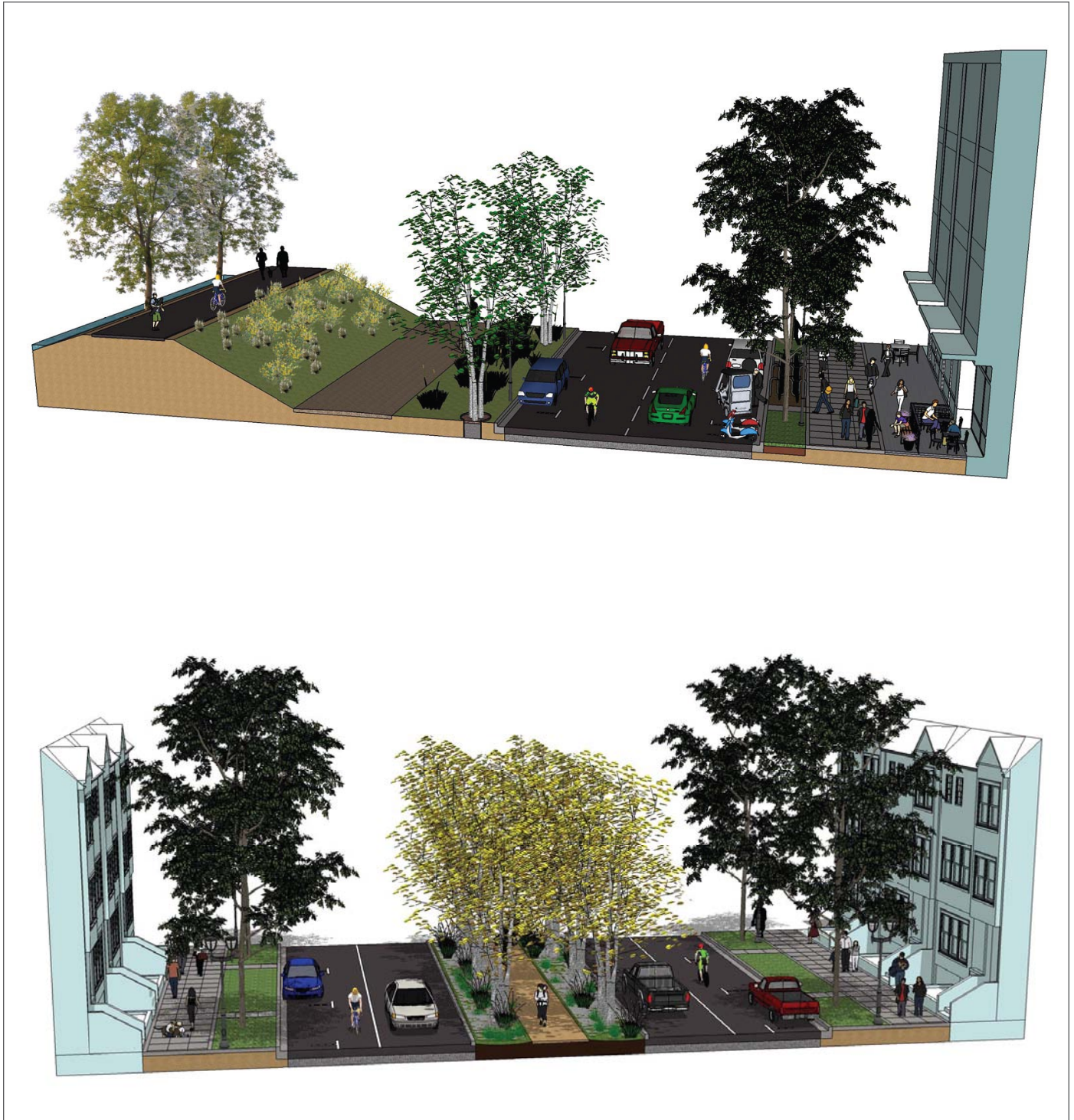


Figure 2.34. Street section examples that bring open space of the river into the street grid in the Twin Rivers Community which creates a public promenade for jogging and walking and bicycling which links the inner street grid to the American River (lower image) and along Riverfront Drive and the American River embankment (upper image).

C. Urban Character Areas

The urban character within the RDSP is intended to be varied and eclectic. For an area of over 700 acres, which is comparable in size to many west-coast downtowns, the expectation for a variety of areas which will evolve over time into distinct neighborhoods or commercial districts.

This chapter will highlight the existing character of seven identified areas within the River District and the unique

area of the south bank of the American River and its unique and special place in the overall planning of the River District as a whole.

How the pattern of urban redevelopment may evolve through the goals and vision of this plan is the focus of this section to begin a broad discussion of urban design vision that with time will evolve with future development and public investment. In the first section of Chapter 3, Public Realm, specific highlights for place-making opportunities are discussed for further inspiration to designers,

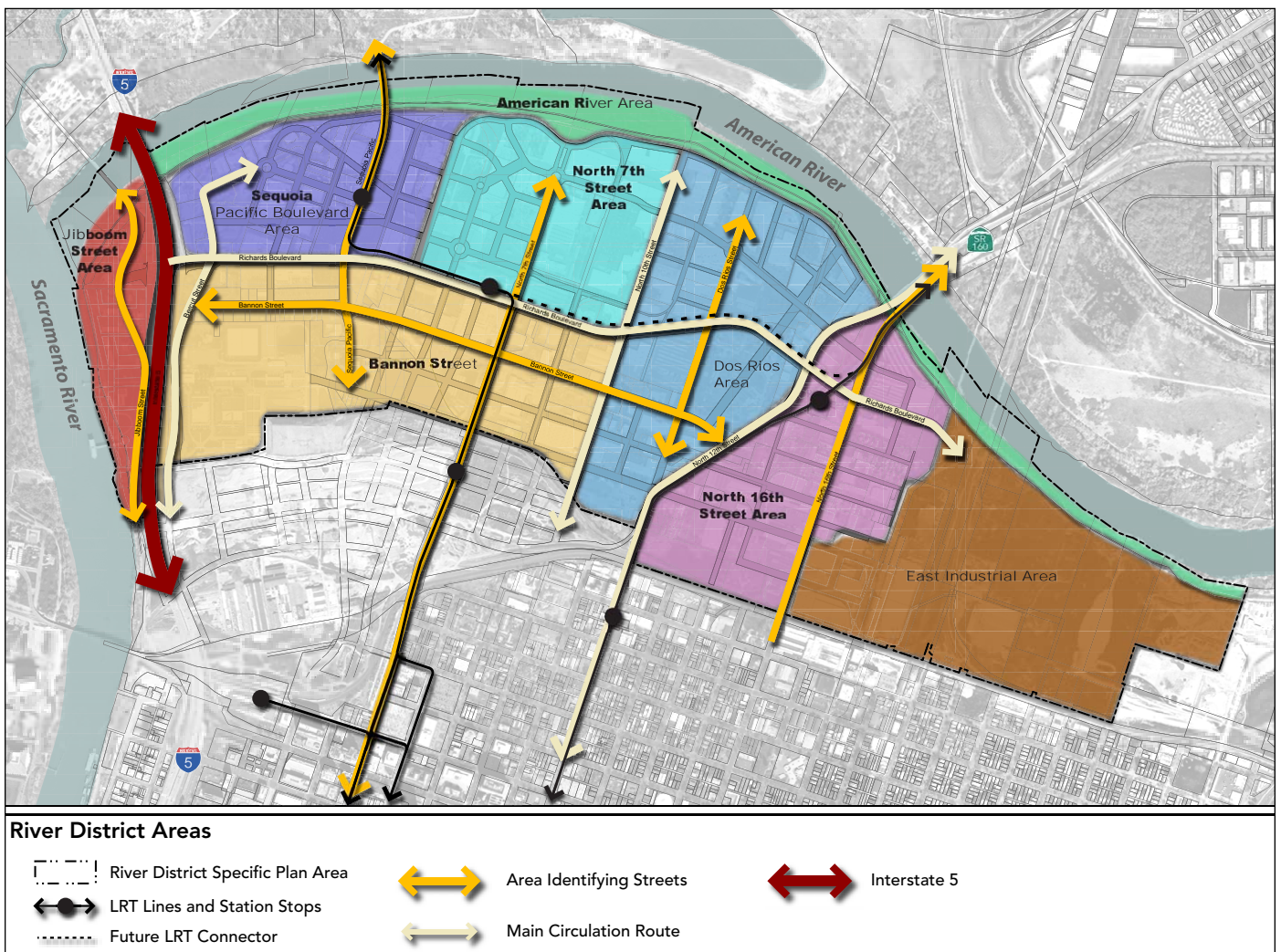


Figure 2.35. Map of identifiable Areas in the River District which may evolve unique urban character as development matures.

developers and the public-at-large.

The River District is foreseen to develop in a density pattern that requires modest highrise development. The desire for office is accommodated around the North 7th Street and Richards Boulevard corridors. Rather, the overall form is seen to be modest in height to support a diversity of uses and transit infrastructure in the range of 45 feet to 90 feet as the typical range. The Jibboom Street area does seek to capitalize on its location and encourage highrise hotel development at the edge of the Sacramento River with

spectacular views of the river and downtown. Blocks along North B Street are set for heights comparable to anticipated highrise residential in the Railyards East End District.

Height allowances in the remainder of the district have been set in respect to a variety of factors including existing context, relationship to transit stations and the American River Parkway.

For specific land-use regulatory criteria, consult the River District Specific Plan and Special Planning District (SPD).

