



**PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: July 22, 2014

Agenda Item #

Prepared By:

David Mitchell
Associate Engineer

Reviewed By:

John B. [Signature]
Senior Engineer

EL TORO TRAIL PROJECT UPDATE

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. Recieve project update, and
2. Set special Parks and Recreation Commission workshop on August 19th, 2014 to review and discuss with the community an "Access Strategy" for the El Toro Trail project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At its March 19, 2013 meeting, the Parks and Recriation Commission (PRC) was provided an update on the El Toro Trail project by Public Works staff. The update included project history, list of neighborhood concerns and possible solutions, easement rights, and possible trail alternatives, see attached presentation. PRC was asked to provide recommendations to staff to keep the project moving forward. The recommendations from the PRC included the following:

- Continue engaging property owners where acquisition might be necessary to further the development of the trail and trailhead facilities.
- Focus attention on obtaining a trailhead on DeWitt Avenue, near the Edmundson Water Tank and for a trail access on or adjacent to the West Hills Community Church in collaboration with church officials.
- Engage property owner whom City purchased Acton parcel from to see if there is interest in purchasing more of their property to expand trail access opportunities.
- Contact City of Morgan Hill Police Department about nuisance issues in the Via Grande neighborhood related to illicit use of the existing El Toro trail.

Since that meeting, staff has:

- Been in contact with one of the property owners who own a portion of the El Toro summit. There is no reportable action from those contacts conversation.
- Been in contact with the Acton parcel property owner. Staff believes there may be some interest in selling a portion of that property that could expand trail accesss oppourtunities from Main Avenue. Discussions about purchasing any property will be put off until "Access Strategy" (see below) is approved.
- Performed preliminary study of trailhead near Edmundson Tank on east side of DeWitt Avenue. This remains a viable trailhead location but will likely require the purchase of right of way from one or more property owners on the east side of Dewitt Avenue and will require trail access off the west side of DeWitt Avenue, which neither the City nor the Open Space Authority have at this time.
- Continued to engage the Open Space Authority about a collaborative trail program, including trailheads. there is no reportable actions from those discussions.
- Set up a meeting with Morgan Hill Police and Via Grande neighborhood. Captain Neumayer met with the property owners at the end of Via Grande. In summary, the residents want a fence to keep

people out of the open space, prosecute trespassers, restrict parking, and are interested in a neighborhood watch program. In response to this, the Police informed them that any fence issues would need to be addressed by the Community Services Department and/or Engineering; the Police cannot arrest trespassers unless there is a victim; the City needs to implement parking restrictions before the Police can enforce them; and they may speak to Officer Greg Dini for information regarding setting up a neighborhood watch program.

Staff feels the appropriate way to move the project forward is to develop an "Access Strategy" for providing multiple access points to the future El Toro trail system. This strategy will take into consideration optimum trail access locations for the community, minimizing impacts to affected neighborhoods, and establishing proper trailhead facilities. Once this "Access Strategy" is approved by the City Council, the City can move forward with necessary actions to implement the the access program and trail development. Staff recommends a special Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on August 19, 2014 to hold a workshop on the proposed "Access Strategy". At the special meeting workshop, input from the entire community will be taken and recommendations sought from the PRC prior to bringing the "Access Strategy" to the Council for their approval.

Attachment: March 19, 2013 El Toro Trail Update Presentation