

# Friends of the Napa River

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October 11, 2014

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## **Napa County Department of Conservation, Development & Planning**

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### ***Napa Pipe Project, Public Hearing October 15, 2014***

***FONR Comments to the Development Plan, Design Guidelines, Development Agreement and Tentative Map***

Friends of the Napa River (FONR) would like to submit these comments for the October 15, 2014, Napa County Planning Commission meeting. These comments are in addition to and accentuate more detailed comments previously submitted by FONR on the Napa Pipe EIR and subsequent project documents.

FONR supports the City of Napa Ballot Measure A this November to initiate expansion of the RUL to encompass the Napa Pipe Project site. This will enable eventual annexation. As stated earlier, "The annexation is in the best interests of all county residents, because the city has the expertise to guide and manage intensive development."

On the following pages, FONR submits brief comments on these topics:

Orientation to the river,

Public access,

Governance for public open spaces and places

Safe access in flooding

We hope these comments will contribute to a safe, productive, and environmentally superior development.

Sincerely,



Bernhard Krevet

for the FONR Napa Pipe Review Team

### **Orientation to the river;**

FONR encourages the Napa Pipe Project to provide a truly exciting, imaginative and publicly accessible riverfront. Realistic and ecologically sensitive solutions can and ought to be incorporated with adherence to “*Living River Principles*” as have been done successfully along other riverfront reaches of the Napa River.

### **Public Access;**

- Though the Development Plan (Plan) anticipates commendable sections of shared pedestrian and bicycle trails at 12’ and 14’ width in places, there remain too many disconnections hindering understandable, safe and attractive circulation routes. Reference should be made to the 10’ minimum wide rule of the conditions for approval of the Tentative Map to require all through connections be completed as shared pathways.
- The Costco warehouse and service station sites provide no clear understanding (indeed, no plans) on just how the principal shared pathways will be connected through or around. FONR is concerned that cross traffic patterns at multiple driveways and parking lots put pedestrian and bicyclists in the way of automobile and truck traffic.
- Full access for pedestrians and bicyclists needs to be made into the adjacent corporate park destinations to the east.
- There seems to be no plan to bring shared pathway routes into and through the Farm site as an attractive destination (and as an alternative to travel alongside heavily motorized routes servicing Costco traffic).
- Providing connection north into Kennedy Park is commendable. FONR is still concerned about this becoming an unattractive chain-link fence enclosed ‘dog-run’.
- No plan (in cross section, at least) is provided on how shared pathway users will get across the bridge needed to connect the Napa Pipe sites south to Anselmo Court. What provisions are there to ensure safe and sensible crossing on the bridge for Vine Trail and Bay Trail users? Related plan documents seem to suggest that this bridge is intended for motorized traffic only. Shared traffic will need to cross.
- FONR agrees and concurs with statements by the Napa County Park and Open Space District and the San Francisco Bay Trail organization that the County of Napa “require the construction of the co-aligned Bay Trail and River Trail in the earliest phase of construction at the former Napa Pipe property”.
- Access to and along the Napa Pipe riverfront seems to be somewhat disjointed. The plan for Shoreline park P6 (containing a pavilion destination) shows no access for bicycle or ADA needs.
- FONR concurs with the City of Napa Police Department comments that access to public parks and connected trails throughout the Napa Pipe Project site be improved for safe public uses and be built to attract a broader range of users as destinations.

### **Governance for Public Infrastructure/Parks and Open Space;**

As stated in previous comments we find that sole reliance on a homeowners association for administration, maintenance and upkeep of public realm amenities is questionable and risky.

Homeowners associations in the Bay Area tend to shirk and neglect over time, and even lock out public access to their private commons.

- Parks, trails and wetlands ought to be conveyed to public agency ownership,
- Complex amenities that require sophisticated and timely attention (such as the bladder dam or hydraulically positioned barriers for flood control) need to be managed by a responsible agency,
- It will be in the best public interest to have legal agreements between a funded public agency and the homeowners association with detail responsibilities addressing all publicly accessible amenities. This has been done successfully in other Bay Area municipalities.

**Safe access;**

In the event of flooding (e.g. homeowners association failed to close the flood barriers in time) only two or three ways in or out of the riverfront residential and commercial island is extremely problematic. This emergency access needs to be examined closely, particularly where senior citizens and hotel guests are expected to find safe and quick exit. The requests submitted by the City of Napa Police Department and other responding agencies must be memorialized in conditions of approval.