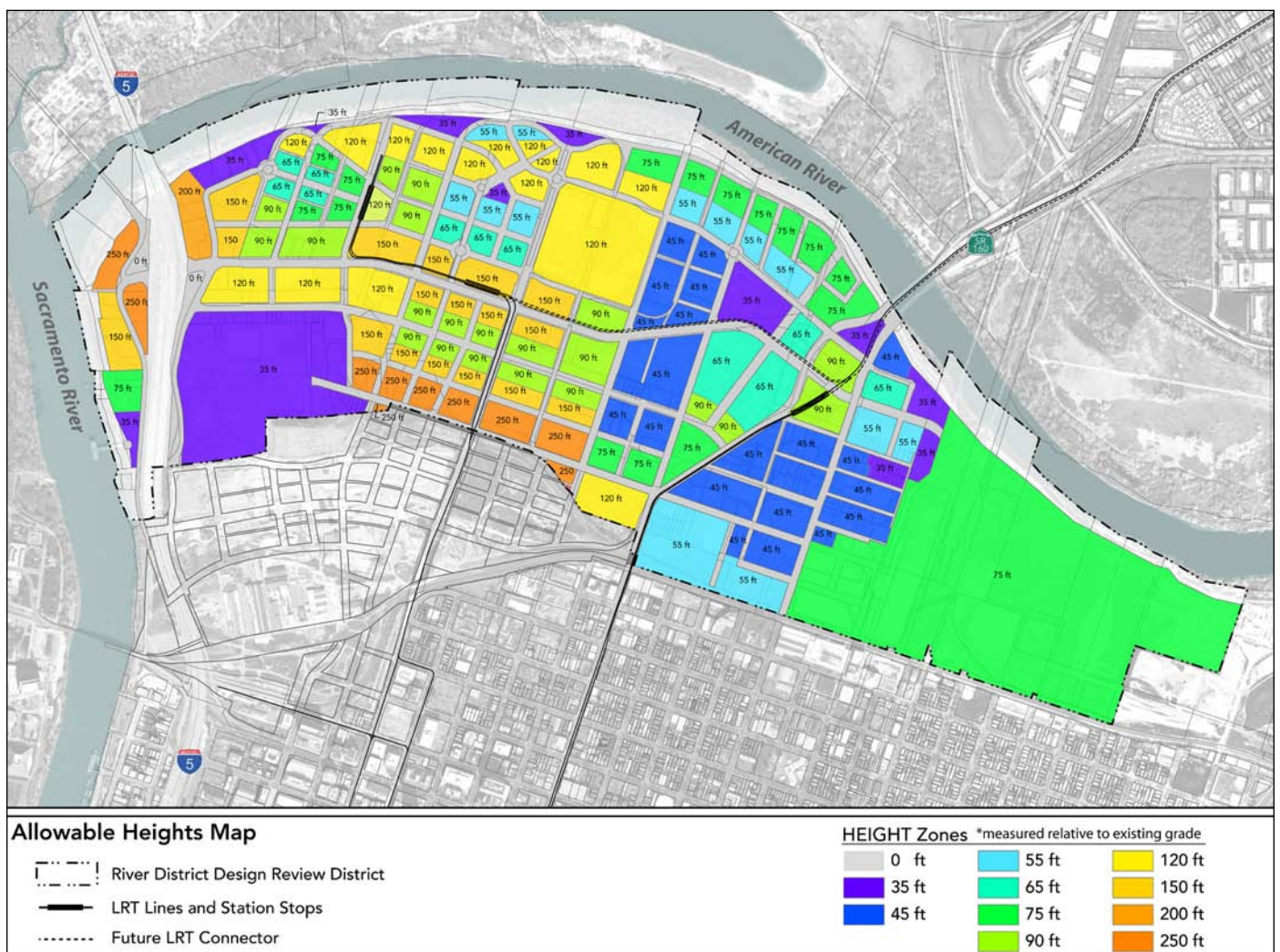


Figure 2.36. Map of allowable building height within the River District Design Guidelines Area and Specific Plan Area.

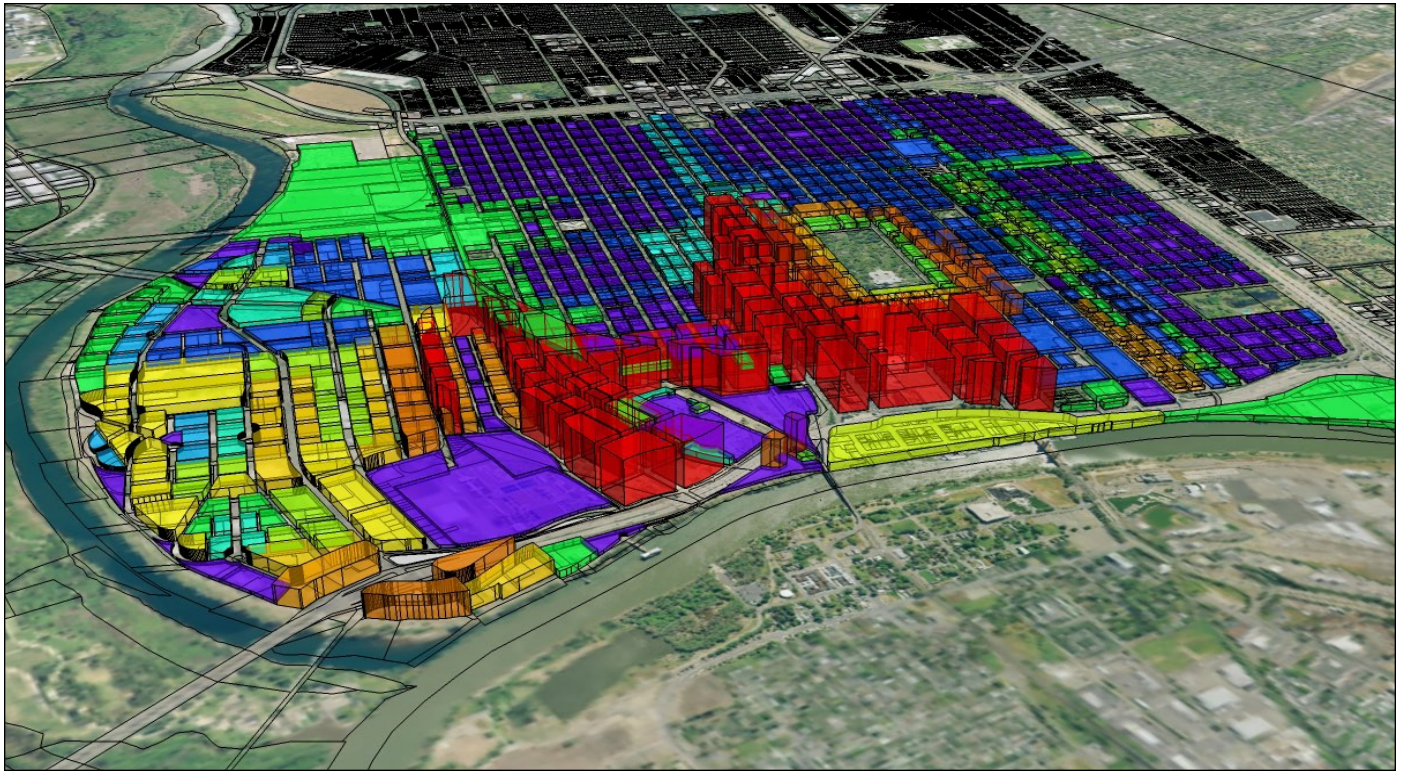


Figure 2.37. Three-dimensional view of the allowable heights in the Central City. The lowest allowable height, 35 feet (purple) to unlimited (red). The River District area (left side) exhibits a mid-height range between 90 feet to 150 feet that is unique in the Central City.

C.1 American River Area

Existing Character

The existing levee embankment in this area provides flood protection from high water events and supports a riparian habitat area along the southern bank of the lower portion of the American River. A paved bike trail on the levee crest, known as the Two Rivers Trail, begins at the entry to Tiscornia Park just west of Interstate 5 at the mouth of the American River, and extends eastward to eventually reach the proposed Sutter's Landing Park, and later, onto the H Street Bridge at the California State University Campus upriver. The Two Rivers Trail intersects with the Sacramento River Parkway Trail at the Jibboom Street Bridge (see the Jibboom Street Area section for further discussion of the Sacramento River Parkway).

The levee embankment on both the American and Sacramento Rivers is a critical piece of flood prevention infrastructure that shields the city but has also limited the ability for people to access the rivers. A large portion of this riverfront was constructed in existing development along the levee embankment turns away from the river with the exception of the vacant former Rusty Duck Restaurant elevated above the levee crest (See Figure 2.37). No designated pathways to the water exist and access to the bike trail is limited to specific trailheads from various streets in the district (Robert T. Matsui Park, Tscornia Park, termini of North 5th and North 10th Streets).

Pedestrian safety and connectivity are in need of improvement. The Interstate 5 bridge passing over the trail creates a perceptual barrier. Connectivity of the Two Rivers Trail to the east is also lacking, ending at the intersection with the Highway 160 bridge and resuming east of this span.

Any design intervention needs to conform to various governing agency regulations and standards.

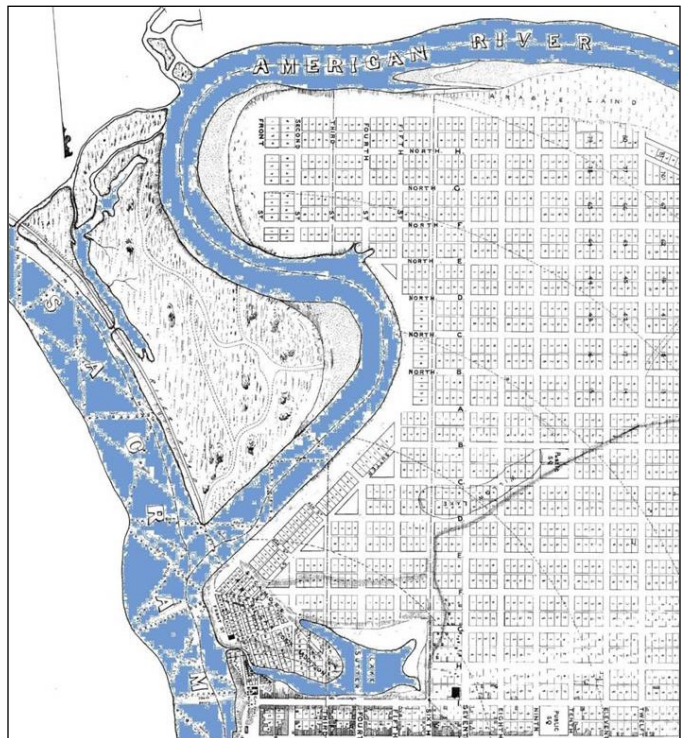
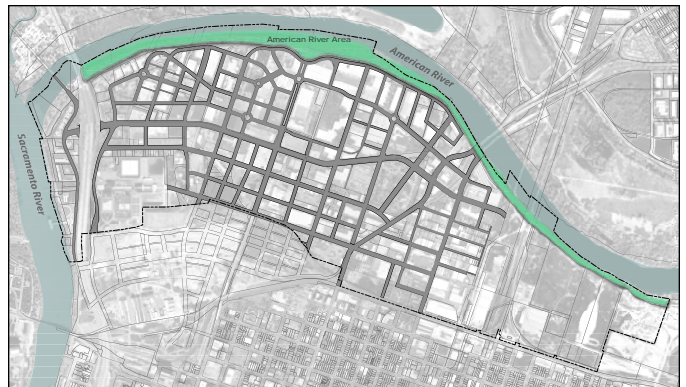


Figure 2.38. Diagram showing anticipated activity nodes along the Two Rivers Trail and the major city linkages to the rivers



Figure 2.39. This former restaurant is the only structure along the American river to take advantage of the views to the American River Parkway.

