

# Agenda Report

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** APRIL 30, 2007

**FROM:** CITY MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** AMENDMENT TO THE HAHAMONGNA WATERSHED PARK MASTER PLAN

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Approve the amendments to the Goals and Objectives of the Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan to reflect the community's vision for the 30-acre Hahamongna Annex property (See Exhibit 1);
2. Conceptually approve the recommended Proposed Uses and the Concept Plan for the Hahamongna Annex, as shown on Exhibit 2 and 2a;
3. Conceptually approve the following amendments to the September 29, 2003, adopted Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan:
  - a) Eliminate the project entitled "Equestrian Staging Area" with its related road realignment and parking improvements and instead keep this location a group picnic area with an improved park road for safe access for two-way traffic;
  - b) Include the addition of the Hahamongna Annex area and its proposed uses;
  - c) Revise the Bicycle Route plan to include routing through the Hahamongna Annex.
4. Direct staff to prepare the necessary plans for final adoption including preparation of the required environmental documents for CEQA compliance and certification.

**HAHAMONGNA WATERSHED PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

At their special meeting of April 19, 2007, the Hahamongna Watershed Park Advisory Committee concurred with staff recommendation and made the following additions:

The Plan should:

- 1) Emphasize the vision statement.
- 2) Seek to minimize surfacing/paved areas (referencing parcel C2), seek alternative types of surfaces, increase access by public transportation and possibly eliminate east-west roadway.
- 3) Commit to not remove/relocate facilities until funding is in place.
- 4) Minimize fencing and maximize non-vehicular access.
- 5) As a general concept, maximize general open space.
- 6) Develop a management plan for appropriate thresholds of use.

### **DESIGN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

At their regular meeting of April 23, 2007, and after advisory review, the Design Commission concurred with the staff recommendation, with the following additions:

The Plan should:

- 1) Carefully consider parking and minimize paving.
- 2) Encourage the use of public transportation to access this site, including the design of an attractive transportation shelter to encourage people to stop at that location.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

At their regular meeting of April 25, 2007, the Planning Commission concurred with the staff recommendation, with the following additions:

- 1) Eliminate the road proposed on parcel C-2.
- 2) Agreement with the recommendations made by both the HWPAC and the Design Commission.

### **BACKGROUND**

Staff concurs with the recommendations of all three Commissions with the exception of the Planning Commission's recommendation to eliminate the road proposed on parcel C-2. The current road terminates at the entrance to the Rose Bowl Riders' facility. This proposed road extension will provide emergency vehicle access to the Rose Bowl Riders and public park area. It will also provide adequate turnaround for emergency vehicles at the gate to Rose Bowl Riders. The proposed road would also provide access to the City-owned parking lot currently lease to JPL. This parking area would only be opened to provide overflow parking for events on weekends at the Environmental Education Center, proposed public equestrian area, and for the public athletic field on the west side of the Hahamongna Watershed Park. The access to the parking lot would be locked right at the entrance to the proposed public equestrian area, but open for bicycle and equestrian use at all times.

On September 29, 2003, the City Council adopted the Hahamongna Watershed Park (HWP) Master Plan, one of the Arroyo Seco Master Plans. The Arroyo Seco Master Plans comprise a set of four separate planning documents (Lower Arroyo Master Plan, Central Arroyo Master Plan, HWP Master Plan, and the Arroyo Seco Design Guidelines) that portray a community vision for one of the region's most valued resources, the Arroyo Seco.

The adopted HWP Master Plan covers the lower 300 acres of the total 1300 acres comprising the Upper Arroyo Seco. Hahamongna Watershed Park is bounded on the north by the Angeles National forest and to the east by the community of Altadena. It is bounded on the south by the Foothill Freeway and Devil's Gate Dam and to the west by the City of La Canada Flintridge.

The Hahamongna Annex property is a 30-acre property immediately adjacent to the northwest border of Hahamongna Watershed Park in the Upper Arroyo Seco. (See Exhibit 3 ). In October 2005, the property was purchased by the City from the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) for a purchase price of \$1.2 million. The site is being referred to as the Hahamongna Annex. A condition of the sale of the Hahamongna Annex placed an Open Space Easement across the entire property and stipulates that

the property shall be used for Open Space, Park and Recreation purposes. An additional condition of sale required the City to honor the existing leases (Los Angeles County Fire and Rose Bowl Riders) on the site.

