



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number: 16-3043

Agenda Item Number: 17.

Agenda Date: 5/25/2016

In Control: Planning Commission

DEPARTMENT: Parks and Recreation

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Janet Martin

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: 9

SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation - Land Acquisition

SUMMARY:

Acquisition by the Parks and Recreation Department of approximately 214 acres of land known as the Classen-Steubing Ranch located in northern San Antonio for protection of the Edwards Aquifer and future development of a park. The property will be acquired in two phases:

- A. Phase 1: The acquisition of approximately 175 acres of land for open space and recreational park purposes using existing Proposition 1 Edwards Aquifer Protection Venue Project funds in addition to other City funds identified in the 2016 Capital Budget.
- B. Phase 2: The option to purchase approximately 39 acres of land for recreational park purposes prior to March 30, 2018, pending identification and approval of future City funding.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The purpose of the Edwards Aquifer Protection Program (EAPP) is to protect the quality and quantity of water recharging into the aquifer. In May 2015, Proposition 1 was placed on the election ballot in which voters approved the 1/8-cent venue sales tax generating \$100 million for continued expansion of the EAPP. The EAPP efforts include obtaining real estate interests by fee-simple purchase, conservation easements or donations of land over the sensitive zones of the Edwards Aquifer.

In January 2012, the Classen-Steubing Ranch landowners initiated contact with the City to gauge interest in acquiring a portion of the property. Due diligence performed under the EAPP determined it would be beneficial to the aquifer to acquire the portion of the Classen-Steubing Ranch available for sale since it exists directly over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. Additionally, a small portion may be developed as a park thus providing access to public green space in a dense urban environment. The two-phased purchase of the 214 acre property includes an allowance of up to 39.75 acres of impervious cover as approved by the 2008 Impervious Cover Master Development Plan.

Phase 1 will include the purchase of approximately 175 acres of land in 2016, which the Edwards Aquifer Authority will hold an aquifer protection program conservation easement on the property to ensure recharge protection for the 170 acres purchased with Proposition 1 funds. The remaining 5 acres will be purchased using

other City funds and will be designated as recreational park land.

Phase 2 of the acquisition will include the purchase of approximately 39 acres of land for recreational park purposes pending identification and approval of future City funding, prior to March 30, 2018.

ISSUE:

The 2015 Proposition 1 Edwards Aquifer Protection Program includes \$90 million for continued acquisition of property rights over sensitive zones of the Edwards Aquifer. The Parks and Recreation Department recommends purchasing approximately 214 acres of land known as the Classen-Steubing Ranch with Proposition 1 revenues as well as other City funds in a two-phased approach. The Edwards Aquifer Authority issued a geological assessment of the site in October 2015 indicating that preservation of this property would provide high water quality and very high water quantity benefits for the City of San Antonio due to the undeveloped state of the property and the flood control structure on the property. Additionally, the City Council-appointed Conservation Advisory Board endorsed this transaction at its April 2016 board meeting.

ALTERNATIVES:

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this acquisition by the Parks and Recreation Department of approximately 214 acres of land known as the Classen-Steubing Ranch.