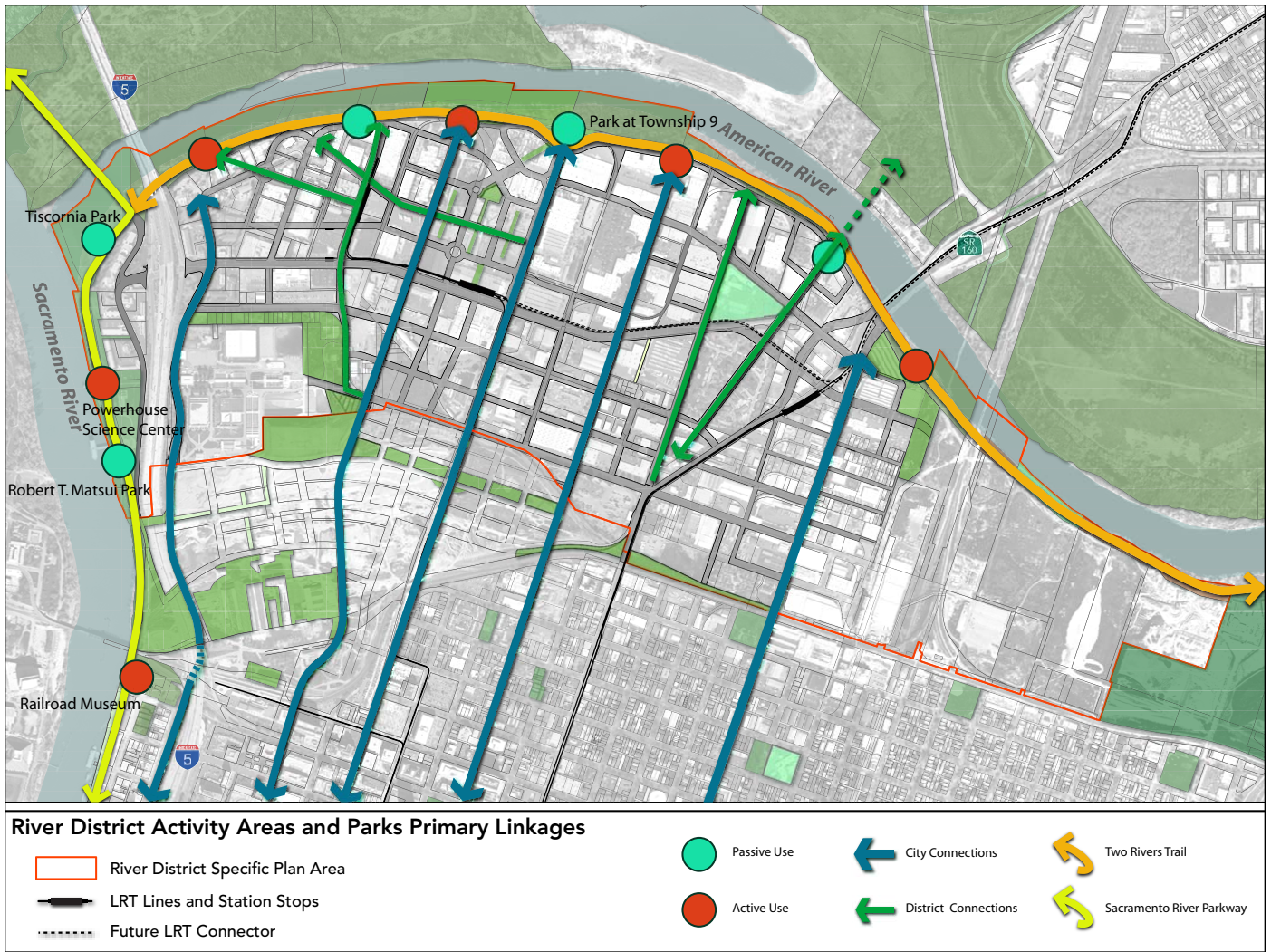


Figure 2.40. Diagram showing anticipated activity nodes along the Two River Trail and the major city linkages to the rivers

Vision for Area

A signature feature of the River District Specific Plan is the development of the Two Rivers Trail into a regionally recognized urban cycling and walking promenade which celebrates the two rivers with a variety of activity locations along the 2.7 mile Sacramento and American River frontage located in the River District Specific Plan Area. This crescent shaped promenade will be a significant amenity for the District and the City as it engages and promotes development and recreational opportunities along its length.

Vision for the Trail

Together, these two trails form the existing armature of what is envisioned as a regional riverfront recreation destination of parks and cultural program locations.

The RDSP envisions a series of passive and active destination activities, such as parks and destination uses, spaced apart within a five-minute walk from one another and coinciding with the terminus of major streets. Linkages between the inner street network and the promenade are a critical feature of this plan (refer to Figure 2.39 and Chapter 3 Public Realm-Streets).

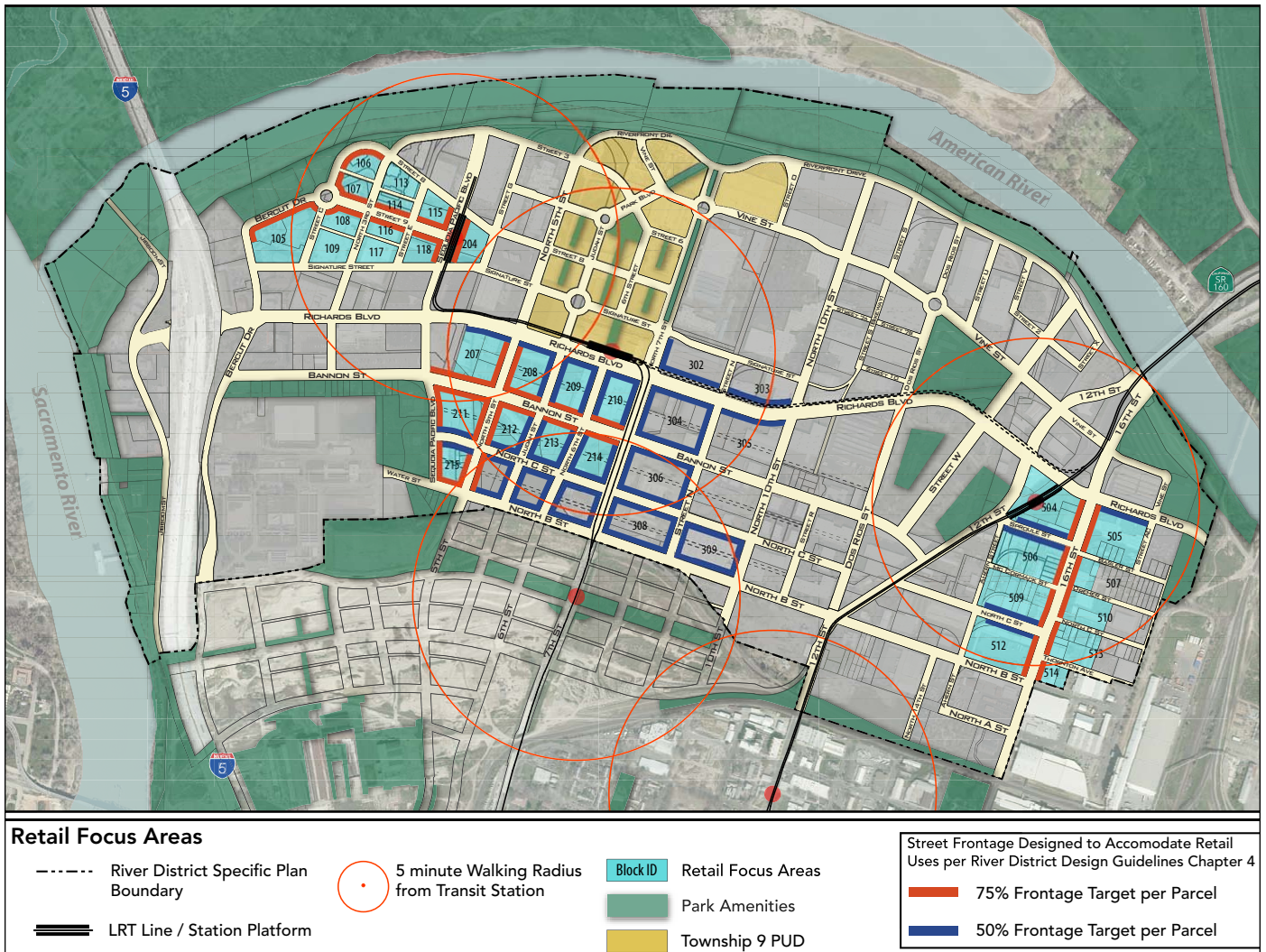


Figure 2.41. Diagram showing anticipated retail areas in the district and their relationship to amenities such as transit stations and parks.

As development occurs along Riverfront Drive and neighborhood retail centers around transit nodes support a permanent population base the Two Rivers Trail will benefit from these activity and amenity centers (see Figure 2.40). With the implementation of the Sequoia Station and redevelopment in the Sequoia Area, Two Rivers Trail will be a primary link between the Jibboom Street area and the radial street linkages to the Sequoia Area and its transit station. Quality improvements for the pedestrian experience under the freeway are important to increase public safety and activity through this area. The trail in this area can become a true riverfront walk with light standards,

seating and café kiosks necessary to establish a strong pedestrian promenade (See Figure 2.45). The Dos Rios Station will bring connectivity to the eastern end of the Trail. New trail connections outside the RDSP planning area can further complete a series of loop connections between interior parks and the Two Rivers Trail as well as connection goals outlined earlier in this Chapter for crossing railroad infrastructure.

New crossings planned for the American River provide an excellent opportunity to celebrate the goals of access to the river from north and south in a way that empha-



Figure 2.42. Views to the Sierra Mountains are often enjoyed under clear skies from the American River. (Luis Alvarado Photo)



Figure 2.43. Lightweight spaceframe structure provides access into the rain-forest jungle in southern Australia. The structure is supported from a single column support.

sizes pedestrian priorities in artful structures within the American River Parkway. Three crossings are contemplated: The Truxel Bridge, the Pedestrian Bridge identified in the American River Parkway Plan, and the future replacement of the Highway 160 Bridge. With the replacement of the existing Highway 160 bridge, provisions can be made to include a grade separated undercrossing for the Two Rivers Trail to maintain safe and uninterrupted east-west flow for pedestrians and cyclists. This facility may also extend bike lanes along a reconstructed bridge alignment.

Accessibility

Making the riverside of the American River levee accessible is an important design consideration when planning trails and pathways from the promenade to the banks of the river.

Pathways will be required to meet requirements under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will require review for impact to sensitive habitats along the American River Parkway.

In sensitive habitat areas, access must be carefully designed through well defined trails which lead to the river's edge while protecting the surrounding fauna. Opportunities for education with informational signage and observation areas could be one of the many opportunities to further



Figure 2.44. Artful bridges can give identity to a place or region while respecting the natural environment. The Living Bridge on the River Shannon, Ireland (above) and the Sundial Bridge in Redding, California illustrate how structure and light can be used to move beyond simple utilitarian infrastructure where the natural beauty of the surrounding should be complimented.

engage in the river’s history and ecology. elevated walkways may be implemented with very light connection to the ground, and minimal disruption to habitat allowing users to capture the scenic views to the Sierras (See Figure 2.40) and other distant landmarks not viewable from the ground within the city grid. Such structures can provide a unique vantage point above the ground and provide views through the tree canopies even during flooded conditions (See Figure 2.41).

