

# Economic Development, Placemaking and Branding/ Marketing Committee

*City of Arts & Innovation*

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**TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMAKING AND BRANDING/MARKETING COMMITTEE**      **DATE: MARCH 18, 2021**

**FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**      **WARD: 1**

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS SEEKING A MASTER DEVELOPER FOR THE CITY-OWNED FORMER RIVERSIDE GOLF CLUB, AB BROWN SPORTS COMPLEX, AND PELLISSIER RANCH PROPERTIES IN THE NORTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD**

**ISSUE:**

Preparation and issuance of a Request for Proposals seeking a Master Developer for the City-owned former Riverside Golf Club, AB Brown Sports Complex, and Pellissier Ranch properties in the Northside Neighborhood.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Economic Development, Placemaking and Branding/Marketing Committee:

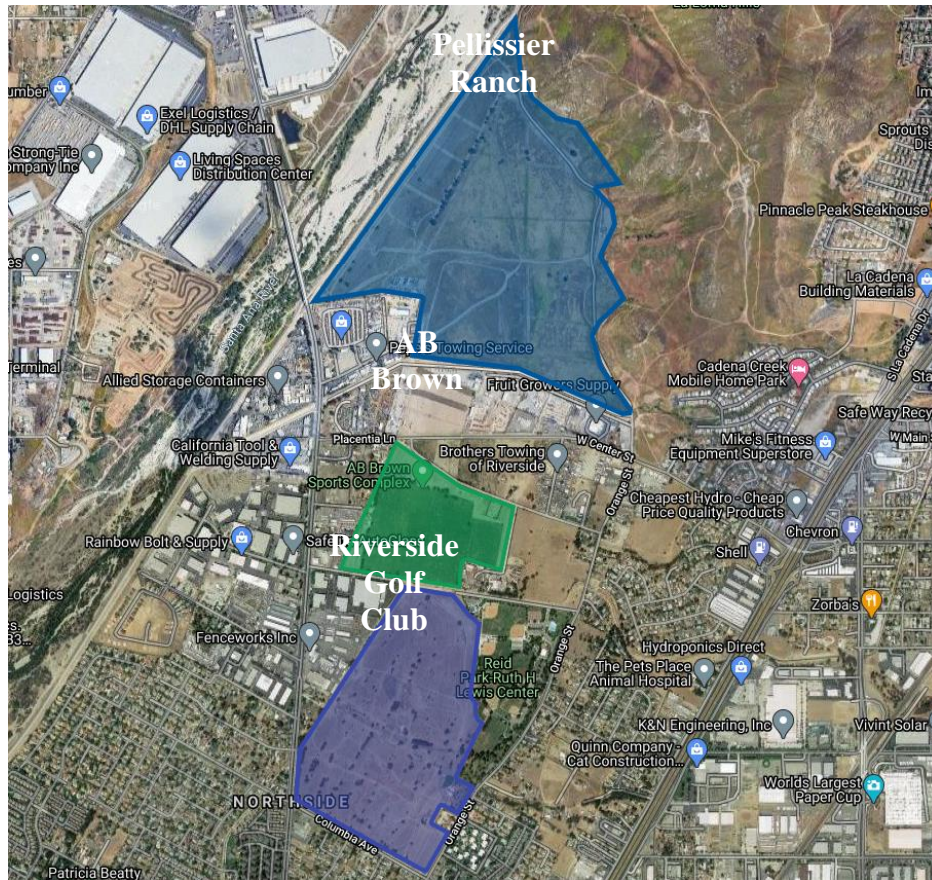
1. Recommend the City Council approve the issuance of an RFP seeking a Master Developer for the former Riverside Golf Club, AB Brown Sports Complex, and Pellissier Ranch properties in the Northside Neighborhood; and
2. Recommend the City Council and the Board of Public Utilities declare the Riverside Golf Club, Ab Brown Sports Complex, and Pellissier Ranch properties as “Exempt Surplus” pursuant to Assembly Bill 1486.

**BACKGROUND:**

On November 17, 2020, the City Council adopted the Northside Specific Plan (NSP) by Resolution and certified a Final Program Environmental Impact Report. The NSP covers approximately 2,000 acres within the City of Riverside, the City of Colton, and the unincorporated County of Riverside. The NSP focuses on future development of both publicly and privately-owned properties and identifies future development potential to create a balanced community.

The following aerial site map depicts the former Riverside Golf Club, Ab Brown Sports Complex and Pellissier Ranch properties that are owned by the City which collectively total approximately

412 acres.



**DISCUSSION:**

Much of the Northside Neighborhood is developed with established single-family and multiple-family residential uses with pockets of light industrial and commercial. The Northside Neighborhood is unique in that it offers an opportunity to celebrate the region’s history, environmental assets, and sports activities through new development that complements and expands on the area’s assets.

**Riverside Golf Club:**

This site is approximately 129 acres; 54% of the site is controlled by the City and 46% of the site is controlled by Riverside Public Utilities. The Northside Specific Plan (NSP) rezoned approximately 41 acres of the southern portion of the site to Northside Village Center (NVC) and approximately 88 acres of the northerly portion of the site as Open Space, Parks & Trails (OS). The mixed uses allowed in the NVC zone include residential (approximately 1,200 units) and commercial (approximately 461,000 square feet) uses while the OS use allows for various recreational facilities and ancillary commercial uses that support the recreational uses, such as vendors. The NSP envisions the re-use of the former Riverside Golf Club with a variety of park uses, including playing fields, cross-country facilities, naturalized areas, and playgrounds for local residents. Open space corridors along the Springbrook Arroyo and the Santa Ana River will help to connect different neighborhoods within the Northside Neighborhood through a series

of trails.

The former Riverside Golf Club represents an opportunity to create an open space area and establish a mixed-use village development with retail and residential development that is complemented with the reconstruction of the Springbrook Arroyo as a central feature. The NSP envisions restoring the Springbrook Arroyo to a natural channel that would serve as a key feature for future park facilities. A series of multi-purpose trails will follow the arroyo through the heart of Northside.

The Northside residents expressed a desire to develop local grocery and shopping options for residents, and to create a new “village center.” The local community envisions the Village Center as an active and walkable mixed-use environment, in which residents are able to enjoy local stores, services and civic gathering spaces, such as plazas and a small park within the Village Center. While the Village Center will focus on uses serving the Northside neighborhood, the vitality of its walkable streets, plazas, and park spaces will appeal to visitors from throughout Riverside, Colton, and beyond.

The Northside Village Center, at the northeast corner of Main Street and Columbia Avenue, on a portion of the site of the former Riverside Golf Club, will serve as the key hub for the Northside Neighborhood. To help support the growth of local retail stores, the Northside Village Center will include a mixture of new residential units, including apartments, townhomes, and office space for local businesses.

#### Ab Brown Sports Complex:

This site is approximately 56 acres and is 100% controlled by Riverside Public Utilities. Any sales proceeds would go to the RPU enterprise fund. The NSP rezoned the entire site as Open Space, Parks & Trails (OS). The NSP envisions the revitalization of Ab Brown Sports Complex as a key area facility that will draw participants from throughout the region that could include a privately owned sports/soccer complex linked to Reid Park (it should be noted, that the sports/soccer complex could alternatively be developed on a portion of the open space planned for the former Riverside Golf Club), public open spaces, the Springbrook Arroyo trail, and surrounding housing. Competitive cross-country running facilities will be integrated into the Northside Neighborhood trail system, linking the Northside Village Center to the Ab Brown Sports Complex.

American Youth Soccer Organization – Region 47 (AYSO) have used the Ab Brown site since approximately 1985. AYSO and the City’s Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department have developed the property with soccer fields, parking lots, and concession buildings. AYSO provided maintenance of the facilities, including watering, mowing, weed control, graffiti abatement, and security. Due to declining membership enrollment, AYSO let its lease expire on June 30, 2020.

Shortly thereafter, the City received an unsolicited lease proposal from Riverside City Football Club to use Ab Brown for its growing soccer program. Staff discussed potential terms with Riverside City Football Club; however, several necessary elements collectively proved problematic including costs associated with deferred maintenance, accessibility upgrades and water rates given what would be a short-term, multi-year lease. For a variety of reasons, “WA-11 landscape water rate” proved most challenging. It is also worth noting, that the City has also received interest from other youth sports organizations to use the Ab Brown athletic fields. Given Council’s approval of the Northside Specific Plan and the inclusion of a sports park within the

the Plan, staff is focused on a master developer selection process to implement the approved Plan. In order to facilitate expedient redevelopment of the site, a short to mid-term agreement with any user group for athletic use, or otherwise, might interfere with plans to retain a Master Developer. Furthermore, staff envisions that a master developer would be in a position to provide for both short and long-term soccer (or other sports) and cross-country running uses at Ab Brown or at the former Riverside Golf Club as part of any new development proposal.

### Pellissier Ranch:

This site, approximately 227 acres, and 100% controlled by Riverside Public Utilities, is located in the City of Colton. Any sales proceeds would go to the RPU enterprise fund. The NSP recommended rezoning approximately 31 acres of the westerly portion of the site to High Density Residential (HDR), approximately 152 acres of the easterly portion of the site to Industrial Research Park (IRP), approximately 91 acres to Light Industrial and approximately 3 acres of the far northern portion to Outdoor Commercial Recreation (OCR) . However, the City of Colton has not adopted the NSP to date. As such, Pellissier Ranch is currently zoned M-1 Light Industrial which allows for a variety of office, industrial and service uses. As part of the RFP being prepared, any Master Developer chosen would have to coordinate the entitlement approvals needed from the City of Colton for Pellissier Ranch to ensure the vision identified in the NSP is realized.

### Master Developer:

Residents recognize these properties are an opportunity to define the future of the Northside Neighborhood and promote investment on nearby properties. Residential, commercial, employment and agriculture will be linked together through safe streets, connected trails, greenbelts, and bicycle corridors and result in a unique community in Riverside, Colton, and County of Riverside. The NSP identifies ways to provide recreation and open space for the Northside Neighborhood and region.

Collectively, the three City owned sites total approximately 412 acres and should be considered as one single development opportunity. For large development opportunities, the master developer approach has become more common with larger, more-urban infill sites, as well as sections of communities.

### **What is a Master Developer?**

#### A Master Developer IS:

- A team that has dealt with all aspects of large-scale development;
- A partner that will work with the City and the community; and
- An entity that will bring resources, planning, development, and finance to create a detailed community-driven plan to facilitate and implement projects.

#### A Master Developer IS NOT:

- A builder or contractor that will bring all of their own resources at the expense of local contractors and builders;
- A single person – no one person has the experience or knowledge on his/her own; and
- Going to dictate the process – the community will always be in charge of its future.

At a minimum, public streetscape/road improvements, sidewalk, curb/gutter, sewer, and storm drainage infrastructure improvements will be needed to facilitate the private development envisioned in the NSP. To leverage City assets, staff recommends that the City issue a Master Developer RFP for all three of the sites as a single development opportunity to achieve the vision detailed in the NSP. The Master Developer, once selected, is anticipated to be a firm that has a strong history of developing large scale projects, an entity that will bring resources in planning, development, finance and public-private partnerships to create a detailed plan to facilitate the vision, and a firm that will have a contractual agreement with the City that will be performance based with guarantees to protect the community.

Next Steps:

Staff has identified the following critical steps in this process:

- With the help of a consultant, identify the “public” infrastructure and costs needed to facilitate the development of the NSP vision for the subject properties.
- Determine if the properties are to be declared as “exempt surplus” or “surplus” and make required findings.
  - Pathway no. 1 (Declare Exempt Surplus) If the subject properties have been declared as “exempt surplus” by adoption of a resolution by City Council, then staff will issue a Master Developer RFP along with notifying a list of required California Housing Financial Agency Certified (CalHFA) affordable housing developers that are registered with the State’s Housing and Community Development (HCD). Any proposal must include a mixed-use development with a minimum of 300 residential units with 25% being restricted to “low income” affordable housing levels.  
**RECOMMENDED OPTION**

OR

- Pathway no. 2 (Declare Surplus)
  - If the subject properties are declared as “surplus” by adoption of a resolution by City Council, then pursuant to Assembly Bill 1486, staff must first notify required public agencies and CalHFA affordable housing developers, from a list provided by HCD, with a 60-day advance opportunity to buy the subject properties for the development of affordable housing with a minimum of 25% of all residential units being restricted to “low income” affordable housing levels.
  - If responses are received during the 60-day first offering period, then a minimum of 90-days must be allowed for negotiations pursuant to Government Code Section 54223. A written summary of the responses and negotiations must then be provided to HCD who has 30-days to respond before the City can proceed with a development proposal.
  - If there are no responses at the conclusion of the 60-day advance opportunity period, staff will notify HCD who has 30-days to respond. It is important to note that if more than ten residential units are developed, then

15% of all residential units need to be restricted to “low-moderate” income affordable housing levels for any future development.

- Upon confirmation from HCD, staff will issue a Master Developer RFP. Given the size/scope of the vision for the subject properties, staff envisions a deadline to respond of 90 days.
- It is also worth noting that the Economic Development, Placemaking, and Branding/Marketing Policy Committee is also discussing local preference (i.e. procurement of goods, labor, etc.) and that any recommendations by this Policy Committee approved by the City Council, will be incorporated into the Master Developer RFP.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no immediate impact to the General Fund associated with this report. However, the sale of the former Riverside Golf Club property could generate significant revenue to the General Fund.

Prepared by: David Welch, Community & Economic Development Director  
Certified as to availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer  
Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager  
Approved as to form: Kristi J. Smith, Interim City Attorney

Attachment: Presentation