

DEL RIO TRAIL
ADOPTED POLICY POSITION
South Land Park Neighborhood Association

Policy and Background on Del Rio Trail Proposal
Adopted by SLPNA Board Nov. 2, 2016

Background: The South Land Park Neighborhood Association (SLPNA) is a nonprofit organization representing an area of over 13,000 residents in the southwest section of the City of Sacramento. SLPNA works closely with local, state, and federal officials, residents, business owners, schools, and nonprofits to protect and improve the neighborhood. In 2013 and 2014, SLPNA spearheaded an effort to oppose the State Parks General Plan & EIR for Old Sacramento. This General Plan called for the operation of tourist trains on an abandoned rail corridor owned by Regional Transit, that cuts through South Land Park residential neighborhoods. After significant public pressure, the State Parks General Plan was amended to remove the neighborhood rail corridor. Since 2014, SLPNA has led a movement to actively promote the SACOG/City of Sacramento plan to build a multi-use trail on the four-mile long right of way.

Opposition to Rail Traffic: The South Land Park community spoke very clearly in 2014 that residents adamantly oppose any train traffic in our quiet residential area. Hundreds of petitions were signed by residents, and hundreds of people showed up to oppose the plan at community meetings and State Parks and Recreation Commission hearings. In January 2014, then-Senator Darrell Steinberg requested that the Commission delay their vote on the General Plan and EIR, and confer with residents in South Land Park, who were completely blindsided by the Parks proposal to run trains on the corridor. This 4-mile strip of land had become a cherished community greenbelt in the 40 years since it was abandoned by the railroad. The tourist train issue motivated neighbors to quickly organize: block captains were established; volunteers knocked on doors to inform the public of the train plan; flyers were distributed; and elected officials were swamped with calls and emails from concerned citizens.

After several months of community meetings, press stories, and pressure on local and state officials, State Parks removed the neighborhood rail proposal from their Old Sacramento General Plan. Within days of the Commission amending their General Plan, SLPNA immediately formed a trail committee, and began advocating for the Del Rio Trail, which was already part of Sacramento's bicycle master plan. The City worked with SLPNA to host a neighborhood forum on the trail plan, and surveyed 2700 residents as to their desire for the property. Schools, residents, and businesses throughout the neighborhood were surveyed: 83% of respondents support the trail concept.

SLPNA has the following stances related to the abandoned railroad right-of-way:

1. SLPNA strongly opposes any trail plans that would allow any train traffic on the abandoned rail corridor south of South Land Park Drive (near Sprouts/LaBou). SLPNA believes that State Parks and the Railroad Museum may propose a "trail

- with rail” concept at some point. This would evoke significant community opposition.
2. SLPNA strongly supports the development of the Del Rio Trail. The key benefits will be providing area residents with a safe walking and biking route to schools, parks, shopping and other amenities.
 3. Ideally, the trail should be a serene neighborhood amenity and not a “bike highway” of speeding cyclists (i.e., the trail design should ensure safety for walkers, joggers, dog walkers, and nature explorers, in addition to accommodating bicycle traffic).
 4. The corridor should feature parklets, community gardens, winding routes, natural settings, incorporate native plantings where possible, plus benches. The trail should preserve large trees and foliage whenever possible. 1354 Palomar Circle urban garden should be included as part of the trail design.
 5. The City and its consultants are encouraged to consult with UC Davis Landscape Architecture department, which has offered its students to work on trail design for class credit.
 6. Dog walking or a dog park should be included where feasible, since portions of the corridor are already used as a dog walking area.
 7. The Sutterville Preschool should be consulted by the City and its consultants, due to the school’s ongoing issues with traffic on Fruitridge at Gilgunn.
 8. Landscaping and natural plantings, benches and park-like settings should be included at the major intersection of Florin and Freeport Blvd.
 9. An “adopt a trail” program should be launched that includes support from nearby businesses, schools, and neighborhood associations. This program would include trail cleanup days, design ideas, donations for adding amenities and maintaining the corridor. Naming opportunities should be considered for trail sections, benches and other features, to offset building/maintenance costs.
 10. The East Land Park Subdivision should be closely consulted, since the corridor directly impacts homes in this subdivision. It is unclear if residents on this street prefer the trail on the east median, the street, or on the rail corridor.
 11. Residents living nearest to the corridor should be invited to provide input on trail design and access points.
 12. Public safety and residential privacy must be high priorities in trail design.
 13. Adequate environmental analysis should be conducted prior to construction. Such analysis should take into consideration impact of removing the creosote-soaked rail ties and metal rails (i.e., is it better to leave rails untouched or covered with soil to avoid ejecting toxins into the air?). Toxic herbicides should be avoided where possible to reduce residential and pet exposure.
 14. Public art should be considered for installation along the corridor.

The above policy was adopted by unanimous vote of the SLPNA Board of Directors on Nov. 2, 2016.