Program Uses for the Two Rivers Trail

The transformation of the Two Rivers Trail to a linear esplanade of civic and cultural amenities will be dependent upon the type of amenities which are identified and implemented along the 2.7 mile crescent within the RDSP boundary and future eastward expansion. The concept foresees a mixture of passive uses, such as parks and plazas integrated with active uses such as museums, nature centers or other cultural activity uses.

Adaptive Reuse

The existing historic water intake structure in the Sacramento River should be reused perhaps as a pedestrian access viewing point of the river, and remain as a cultural education resource.

Building Heights

Building structures are not permitted in this area under the RDSP.

Massing and Scale

Any structures in areas adjacent to the American River Area will be respectful of view lines and designed to minimize the impacts to views and shadow casting to the immediate surroundings onto this area.

Transitions

Not applicable.

Step backs

Not applicable.



Figure 2.445 Two Rivers Trail as it passes under Interstate 5. Tiscornia park is viewable beyond. This area can benefit from attractive active program uses.



Figure 2.46. Pedestrian undercrossings can be enhanced with lighting and texture as well as activated program uses sited adjacent to the passageways to populate with users to improve security.



Figure 2.47. A variety of human-powered modes of travel can be accommodated on and along the Two Rivers Trail. Clockwise from top left: Bicycles and skateboards; peddle cart rentals; rollerblading and strollers; and servicing streets connecting to the Two River Trail pedestrian network, pedi-cabs for Riverfront Drive and other streets leading to the trailheads within the district.



Figure 2.48. Aerial conceptual illustration of the future buildout of the River District Specific Plan Area as seen from the north bank of the American River. Note: the Railyards development is not shown in this illustration.

Landmarks and Vistas

The park at 7th Street and Riverfront Drive has been identified as a site for a structure which may serve as a terminal viewline element.

The development of the Two Rivers Trail relies on passive and active destination nodes spaced at 5 to 10 minute walking intervals and which correspond with the terminus of streets to the levee. As Figure 2.47 illustrates, these locations should be reserved for a viewshed to be clearly identifiable from both the levee and street vantages (See also Figure 2.28).

C.2 Jibboom Area

Existing Conditions

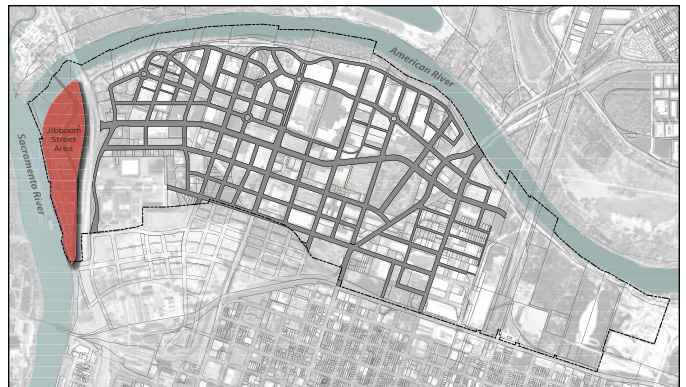
The Jibboom Street Area consists of typical highway commercial uses such as low-rise motels, gas stations and restaurants, all surrounded by parking lots. Many of the existing motels are approaching 40 years and are primarily open balcony type, a configuration that is less desirable by most contemporary hotel standards. Only the upper floors of existing motels enjoy the possibility of river views (See Figure 2.48).

The streetscape responds to the automobile, with only limited pedestrian facilities provided with minimal sidewalks and bicycle lanes. This area has a very weak pedestrian connection to sections of the District east of the Interstate 5 overpass (See Figure 2.49) and is only connected to Old Sacramento via the Two Rivers Bike Trail.

Park facilities along the Sacramento River are great attractions. At the southern end of the Jibboom Street Area, the water intake facility at Robert T. Matsui Waterfront Park is a very popular destination for those seeking a spectacular view of the river or to cool in the summer heat with the interactive fountain at the entry plaza. At the confluence of the Sacramento and American Rivers, Tiscornia Park



Figure 2.49. 1970's era motels along the Sacramento River do not take full advantage of the river views or the opportunity to create a riverfront hospitality destination. (Luis Alvarado Photo)



is a regional destination for boaters, swimmers, and sun bathers particularly in the hot summer months (See Figure 2.49).

The westerly bend in the Sacramento River provides the eastern riverfront with the ability to view the entire length of the Sacramento River to Miller Park along with views of Downtown and the growing West Sacramento waterfront. [Need photo]

Vision for Area

The Jibboom Street Area will serve as the northern end of a riverfront esplanade along the Sacramento River providing a transition to the more passive beauty of the American River Parkway.



Figure 2.50. Freeway access at Interstate 5 and the lack of pedestrian facilities design results in the isolation of the Jibboom Street Area from the remainder of the district.



Figure 2.51. Tiscornia Park at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers is a favorite destination for water activities.



Figure 2.53. New hotels fronting the river should maximize the separation of towers and provide public access to the river as per policies in the River District Specific Plan and Chapter 4 of these design guidelines.

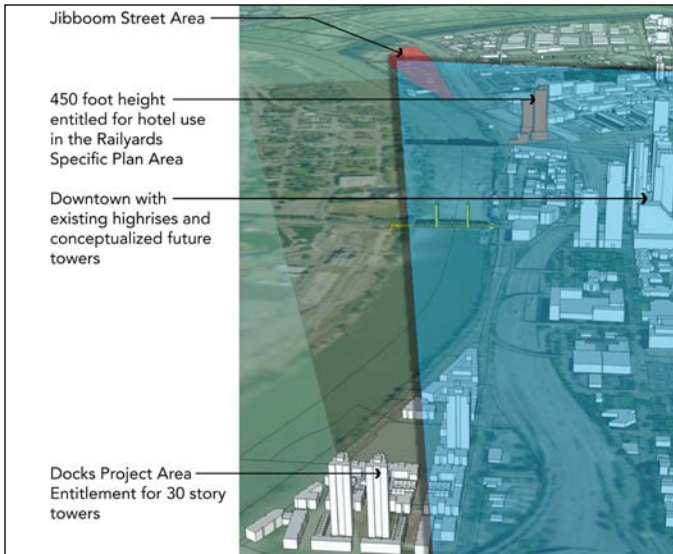


Figure 2.52. Viewshed from Jibboom Street District overlaid in blue illustrates the view down the Sacramento River and the Downtown Business District.

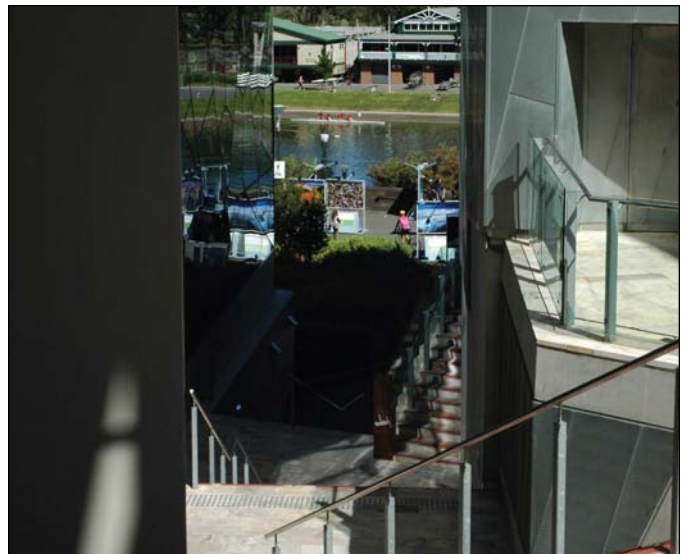


Figure 2.54. Pedestrian easement to waterfronts are necessary in connecting people to the rivers from the public street.

The Sacramento Promenade will traverse the river's eastern bank reaching down to the Docks project area and eventually to Miller Park, below the Interstate 80/State Highway 50 Pioneer Bridge. This riverfront linkage will connect various projects planned for the eastern bank of the Sacramento River. As envisioned in the River Front Master Plan, new connections will be made to the West Sacramento Waterfront. With improved access opportunities in the development of the Railyards and the conversion of the old railroad overcrossing at R Street to a pedestrian and bikeway, many more opportunities to access the

waterfront from urban focal points will allow mobility from the southern Central City to the Jibboom Street Area. The area will build upon its current hotel establishments and redevelop with greater attention and capitalization of its prominent siting for exceptional views and recreational opportunities.

High rise hotel and residential development proposals have been approved south of the District that will set the stage for more intensive development along the northern end promenade. The Docks project, at the southwestern cor-



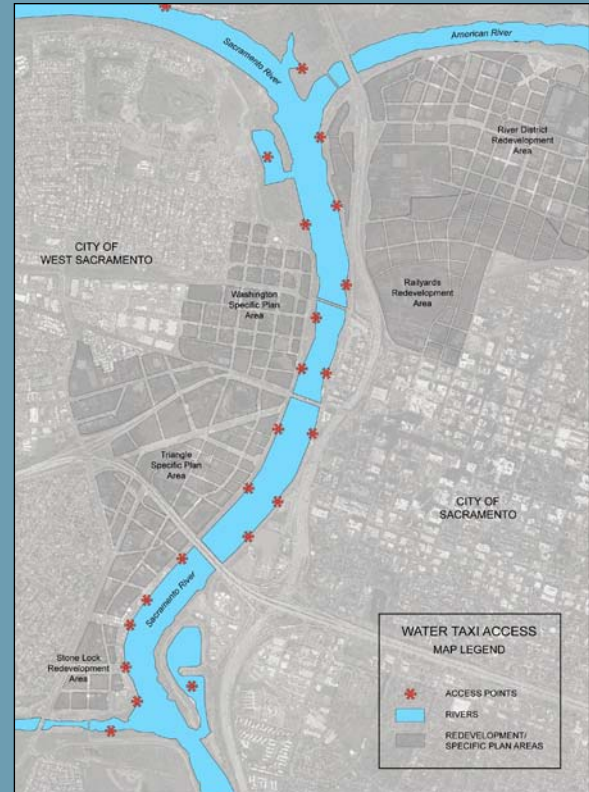
Figure 2.55. An particular example of an opening views. A hotel tower punctured by open slot which retains more open vista and makes a dramatic statement on the skyline and expression of restaurant with dramatic views...

ner of the Central City has approval for 30-story residential towers. The Railyards project will include three towers with a 450 foot hotel just north of the rail line and west of the Central Shops.

A major anchor for the District and a regional destination and resource for Northern California, the Powerhouse Science Center at the site of the former Pacific Gas & Electric Power Plant building will be a premier science and space center for children and families. This major regional destination, will be a complement to the world-renowned State Railroad Museum in Old Sacramento, and the Museum's upcoming expansion into the Shops Buildings in the Railyards. It is the first cultural amenity within the River District Specific Plan area, and north of Old Sacramento and the State Railroad Museum, to proceed with design and funding.

