



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

14-0926

Agenda Date: 1/30/2015

2015 COUNCIL STUDY ISSUE

NUMBER

DPW 13-12

TITLE Acquisition of Approximately 18 Acres of Land Bounded by Highway 85 and Stevens Creek

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Department of Public Works
Support Department(s): N/A

Sponsor(s):

Councilmembers: Moylan, Griffith

History:

1 year ago: Deferred

2 years ago: Deferred

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

What are the key elements of the study?

The study would examine the feasibility and costs associated with acquiring or entering into a joint-use agreement for approximately 18 acres of land located within Mountain View and Sunnyvale city limits and bounded by Highway 85 and Stevens Creek, north of Fremont Avenue. The study would also evaluate potential public uses and analyze the cost benefit to the community of entering into a joint-use agreement or purchasing, developing, and managing said land.

Most of the land to be studied is located within Mountain View, owned by the City of Mountain View, and zoned for public facility. The Santa Clara County Assessor's map lists the area as part of the Stevens Creek Park Chain, which was a planning term coined for the original county park plans for the Stevens Creek Corridor in the 1960s. It is unclear whether there are any legally binding covenants to this designation, land and water conservation easements, or any other limits to the use of the property. The area is not currently used as part of the Stevens Creek Park Chain and is inaccessible to the public. Several parcels within the study issue area are owned by the City of Sunnyvale, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and Pacific Gas and Electric.

This land will be evaluated for trail feasibility as part of the Stevens Creek Trail Joint Cities Feasibility Study. The City of Mountain View has also completed extensive environmental reporting on much of this area as part of its planning for the Stevens Creek Trail. They intend on utilizing about half their property, from the northern tip to approximately Remington Court, to construct the last reach of their trail as currently planned. The City of Sunnyvale also currently owns three parcels and a roadway easement in this area, totaling approximately 5 acres which will be considered in the trails study.

What precipitated this study?

This study issue was proposed by Councilmember Moylan, supported by Councilmember Griffith, and raised by members of the community for possible park and/or trail use.

Planned Completion Year: 2015

FISCAL IMPACT**Cost to Conduct Study**

Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost): Moderate

Amount of funding above current budget required: \$25,000

Funding Source: Will seek budget supplement

Explanation of Cost:

Costs for staff can be absorbed within existing operating budgets. The study would require staff to coordinate with the City of Mountain View to evaluate the feasibility of a land acquisition. Should the purchase be possible, staff would obtain consultant services for any appraisals and environmental assessment of the land.

Funding would be required for obtaining title reports, appraisals and environmental reports. In addition, staff believes it may be helpful to obtain specialized brokerage consultant services to conduct a market analysis of public land.

Cost to Implement Study Results

Some cost to implement.

Explanation of Cost: If the City of Mountain View is amenable to selling their parcels to the City, the capital costs for purchasing the land could be several million. As part of the study issue analysis, staff will estimate the cost to purchase, develop, maintain, and manage the land.

EXPECTED PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS

Council-approved work plan: No

Council Study Session: No

Reviewed by Boards/Commissions: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Position: Defer

Explanation: Staff recommends continuing to evaluate uses for the area as part of the Stevens Creek Trail Joint Cities Feasibility Study and partner with the City of Mountain View for joint use. Upon completion of the study if ownership by Sunnyvale still looks desirable, further analysis as outlined in this study issue could be conducted. The Stevens Creek Trail Joint Cities Feasibility Study will be available in Early 2015 for consideration by agencies.

Prepared by: Scott Morton, Parks and Golf Superintendent
Reviewed by: Manuel Pineda, Director, Public Works
Reviewed By: Robert A. Walker, Assistant City Manager
Approved By: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager