



# Acceptance of Quitclaim Deed for Former Navy Railroad Right-of-Way

*Unlocking public reuse  
opportunities for a former military  
corridor*

City Council Meeting  
June 3, 2025

# Request

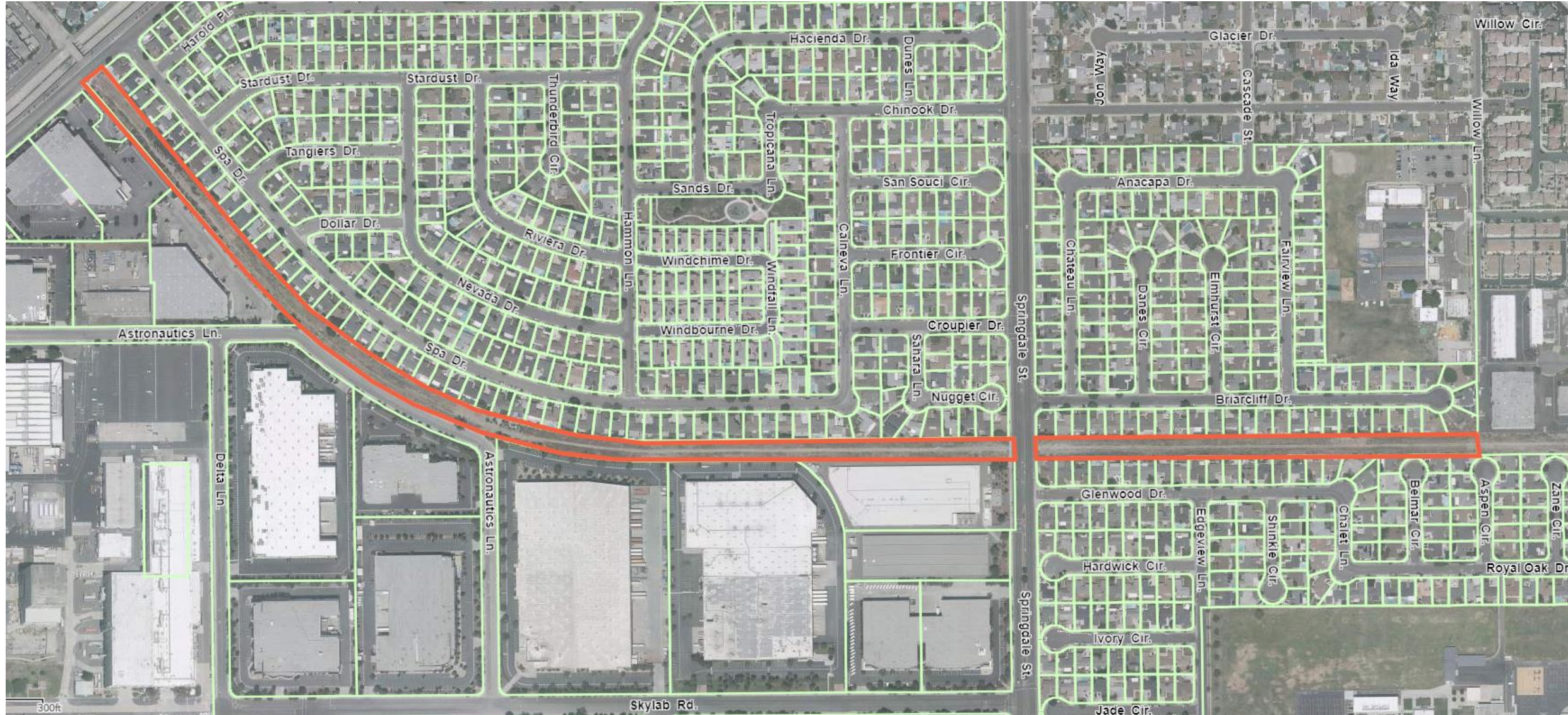
The City Council is asked to approve and accept a Quitclaim Deed from Spreckels Sugar Company, Inc. for a City-maintained property in North Huntington Beach, formerly used by the U.S. Navy as a railroad corridor.

Acceptance of this deed will give the City full ownership of the land and allow for future public-serving uses.





# Property Description & Location





# Historical Ownership and Military Use

- Originally, the land was owned by the Anaheim Sugar Company (now Spreckel's), for sugar beet cultivation and processing.
- 1944 – During World War II, the U.S. Navy obtained an easement from the sugar company to construct and operate a rail spur connecting the Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station to inland rail lines.
- 2010 – Navy operations along the corridor ceased
- 2012 – Railroad tracks were removed
- 2016 –U.S. government's easement interest was quitclaimed to the City via the General Services Administration.



# Analysis

- City easement acquired in 2016 was **limited to railroad purposes only**. This limitation prevented the City from making improvements or putting the property to public use.
- It did not grant the City authority to use the land for any other purposes.
- Staff reached out to owner and successfully negotiated a voluntary quitclaim at **no cost to the City**.
- This action relieves Spreckels of any future liability or maintenance responsibility and ensures the City now has control of the property.
- This deed gives the City both the easement and the underlying land, clearing the way for long-term reuse.



# Financial Impact

- There is no cost to the City to accept the quitclaim deed. The Public Works Department already maintains the property, and associated costs are included in the Department's existing operating budget.
- Any future improvements or use of the site will be considered pursuant to a separate City process.



# Environmental Condition

- In 2014, the City commissioned a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for the corridor, including soil sampling and laboratory testing at multiple locations.
- The Phase II report found soil conditions to be within residential safety thresholds, and the site may be suitable for community gardens or urban agriculture when best practices are used.
- No contaminants were found at levels that pose a threat to human health or the environment.
- No remediation is required.



# Recommended Action

- Accept the Quitclaim Deed from Spreckels Sugar Company, Inc. for the former Navy ROW property
- This action clears the way for long-term civic reuse and brings the property under full City control.





# Questions