These three program elements present tremendous opportunities for interlinkages surrounding education and technology that will in turn energize the riverfront. In addition,

Vision Concept - River Taxi Commute



Water Taxi

Although Sacramento has invested in water taxi service in earlier years without strong success, future development along both banks of the Sacramento River should warrant a renewed investment in water-borne transportation. The Jibboom Street Area has the opportunity to benefit greatly from this form of transportation from a locational perspective, as well as a potential generator of organization of the waterfront.



the newly expanded Crocker Art Museum, two blocks east of the Promenade, will draw tourists from the Bay Area and beyond who can arrive by train or by light rail at the Sacramento Intermodal facility, just four blocks from the Riverfront Promenade.

Building on these regional and nationally significant institutions and the scenic beauty of the area, the RDSP envisions the Jibboom Street Area to expand the existing motel and restaurant uses to a higher intensity. Hotels rising from 15 to 25 stories with restaurants and night clubs will offer dramatic panoramic views of downtown, the two rivers, and the waterfront development planned for the Sacramento River's western shore.

The Jibboom Street Area is also the hinge point for access

to the American River Parkway at Tiscornia Park and its cross river linkage to Discovery Park and the Garden Highway. Tiscornia Park is a popular recreational destination for swimmers and water sport enthusiasts, who would benefit from additional facilities for seasonal water activities.

Tourists from the area hotels will enjoy the amenities of trails and other mobility assets, such as pedi-cabs, bicycle rentals, and a potential for water transportation on the river (see sidebar: Vision Concept River Taxi Commute).

Capacity improvements to Interstate 5 at the Richards Boulevard interchange will provide easy access into the area for regional visitors and tourists with shuttle connections to the airport. For local, recreational and commuter

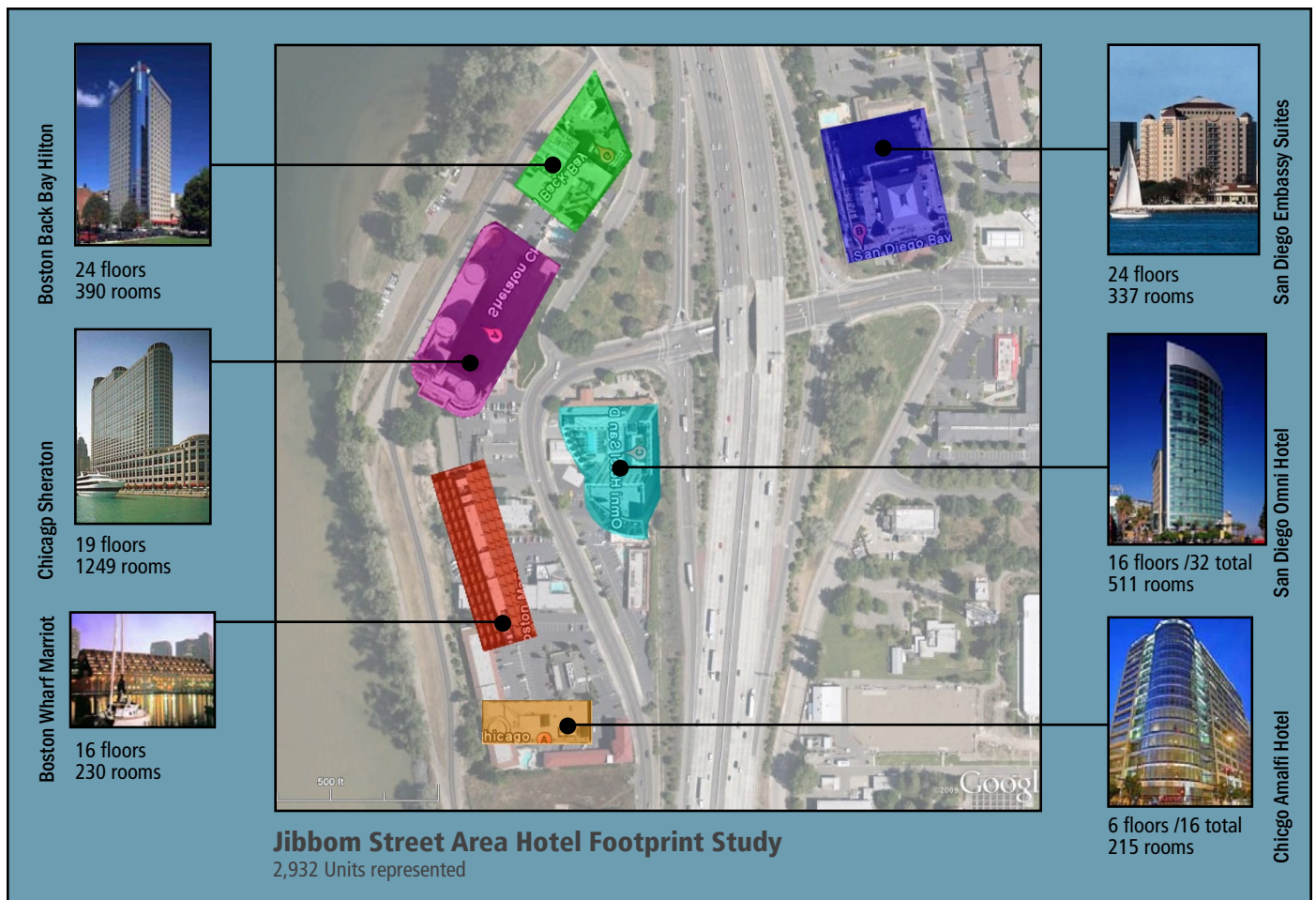




Figure 2.56. Conceptual rendering of the Powerhouse Science Center, at the north edge of Robert T. Matsui Park, will be the first 'Active Use' program element on the River District's planned activity nodes along the Sacramento River Parkway and the Two Rivers Trail. (Dreyfuss & Blackford Architects)



Figure 2.57. An example of civic infrastructure in the grand tradition, the City of Sacramento Water Intake Facility provides exceptional public viewing of the Sacramento River along its perimeter balcony.



Figure 2.58. An example of civic infrastructure in the grand tradition, the City of Sacramento Water Intake Facility provides exceptional public viewing of the Sacramento River along its perimeter balcony.

connections, the Two-Rivers Trail surrounds the District and provides direct bicycle access from Downtown and eastward under the Interstate 5 bridge to follow the levee and the trail along the scenic watershed of the American River.

With high rise hotel development that will require extensive parking, careful design can place parking at grade with the levee elevation coinciding with public walks and plazas. The planning of this infrastructure to create interesting public stair and ramp ways between developments can serve as "river alleyways" connecting Jibboom Street to the levee (Goal 2.2 and See Chapter 4).

Adaptive Reuse

The former Pacific Gas & Electric Powerstation, currently proposed for the Powerhouse Science Center, is the pre-dominant structure in the area that warrants adaptive reuse.

Building Heights

Building heights in the Jibboom Street Area and parcels east of Interstate 5 to Bercut Street may be developed for high rise towers. Building heights are allowed to 250 ft in this area with public benefit provisions to allow additional height (See Figure 2.35 for Allowable Height Map).

Massing and Scale

Heights and form of towers in the Jibboom Street area and east of Interstate 5 shall be of slender proportion to preserve views through to surrounding areas See Chapter 4, section D.

Structures in this area shall be respectful of view lines and designed to minimize the impacts to views and shadows to immediate surroundings while allowing for penetration of Delta breezes along the river.

Transitions

Highrise towers along the levee trail area will step down to a maximum of 4 story podium along the levee embankment.

Street Frontages

Hotels and other buildings in this area should be designed to maximize the potential for good streetscape principals and provide visually interesting program uses, wall treatments and active storefront entrances to enhance the pedestrian character of the district. Care shall be taken to place hotel valet and drop-off areas away from the main public street (See Figure 2.52 and Chapter 4). Curb cuts shall be minimized.

Set Backs and Step Backs

Buildings located between the levee trail and the public way (Jibboom Street) shall provide Setbacks on a minimum of one side yard to provide a public access from the public street to the levee trail. (See Chapter 4).

Buildings towers above the fourth floor shall be spaced a minimum of 200 ft apart to allow view corridors and privacy for hotel and resident uses (See Chapter 4).

Landmarks and Vistas

Highrise hotels in this area should locate towers to maximize views to the rivers and also be of high architectural quality to serve as gateway markers to the Central City and landmarks of distinction for this area of the city (See

Figures 2.28 and 2.51). Public observation areas, capturing scenic views are encouraged in this area.



Figure 2.59. The Sacramento River Parkway Promenade south of Old Sacramento. This promenade is to be extended further south to the Docks Area.



Figure 2.60. The Sacramento River Parkway at Tiscornia Park. The hotel behind the redwoods fails to connect to the river. The extension of the Promenade along this area will connect future hotels to the waterfront.



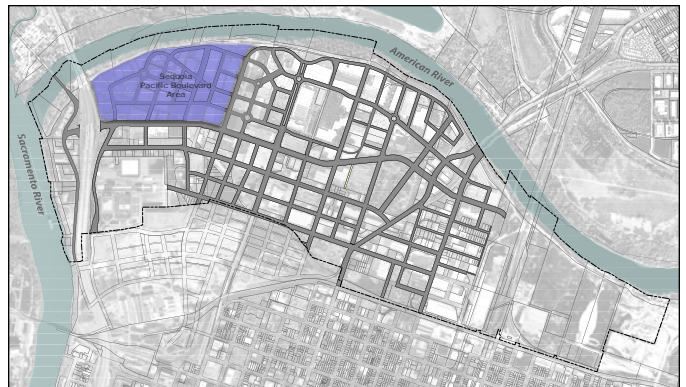
Figure 2.61. Jibboom Street Bridge is a gateway to boaters and currently the only bike connector to Discovery Park and Natomas at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers. (Luis Alvarado Photo)

C.3 Sequoia Pacific Boulevard Area

Existing Character

The Sequoia Area comprises approximately 75 acres and is populated with many single-story tilt-up concrete warehouses and commercial buildings. The existing circulation pattern consists of a large loop pattern formed by Bercut Street/ North 3rd Street and Sequoia Pacific which terminates in a cul-de-sac. Large warehouse uses are situated between Sequoia Street and 5th Street and many commercial office uses are housed in single-story buildings with surrounding parking lots. Only a few buildings address the street with direct access from the public way.

With the exception of the former Rusty Duck Restaurant facility on Bercut Street, the existing buildings have no orientation to the river.



The buildings facing Richards Boulevard set back from the street with parking in the frontage area and large warehouse facilities such as the Fed-Ex distribution center have loading facility access from the Boulevard. Regional Transit's Green Line will extend west from Township 9 and take frontage area along these properties up to Sequoia Pacific Boulevard, where the line will turn north along its street alignment.

Street circulation in this area is minimal. The inner loop circulation pattern of Bercut street makes future connections to a continuous street grid pattern difficult.

Vision for Area

The vision for the Sequoia Area is for a large scale redevelopment of the existing streets and infrastructure that will



Figure 2.62. Typical single-story tiltup concrete warehouse and office buildings that dominate the Sequoia Area.



Figure 2.63. View from the levee shows the typical site planning in the area with parking and storage areas adjacent to levees and buildings facing inward.



Figure 2.64. Typical street frontage along Richards Boulevard and buildings set back from street with front parking.

evolve into a transit oriented area centered around a new light rail station with pedestrian linkage to the riverfront. This area will be a gateway for travelers on the future connection to the airport.

Connecting this area to the larger street network requires a comprehensive replanning of the area as set forth in the River District Specific Plan. As this area exists in a corner of the District, the street pattern needs to provide strong connectivity to surrounding development, and ensure the street network does not create dead-end conditions at the riverfront.

The Sequoia Area will become the urban foyer of the Central City for those connecting to Natomas and the Airport when riding the Green Line from the Intermodal Station as well as Natomas residents crossing the American River by foot, bicycle, bus or automobile. The character of the Sequoia Area will be evident through this gateway neighborhood with priority given to pedestrian friendly street design and a pedestrian Promenade serving as the spine of the neighborhood and connecting the transit station axially to the riverfront and Parkway. It's street pattern will flow to Township 9, resulting in a 75 acre mixed-use, housing intensive neighborhood.

Adaptive Reuse

No buildings have been identified for adaptive reuse in this area under the RDSP plan.

Building Heights

The heights in the Sequoia Area vary in response to a variety of urban circumstances. Heights along the American River will transition from high-rise along Interstate 5 to mid-rise heights at North 5th Street. The later in keeping with the heights established by Township 9. The overarching urban design intent is to create a pedestrian scaled area formed around a central axial spine connecting the future transit station and a future gateway to the riverfront and future park. A diverse mix of uses is intended for this area for dwelling and tourism with small boutique hotels and restaurants. The character of the area should

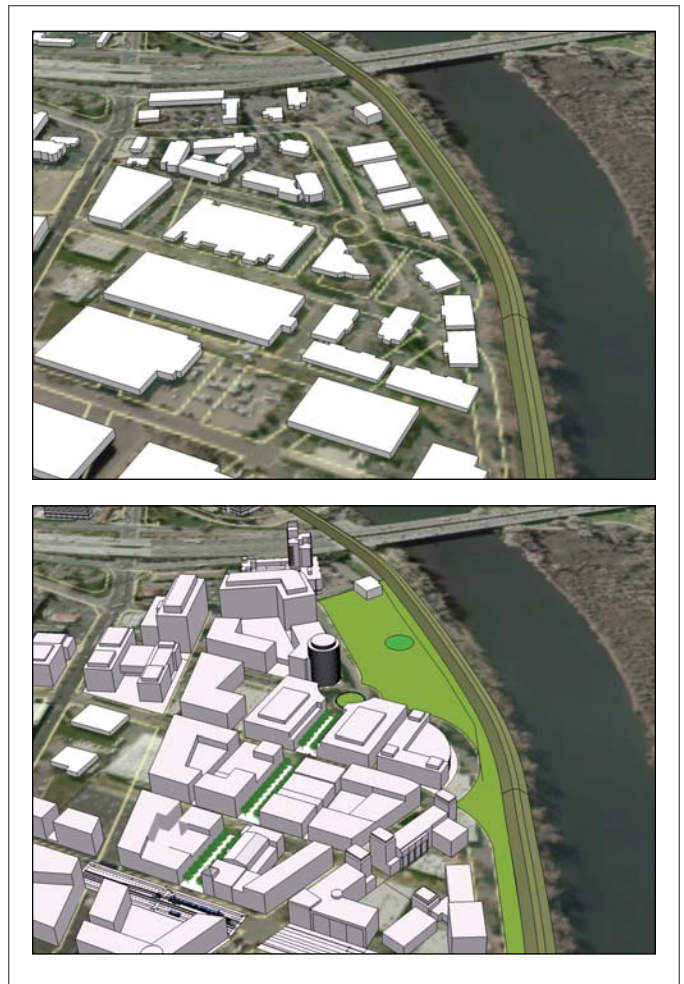


Figure 2.65. Aerial view of massing model showing existing building mass and conceptual development massing of the Sequoia Station Area. The axial pedestrian street connecting the transit station to the park adjoining the Two Rivers Trail is delineated with the line of trees.



Figure 2.66. The transit-centered village of Orenco Station, Oregon exemplifies that scale and street character anticipated for the Sequoia Pacific Boulevard Area.

be supported with numerous neighborhood-focused amenities including grocers, cleaners, and other family oriented service retail. With these uses, the streetscapes should be developed in an intimate and inviting manner, with public seating and small outdoor courts and gardens within private developments and the adjoining public way.

Set Backs and Stepbacks

The Sequoia Area is envisioned as an urban village with buildings having ground floor retail uses with residential uses on the second floor and above. Buildings in the central core of the areas should meet the front property line, except where an entry court or corner entry is desired to be inset.

Buildings along 5th Street and Street 3, facing the Parkway, should be setback 10 feet from the front property line and be well landscaped and ample walkways for pedestrians (See Street Sections in Chapter 3). Entry gateway elements, stairs and raised porch elements may project into this setback area.

Towers in the 200 foot allowable height zone should be spaced a minimum of 80 ft apart to allow for privacy for hotel and resident uses (See Chapter 4).

Landmarks and Vistas

Programmatic river element: Water events and other Sacramento/lower American River events [elaborate]



Figure 2.67. Church Street, Burlington, Vermont is a successful pedestrian street with strong ground floor retail uses supported by a large resident population.



Figure 2.68. Illustration of the pedestrian street as it terminates to Sequoia Pacific Station Plaza.

Massing and Scale

See Chapter 4 - Private Realm Guidelines

Transitions

The area is bordered on two sides by intensive circulation arteries, Interstate 5 to the west, and Richards Boulevard on the south. Building heights have been set high along these two edges to shield the inner, lower-scaled neighborhood from noise. The heart of the Sequoia Area is the pedestrian spine terminating at the transit station plaza and the park leading to the Two Rivers Trail, where building heights are set at four to five stories, creating a pleasant pedestrian scale streetwall and allowing higher transition set back from the edge.



Figure 2.69. Sequoia Pacific Station Plaza and pedestrian street, aerial view.



Figure 2.70. Cady's Alley, Georgetown, D.C. exemplifies scale and mixture of uses desired in Sequoia Pacific neighborhood alleys. Photo credit: Citta-Vita



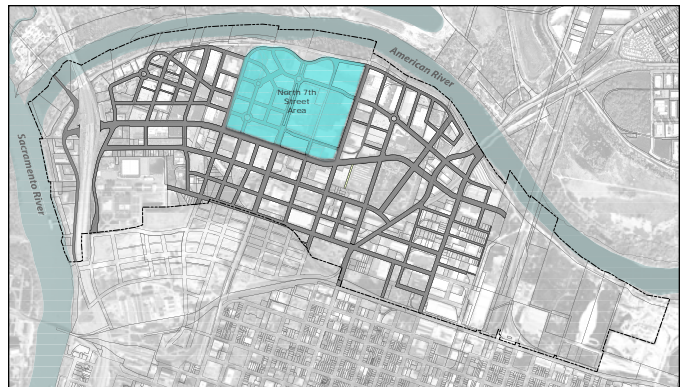
Figure 2.71. Three urban grocery store examples which illustrating mixed use integration and urban standalone markets which engage the streetscape. Top to Bottom: Provigo, Quebec, Canada; Safeway, Seattle, WA; Whole Foods, San Francisco, CA

C.4 North 7th Street Area

Existing Character

The North 7th Street Area was the historic cannery center built with predominately large open warehouses that are currently under transition. The old Richards-Bercut cannery site, west of 7th Street has begun transformation under approved plans for Township 9 development as a mixed-use residential neighborhood with pedestrian prioritized streets and plazas. Continental Plaza is the new home for the California Highway Patrol, and this existing single story complex has been renovated to provide a stronger street presence along 7th Street. The Township 9 Light Rail Station will incorporate elements from the old cannery into the station design and will draw on the brick structures of the historic buildings.

Development plans are underway for other significant projects in the area, including Phase IV of Continental Plaza, a mid-rise office project, and the new California State Lottery Headquarters which has risen on the south edge of Vine Street, filling a large site from Richards Blvd north to Vine Street with frontage along North 10th Street. Continental Plaza and the State Lottery preclude local street throughways at this time.



Vision for Area

The urban design vision for this area has largely been set in the approved plans for Township 9. These plans follow the River District Specific Plan Principles and Goals for a walkable neighborhood with strong access to the American River Parkway. Township 9 seeks active uses and transparency at the street level which will characterize the streetscape for the 7th Street area, including frontages along Richards Boulevard and at the intersection of 7th and Richards Boulevard (see UD Goal 1.5).

Adaptive Reuse

Township 9 has razed the former cannery site, utilizing some structures and components for the light rail station



Figure 2.72. The former Continental Canning Company complex is now home to the California Highway Patrol. A recent renovation utilizes masonry and cementitious materials in a contemporary blend with the existing building.



Figure 2.73. The new State Lottery Headquarters at North 10th Street and Vine Streets is the first expressive building form in the District and is the first high rise structure.

which will convey a sense of the site’s history in this public gateway.

Building Heights

Heights in this area have, in large part, been determined by the approval of Township 9, and are set in relationship to the American River Parkway. Township 9 height parameters allow building heights above four stories up to twelve stories when more than 400 from the water line of the river. This has been determined to be the mid-point of building heights along the American River. Township 9 allows heights along Richards Boulevard to 150 feet to accommodate office development (See height diagram Figure 2.35).

Massing and Scale

See Chapter 4 - Private Realm Guidelines

Transitions

See Chapter 4 - Private Realm Guidelines

Stepbacks

See Chapter 4 - Private Realm Guidelines

Landmarks and Vistas

The park located at the terminus of North 7th Street with Riverfront Drive provides a rare opportunity for landmark terminus in the Central City grid and should receive careful attention in its design. The plan of Township 9 has been conceived to celebrate terminal views within its street grid.



Figure 2.75. Township 9 site plan (Carter-Burgess).



Figure 2.74. Artist rendering of North 7th Street along Township 9 street fronts. (Carter-Burgess)



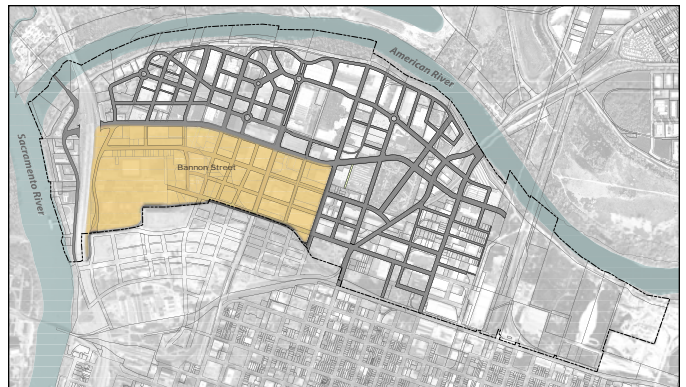
Figure 2.76. Street view showing residential buildings surrounding a park (Carter-Burgess).

