



City of Arts & Innovation

Development Committee

TO: DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS DATE: JULY 23, 2015

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WARD: 1
DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL CHINATOWN PARK AT RIVERSIDE'S SECOND CHINATOWN
LOCATED AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF BROCKTON AND
TEQUESQUITE AVENUES

ISSUE

Consideration to: 1) receive an update regarding the viability, development and funding options needed for a proposed interpretive park honoring Riverside's Second Chinatown (Chinatown Park); and 2) recommend that the Committee forward to the City Council to direct whether staff should undertake the work needed to commence negotiations with the land owner to secure control of the project site – two parcels identified as Assessor's Parcel Numbers 217-050-003 and 018, located at the northwest corner of Brockton Avenue and Tequesquite Avenue (Property – Attachment 1).

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Development Committee:

1. Receive an update regarding the viability, development and funding options needed for a proposed interpretive park honoring Riverside's Second Chinatown (Chinatown Park); and
2. That the Committee forward to the City Council to direct whether staff should undertake the work needed to commence negotiations with the land owner to secure control of the project site – two parcels identified as Assessor's Parcel Numbers 217-050-003 and 018, located at the northwest corner of Brockton Avenue and Tequesquite Avenue.

BACKGROUND

In 2006 the City received an application from Doug Jacobs to facilitate the development of a medical office building located at 4577 and 4489 Brockton Avenue. The medical office building was proposed on a site totaling approximately 4.2 acres, on three parcels identified as Assessor's Parcel Numbers 217-050-003, 217-050-018 and 217-060-014; an archeological site known as Riverside's Second Chinatown which has been designated as City Historic Landmark #19 by the City's Cultural Heritage Board, a County Landmark, a State Point of Historical Interest and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Save Our Chinatown Committee has advocated for utilizing two out of these three parcels, identified as Assessor's

Parcel Numbers 217-050-003 and 018, for a park and open space to honor Riverside's Second Chinatown.

On March 19, 2015 the Development Committee directed staff to review the viability of a park including the potential for City acquisition of the Property and development of the Chinatown Park; research potential grant opportunities and other funding sources for the potential acquisition and development of the site, including subsequent maintenance and operation of the park; and return to the Development Committee within 120 days with an updated report and recommendation.

Viability and Development

Staff conducted initial informal conversations with the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) – the land owner – and Doug Jacobs – the developer of the site who holds an existing Purchase and Sale Agreement with RCOE – regarding the possibility of the City acquiring two of the three parcels for use as a public park. The RCOE and Doug Jacobs have informally stated they would consider selling the two parcels located at the northwest corner of Brockton and Tequesquite Avenues to the City.

These two parcels total approximately 3.22 acres. The Property lies within the Health Care District of the Downtown Specific Plan area and is zoned Commercial General. The development of a public park may require a Zone Change and a General Plan Amendment.

Funding

The proposed Chinatown Park Project may become eligible to apply for a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant from the Natural Resources Agency of the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The grant would allow funds to be used to acquire and develop the Property for park and recreation purposes. LWCF considerations include:

1. The LWCF is a competitive program that requires:
 - a. providing a legally binding document such as a Purchase and Sale Agreement showing an agreed upon price between the land owner and the City;
 - b. identifying all committed funding sources for acquisition and matching funds; and
 - c. demonstrating compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and corresponding Section 106 environmental reviews.
2. The City could be eligible to apply for up to \$2 million in LWCF grant funds or up to 50% of the total project cost per year for acquisition or development of the Property to create a new park.
3. The park must be opened for public use within three years after the completion of the acquisition of the Property.
4. LWCF is a reimbursement-only program. The City must be able to initially fund 100% of the project as the full grant amount is reimbursed when eligible costs are paid in full.
5. The LWCF grant application is an annual offering, due on February 3.

If directed by City Council, the next immediate step for this project would involve commencing negotiations with the RCOE and Doug Jacobs to attain site control through a Purchase and Sale Agreement.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of recommending City Council approval for staff to proceed with the initial property negotiations for the Chinatown Park Project include staff time, an appraisal fee and attorney services; staff estimates these costs to not exceed \$25,000. The Project is not budgeted and will most likely require a supplemental appropriation from the General Fund Reserve.

Submitted by:	Emilio Ramirez, Interim Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to availability of funds:	Brent A. Mason, Finance Director/Treasurer
Approved by:	Alexander T. Nguyen, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney
Attachment:	Property Site Map