



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 6, 2007

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR ACQUISITION OF AIR NATIONAL GUARD PROPERTY

DATE: OCTOBER 24, 2007

FROM: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE/ADMINISTRATION

PRESENTATION BY: CAROL C. PROCTOR, MANAGEMENT ANALYST

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: CAROL C. PROCTOR (714) 754-5688

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment 1) in support of the City's acquisition of the California Air National Guard Property located at 2651 Newport Boulevard in Costa Mesa; and
2. Direct staff to take the steps necessary to communicate the City's interest in the property and advocate for its acquisition for park and open space purposes.

BACKGROUND:

Many years ago, the City began communicating our general interest in acquiring the California Air National Guard (ANG) site for various park and recreational purposes. The property, a parcel of land of approximately 7.86 acres, is located at 2651 Newport Blvd. and is adjacent to TeWinkle Park (see picture in Attachment 2). On March 31, 2008, the ANG is prepared to formally close its operations at the site and transfer to Beale Air Force Base in Marysville, California. The site includes several existing structures and other improvements that can be seen from the picture in Attachment 2. It is unclear at this time what structures and improvements will remain on the site and the specific condition of the various amenities is also unknown.

The City's current Open Space Master Plan of Parks and Recreation (Master Plan) was approved by City Council on January 21, 2003. This recently updated Master Plan includes a Needs Assessment collected from community workshops, surveys and interviews. Based on the data collected, some of the current un-met needs are additional parkland acreage and community centers in Costa Mesa. The Master Plan specifically planned for the acquisition of the ANG property. For background

information, Attachment 3 of this report is the Executive Summary of the Master Plan. This information does not include changes and other updates from 2003 to the present.

The Costa Mesa 2000 General Plan designates the ANG property as Public and Institutional, and it is zoned Institutional and Recreational. Therefore, the reuse of the property for public recreational purposes is already consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Code. The General Plan suggests 4.62 acres of parkland per thousand population. This translates into an existing deficit of approximately 50 acres of parkland. Finally, as required by law and prior to the acquisition of the property, the Planning Commission would need to make a finding that the acquisition of the ANG site for park and open space use is in conformance to the General Plan.

The Department of Defense (DOD) currently controls the property and they are in the process of notifying other DOD agencies to determine if any of these agencies have any interest in this property for federal government purposes. To date, staff is aware of two DOD agencies that had expressed some interest and visited the site, although it has been communicated that the site is too small for their particular purposes. If no further interest is expressed by DOD agencies, the Federal General Services Agency will provide notice to other federal agencies, and then to the state, county and local agencies. This process is likely to take up to a full year.

Over the past 10 years, the City has submitted several letters of interest to the Federal government and met with various officials about our interest in acquiring the site. In addition, staff has closely followed the status of the ANG unit (222nd Combat Communications Squadron) and followed their plans to relocate to Beale Air Force Base. Additional meetings will be held in the near future with various Federal officials including our local congressional representative. These meetings will assist in obtaining the most recent updates on the status of the property, reconfirming our strong interest in acquiring the property and obtaining information/strategy advice for our next steps in the process.

ANALYSIS:

The 7.86-acre property could provide numerous opportunities for the Costa Mesa community by merging the property with TeWinkle Park. At this point, no specific details are needed from the City Council on how the City might reuse the property other than to identify that the reuse of the property would be for park and open space.

It is unknown what the costs would be for the site and no funds exist for its acquisition or improvement. In addition, proper due diligence and various site investigations would need to be completed to obtain the current condition of the property and its improvements. Finally, staff has not notified the private properties located within 500 feet of the site of the City's interest in acquiring the property. This step, along with the other acquisition steps, will be completed at the appropriate time as the process moves forward. The total focus in the initial stages will be to aggressively advocate for the Federal government to exclusively negotiate with the City of Costa Mesa for our acquisition of the site.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

The City Council could decline to direct staff to pursue the acquisition of this property. An additional alternative would be for the City to encourage the Federal, State or County governments to develop the site for park and open space purposes or alternative public use.

FISCAL IMPACT:

It is too early in the process to identify any fiscal impact. The following are the typical costs that would be incurred related to the acquisition and reuse of property: sales price; appraisal and inspection reports; demolition, abatement of hazardous materials (although this is a Federal responsibility for military base reuse), conceptual design, and construction. However, it is important to understand that the property almost certainly will not be “gifted” to the City at no cost by the Federal government. Federal Base reuse policy requires taxpayers to be equitably compensated for the sale of public lands. Based on the City’s most recent acquisition of park acreage (261 Monte Vista/1.2 acres @ \$3.5 million), it is not unreasonable to expect this property to be valued in excess of \$20,000,000. Funding at this level would require a bond issue or similar public financing.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney has reviewed the attached Resolution and the staff report.

CONCLUSION:

It is recommended that the City Council approve the attached Resolution and direct staff to take the steps necessary to communicate the City’s interest in acquiring the site for future park purposes.

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Assistant City Manager

- Attachments: 1 – [Resolution](#)
2 – [Aerial Photograph](#)
3 – [Executive Summary of Master Plan](#)