C.5 Bannon Street Area

Existing Character

The Bannon Street Area is largely comprised of scattered large warehouses and under-utilized vacant parcels. The State of California Printing Plant occupies a large segment on the southwest corner of Richards Boulevard and North 7th Street and the City of Sacramento has a large land holding with the tallest building in the area at 3-stories.

The city's water treatment facility in the southwest corner of the Area will remain as the primary water facility for Central City. This Area holds some significant early 20th century concrete and masonry buildings which provide beautiful axial views from North B Street and the rivers.



The Bannon Street Area, at North B Street, is the juncture of River District with the northern edge of the Railyards Plan Area known as the East End. The East End is planned for high density residential without limitations to height. This residential neighborhood is organized around a lin-



Figure 2.77. The Beaux-Arts inspired buildings of the Water Intake Facility.



Figure 2.79. The Sacramento Theatrical Company building at Richards Boulevard and 10th Street is an impressive long span curved-truss building.



Figure 2.78. Low-rise office buildings recently added to the area.



Figure 2.80. Typical scale of motel buildings in the Bannon Street Area.

ear series of neighborhood park blocks which have a western terminus at Vista Park, a 10-acre park elevated 30 feet above the surrounding ground plane.

Vision for Area

The Bannon Street Area is the primary grid connector from Downtown into the River District. It is in this area that the continuity of the 1873 street grid is most realized together with the adjacent street pattern in the Railyards East End residential area. The area will serve as a north-south connector to Richards Boulevard with six new through streets to be added abreast of North 7th Street. In the east-west direction, Bannon Street, North C Street, and North B Street all connect to a new 10 acre park in the River District Specific Plan. With the Railyards Vista Park, a combined 20-acres of park will surround the City's Water Intake Facility at the western edge of the Bannon Street Area and be a significant public amenity for the areas mix of office and residential uses.

Pedestrian Network

While Richards Boulevard is a major east-west connector, Bannon Street is envisioned as a local street and is anticipated to be the main east-west pedestrian street connection to the new park. Bannon Street is viewed as a principal retail street in this Area, providing an attractive streetscape for small shops and restaurant cafes with sidewalk dining.

The grid network of streets aligned north-south are of smaller rights-of-way (69 feet wide) allowing two lanes of traffic with parallel parking. These streets will be more intimate in scale and will facilitate the flow of pedestrian traffic to Bannon Street.

Alleys

The Specific Plan calls for mid-block service alleys in the grid of blocks in this area and also for a pedestrian network with active uses fronting those alleys. Activated alleys are to be part of the new private development and therefore building designs shall take care to include alley fronted uses in the architectural program to develop a



Figure 2.81. The new 10 acre area in the RDSP dedicated to park will connect to Vista Park in the Railyards, creating an amenity for surrounding development.



Figure 2.82. Two views of Washington Square Park in San Francisco's North Beach District illustrate the flexibility and diversity of urban park uses.



Figure 2.83. Commercial Alleys which have introduced new residential and small commercial uses are encouraged in the Bannon Street Area.



Figure 2.86. VEER Lofts, Seattle, WA is an example of scale, massing and materials, which would integrate well into the eastern end of Bannon Street Area where light-industrial uses may be retained.



Figure 2.84. Residential uses which back onto alleys can mediate the utilitarian purpose and enhance security with landscaping and strong visual connection to the alley.



Figure 2.85. Mixtures of uses within Bannon Street Area blocks are encouraged to include neighborhood supportive amenities such as grocery stores. This example integrates the urban grocery shamelessly into the building and provides strong ground floor activation with windows along the entire facade.



Figure 2.87. Mid rise residential which delineates a strong base and streetwall with would be well integrated into a mixture of office and residential uses. Strong continuity of ground floor retail in all building types is encouraged.



Figure 2.88. The new interim Greyhound Station at the corner of Richards Boulevard and Sequoia Pacific Boulevard expresses light and movement in a contemporary architectural vocabulary.

comprehensive streetscape plan, coordinating driveway access. (See Chapter 3-Alleys).

Transportation Connections

A new Greyhound terminal is located on the east side of Sequoia Pacific Boulevard between Bannon Street and Richards Boulevard. The location of the facility will benefit from close proximity to the new Township 9 Station and future Sequoia Station. This interim facility will eventually move to the Intermodal Station in the Railyards with a future adaptive re-use of the building.

Adaptive Reuse

There are many opportunities in the area for warehouse conversions as interum or permanent uses.

Building Heights & Transitions

Heights vary within this area from the 250 foot high blocks at North B Street, stepping down to a more pedestrian scale of 90 feet along Bannon Street. North of the alleys separated Bannon Street and Richards Boulevard, the heights step back up to 150 feet where they front Richards Boulevard. Blocks surrounding the proposed 10 acre park retain heights from 120 feet to 250 feet (See height diagram Figure 2.35).

Massing and Scale

See Chapter 4 - Private Realm Guidelines

Step backs

No Step Backs

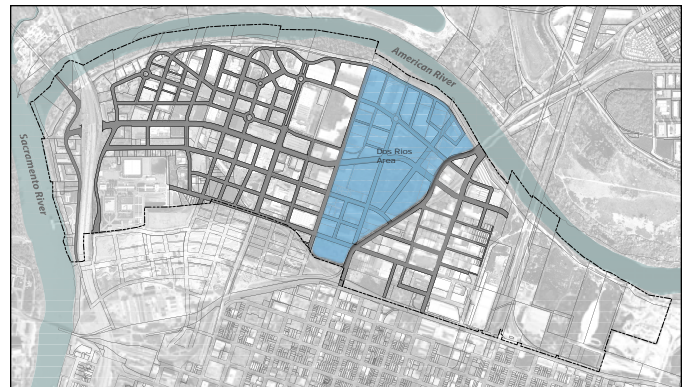
Landmarks and Vistas

See Figure 2.28.

C.6 Dos Rios Street Area

Existing Character

The Dos Rios Street Area is eclectic in its existing uses and mixture of building sizes, ranging from two-unit dwellings in a suburban setting, to large warehouses and trucking companies requiring large paved surfaces for deliveries of goods. The Area is bisected by Richards Boulevard, which forms an edge between the residential neighborhood and the school. The American River Parkway Plan anticipates a pedestrian/bike bridge over the American River which would intersect Two Rivers Trail not far from the school. There are several remnant railroad rights-of-way to be reclaimed.



Vision for Area

The vision for the Dos Rios Area is to maintain and enhance the eclectic character of uses and building stock. Examples of transitional warehouse/industrial areas exist in the Bay Area, such as west Berkeley and South of Market Street in San Francisco. (Sidebar Case Study from



Figure 2.89. A conceptual massing illustration of the Dos Rios Street Area showing a mix of existing buildings (white) and new buildings (tan). The spline of the Bicycle Boulevard can be seen to the right of center. The park in the middle of the image is the school grounds, enlarged by the relocation of Richards Boulevard in the RDSP. The Twin River Community is shown reconfigured with units clustered in mid-rise buildings and row houses, providing park area and recreational grounds.



Figure 2.90 Existing cluster of warehouse and light-industrial buildings surrounding the Smythe Academy Elementary School.



Figure 2.91 Conceptual massing showing new buildings (tan) interspersed with existing buildings (white). The bikeway is recognizable with the line of trees.

Workshop Presentation). North of Richards and south of Bannon Streets, the industrial character of the area should remain predominant without streetscape improvements.

Redevelopment Opportunities

A proposed redevelopment of the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency's (SHRA) Twin Rivers Housing Project will see a significant change in character from the existing development.

The plan for the area anticipates the future redesign of the SHRA housing community around a pedestrian boulevard extending to the river. Small community parks within the residential area are anticipated for the residential community and neighborhood serving retail to integrate within the new development.

Mobility Opportunities

Central to the vision of this area is the development of two linear corridors of diverse character.

Biking and pedestrian opportunities are a critical component of this area with a proposed "bicycle boulevard" following some abandoned railroad spur lines. Opportunities exist to create retail and small incubator spaces in old warehouse buildings and a parkway boulevard linking the internal streets with the river.

The transformation of the existing rail spur easements into a pedestrian scaled "bicycle boulevard" is a priority of the RDSP. This corridor could serve as a primary commute and recreation route from downtown to Two Rivers Trail and the future American River pedestrian/bike bridge cited in the American River Parkway Plan 2008. There is a unique opportunity for this corridor to provide for the development of shops and restaurants to face onto this corridor and provide a urban place for people watching. The plan calls for small streets to feed into this area.

The second corridor, Street W, is conceived as a pedestrian boulevard which links a small commercial/retail area



Figure 2.92 Rendering of the Bicycle Boulevard with existing and new development fronting the linear pedestrian and bicycle connector.



Figure 2.93. Southpark, San Francisco sits within a light industrial mixed-use district. An internalized park with business and housing ringing its perimeter it could be a development model for the Dos Rios Area.



Figure 2.94. The deconstruction of a former steel-framed warehouse serves as a parking lot for the renovated masonry building housing the primary use.

through a residential area and school to the future crossing of the American River.

The warehouses existing north of Vine Street are anticipated to redevelop in the future, and the streets plotted in the RDSP indicate how improvements could occur with the retention of some buildings. It is assumed that this entire area north of Vine Street could be redeveloped and that another street plat may be implemented. Nonetheless, the axial linkage of Street W to the river, should be maintained.

This plan seeks to retain viable light industrial and warehouse uses, while allowing the infill of new urban housing and retail uses. With this transitional land use mix, streetscape improvements would be largely developer initiated and probably inapplicable in many areas.

Adaptive Reuse

From an architectural character viewpoint, many of the mid-20th century brick warehouse buildings east of North 10th Street provide interesting opportunities for adaptive reuse, primarily those buildings backing onto the rail spur lines (see diagram).

Building Heights

Building heights in this area are modest and should be

maintained to expand the emerging neighborhood character. Heights inside the levee are modest for waterfront development but coincide with the RDSP policy to transition heights downward easterly from the approved heights of Township 9. The general heights in this area correspond to other transitional areas in the Central City, such as the R Street corridor and support higher density near transit stations.

Massing and Scale

See Chapter 4 - Private Realm Guidelines

Transitions

See Chapter 4 - Private Realm Guidelines

Set Backs

In-progress

Landmarks and Vistas

There are several opportunities in this area to support urban design goals of providing orientation through new landmarks and iconic architectural markers. The reconfiguration of Richards Boulevard and Street W provide occasion to capture viewpoints along these circulation routes. The non-orthogonal street network in this area will allow particular architectural attention to acute-angle corners (See Viewshed diagram, Figure 2.28).



Figure 2.95 Reuse of warehouse buildings in the Dos Rios Street Area should explore creative solutions and celebrate eclectic design integration.