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Until recently, the Hahamongna Annex property contained three tenants: The Oak Grove Station of the U.S. Forest Service (seven acres), Los Angeles County Fire Camp 2 (six acres) and Rose Bowl Riders (12 acres). The U.S. Forest Service terminated its lease just prior to the City's purchase and is no longer on the property. The US Forest Service Ranger Station, which has now been abandoned, offers the most significant opportunity for future uses. The County Fire Camp has a fifty-year lease on its site, which was renewed in 2003 and is being honored by the City as a condition of the sale from the MWD. The lease with the Rose Bowl Riders is a year-to-year lease that expires annually at the end of October; RBR has subleases with two additional tenants: Tom Sawyer Camps and MACH1 (Move A Child Higher). Additional information about the current tenants can be found in Exhibit 4. The site also contains a one-acre easement with Jet Propulsion Laboratory and four acres of common area consisting of the park roadway, slopes with oak woodland, and trails.

A variety of buildings are in existence on the vacated U.S. Forest Service grounds and a variety of equestrian-related facilities on much of the remaining site. The "Celebration and Open House" brochure provides a description of the existing facilities. (See Exhibit 5).

The Department of Public Works, Parks & Natural Resources Division, began a planning process for the Hahamongna Annex in January 2006. The City was a recipient of a technical assistance grant from the National Parks Service, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program, whereby assistance with community meeting facilitation as well as technical/planning assistance was provided for the project. The primary objectives in embarking on this planning process were to:

1. Develop a community vision for the Hahamongna Annex;
2. Create a seamless plan for this part of the Arroyo Seco that merges the 30-acre Annex site with the already adopted 300-acre Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan area.

The following community meetings took place on this project.

April 6, 2006 – 1<sup>st</sup> Community Workshop: Presentation of Data Collection and Research/General Community Feedback;

May 4, 2006 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Workshop: Develop Project Vision Statement and Goals and Objectives;

May 18, 2006 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Workshop: Complete Development of Vision Statement and Goals and Objectives;

May 20, 2006 – Design Charrette with approximately 36 invited participants;

June 20, 2006 – 4<sup>th</sup> Community Workshop: Share Charrette Results/General Feedback about the Charrette Results.

Since the summer of 2006, staff has:

- Conducted research on similar facilities within a public park setting
- Sought the expertise of an equestrian facility designer
- Met with various City departments on the both the lease, management and operational issues associated with a public equestrian facility
- Met with all the tenants on several occasions to attempt to reach a mutual consensus

A proposal for the future of this new public land is now recommended based on the information and feedback received through the public planning process described above. The plan proposed for conceptual approval is a combination of equestrian-themed uses and an environmental education center. This is detailed as follows: A horse boarding area; a public equestrian activity and event area comprised of 3.6 acres of land, to be operated by Rose Bowl Riders; a therapeutic equestrian area; and a youth camp equestrian area. The environmental education and community meeting center comprised of 5.63 acres is proposed for the area formerly occupied by the United States Forest Service. The plan also includes maintaining the existing Los Angeles County Fire Camp 2 and calls for restoration of 2.86 acres of oak habitat (see Exhibit 2A).

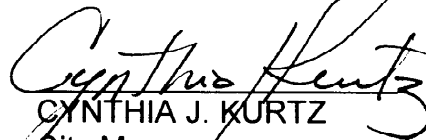
The environmental Education and Community Meeting Center will be developed within the building previously occupied by the U.S. Forest Service. The building location will make an ideal location for exhibition and study of the ecology, biology, geology, and watershed issues of this area. The City has received a proposal from Pasadena City College indicating a desire to utilize this site for the college's new interdisciplinary Environmental Studies Program that begins in Fall 2007 (Exhibit 6). In addition, the City has discussed the development of community meeting rooms that the Los Angeles County Fire Department and Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) have both shown an interest in for future use.

The proposed uses will fill a need for public equestrian facilities, the development of an environmental education center and restoration of critical habitat within the area.

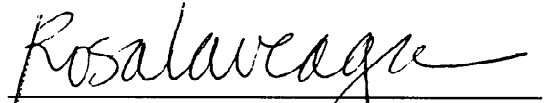
**FISCAL IMPACT**

Upon adoption of the Amendment to the Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan, staff will prepare cost estimates and priorities.

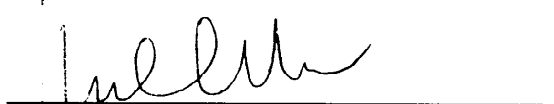
Respectfully submitted,

  
CYNTHIA J. KURTZ  
City Manager


Prepared By:

  
Rosa Laveaga, Landscape Architect  
Arroyo Seco Project Supervisor  
Parks and Natural Resources Division

Reviewed By:

  
Kathleen Woods, Administrator  
Parks and Natural Resources Division

Approved By:

  
Martin Pastucha, Director  
Department of Public Works

**Exhibits:**

1. Amendments to the Goals and Objectives of the Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan
2. Proposed Uses
- 2a. Proposed Uses Concept Plan
3. Hahamongna Annex Location Map
4. About the Tenants
5. Open House Brochure
6. Letters of Interest