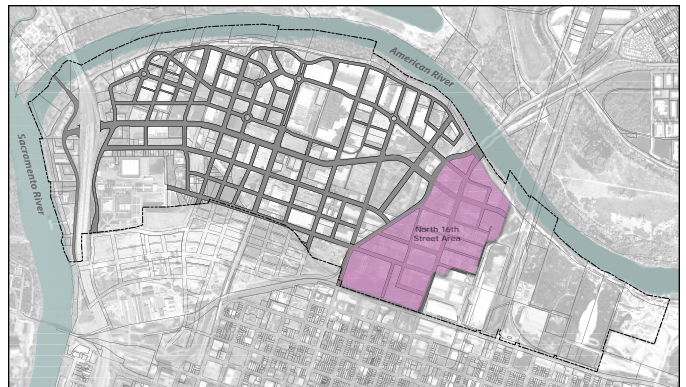
C.7 North 16th Street Area

Existing Character

The area between North 12th Street and North 16th Street, is identified in the River District Specific Plan as the “North 16th Street Area.” This Area has a robust stock of existing masonry and concrete structures fronting on small scaled streets.

The North 16th Street Area is characterized by diverse building patterns, varying from low massed warehouses, some with second floor offices, to large lots servicing auto sales and truck deliveries, to well defined single-family neighborhoods with pleasantly scaled streets.

The North 16th Street Area, also serves as a “Gateway District,” with many compelling opportunities for transformation as a destination. Impacts from traffic and other programmatic constraints have hampered new development in the area, which will be mitigated as street connectivity improves. These two streets convey large volumes of vehicles on alternating times relative to commute hours and become barriers to effective pedestrian movement through the area.



East of North 16th Street, Dreyer-Basler is a small, defined neighborhood which seeks to retain the scale of its single-family homes. Its direct adjacency to the Blue Diamond Almond property, a large area outside of the RDSP boundary, which, when developed in the future, should present future opportunities to benefit the neighborhood and the entire area.

Vision for Area

The vision for the North 16th Street Area is for it to flourish with interesting places to draw people to the area. Because this Area has strong edge-defining streets conveying high traffic volumes, the space between these arterials can become refuges for slow streets filled with people.



Figure 2.96. North 16th Street has many buildings fronting the old highway that would be enhanced with streetscape improvements.



Figure 2.97. The upper (north) end of North 16th Street finds more buildings which are sited back from the street frontage in a typical suburban pattern.



Figure 2.98. This aerial view of North 16th Street and the surrounding area illustrates the unique building form and the potential for infill development and adaptive reuse of many existing buildings.



Figure 2.99. General Produce Company hosts a large interior lot .



Figure 2.100. Several buildings in the area were built to the curvature of rail-road spur lines that give the area a distinctive architectural character.



Figure 2.101 The brick masonry buildings along North C Street are distinctive and unique in form.



Figure 2.102. The brick masonry buildings along North 16th Street exist in a corridor that can be enhanced with new streetscape and street parking.

(sketch diagram-refuge). The opportunities in this Area will generate exciting pedestrian friendly linkages and spaces.

At the center of the North 16th Street Area lies arguably Sacramento’s finest cluster of brick warehouse buildings which will be incorporated into the North 16th Street Historic District (see map at in Ch. 4 subsection F). This small area contains untapped potential for a vibrant live-work and retail district that can build on the history of these many interesting structures. As well, there are many exciting opportunities for interesting outdoor plazas and pedestrian prioritized streets and alleyways in what is an area of strong pedestrian character.

The area contains an established residential neighborhood serving as a nucleus for further small infill residential development. There are many opportunities to expand retail, including small neighborhood grocery stores, which could also serve outbound commuters leaving downtown via North 16th Street.

Adaptive Reuse

Many opportunities for warehouse conversion exist in this area. Historic guidelines shall be consulted for projects within the North 16th Street Historic District.

Building Heights & Transitions

See Chapter 4 - Private Realm Guidelines

Massing and Scale

See Chapter 4 - Private Realm Guidelines

Landmarks and Vistas

See Figure 2.28 at the beginning of this chapter.



Figure 2.103 The park area proposed at the northeast edge of the North 16th Area will have a spectacular view of the downtown skyline, viewable from the levee embankment. Dolores Park in San Francisco, shown here, serves a local neighborhood, and like the future Dos Rios Station, is accessible citywide with transit lines.



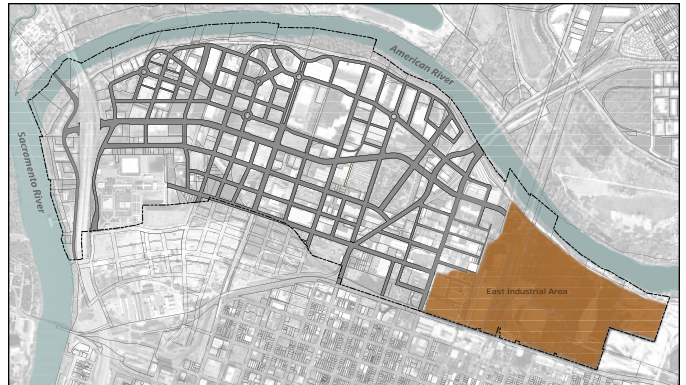
Figure 2.104. The North 16th Street Area has the physical attributes with many desirable buildings to host a variety of retail endeavors, including a public market with indoor and outdoor vending. The examples above are characteristic of many warehouse interiors in this area.

C.8 East Industrial Area

Existing Character

The East Industrial Area consists of the Blue Diamond Almond Growers complex and several vacant large land holdings; it abuts the area identified for a new regional park on the site of a former landfill.

The southern edge is bounded by the east-west main-line of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). Running perpendicular at 20th Street is the north-south Union Pacific line which crosses the American River. To the west of the UPRR bridge is the old Sacramento Northern bridge which has been converted to a pedestrian/bike bridge for the trail linking the midtown neighborhoods at 20th and C Streets. A first stage implementation of Sutter's Landing Park has begun on the eastern edge of the East Industrial Area.



Vision for Area

Blue Diamond has done preliminary planning for vacant parcels it controls north of its active facility. The regional park known as Sutter's Landing Park has been included in some early plans for minor improvements. A comprehensive plan for this Area has not been developed, nor was a street plan considered under the 1994 Richards Boulevard Area Plan (RBAP). Street circulation was not considered in the prior RBAP nor in the RDSP. Further east, preliminary studies have looked at a future interchange at Interstate Business 80 near the Union Pacific Railroad bridge, which could provide a future east-west connection into the District.

Any new development should reference the surrounding character of the North 16th Street Historic District and the patterns found in the Blue Diamond complex.



Figures 2.105 (top) and 2.106 (bottom) in the area of the future Sutter's Landing Park. Passive recreational activities and a popular Dog Park have begun to bring people into the eastern end of the East Industrial Area.



Adaptive Reuse

Many buildings in the 20th and C Street neighborhood provide excellent opportunities for adaptive reuse.

Building Heights

Current zoning in the area is M-2 Industrial which allows building heights to 75 feet.

Massing and Scale

Refer to North 16th Street Character Area

Transitions

Refer to North 16th Street Character Area

Set Backs

Refer to North 16th Street Character Area

Landmarks and Vistas

The existing north-south bike and rail corridors provide opportunities for visual linkages. The future extension of Richards Boulevard east of North 16th Street should also be planned with attention to orientation and vistas.



Figure 2.107. The bridge of the former Sacramento Northern Railroad once carried electrified passenger and freight service as far north as Chico, spans the river on the border of the RDSP, and is now a pedestrian-bike bridge.

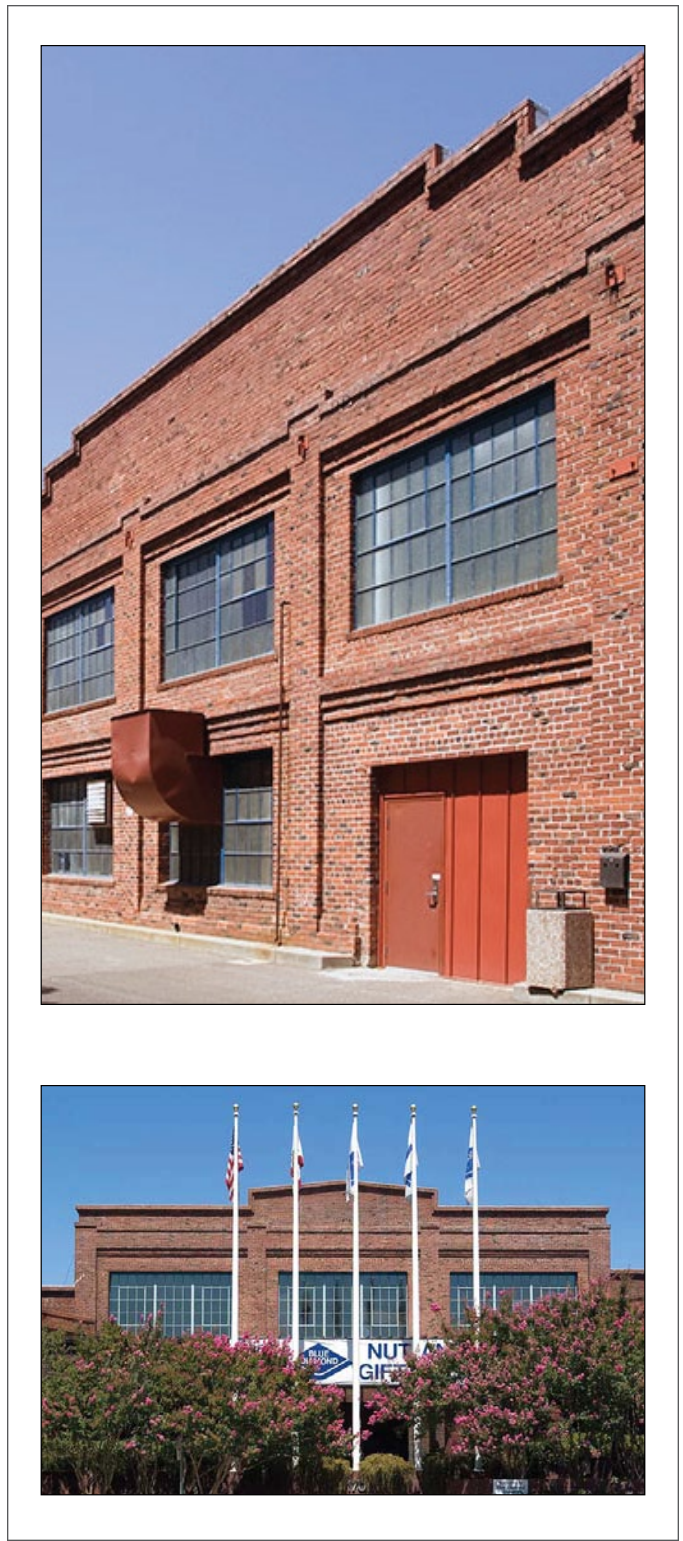


Figure 2.108. Two examples of the vintage buildings found in the large Blue Diamond Almond Growers campus of buildings in the western edge of the East Industrial Area.