



# City of Huntington Beach

File #: 24-440

MEETING DATE: 7/2/2024

## REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

**SUBMITTED TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**SUBMITTED BY:** Eric G. Parra, Interim City Manager

**VIA:** Chau Vu, Director of Public Works

**PREPARED BY:** Bill Krill, Real Estate and Project Manager

**Subject:**

**Approve and authorize execution of the Agreement for Acquisition and Escrow Instructions for the purchase of two Encyclopedia Lots (APNs 110-152-23 and 110-182-11), and appropriation of funds**

**Statement of Issue:**

The City Council is asked to approve an agreement with Richard C. Bemis, for the purchase of two encyclopedia lots (APNs: 110-152-23 and 110-182-11) on the north side of Ellis Avenue between Edwards Street and Goldenwest Street. Total purchase amount is expected to not exceed \$72,000, with purchase of the two lots totaling \$50,000, along with escrow and due diligence fees not to exceed \$22,000.

**Financial Impact:**

Funds for this transaction have not been budgeted in the current budget. Therefore, an appropriation of funds not to exceed \$72,000 from the Preliminary Park Development Impact - Non-Residential Fund Account 23545001.81100 is necessary to complete this transaction. Estimated acquisition budget is attached.

**Recommended Action:**

- A) Approve the Agreement for Acquisition and Escrow Instructions; and,
- B) Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the agreement and other related documents; and,
- C) Authorize the City Manager to execute any other related escrow documents; and,
- D) Authorize the appropriation of up to \$72,000 from the Preliminary Park Development Impact - Non-Residential Fund Account 23545001.81100.

**Alternative Action(s):**

Do not approve the Agreement and direct staff accordingly.

**Analysis:**

Huntington Central Park West includes approximately 300 small lots in the area north of Ellis Avenue between Goldenwest Street and Edwards Street that were given to purchasers of encyclopedias in the early 1900s. Lot sizes vary but are typically 2,800 square feet and zoned as Open Space/Park (OS-PR). Since the mid-1980s, the City has acquired all but 29 of the original 300 parcels.

The City's goal is to acquire all encyclopedia lots. Once acquired, the lots are to be incorporated into the surrounding parkland which is consistent with the City's General Plan, Zoning Plan, and Central Park Master Plan.

The City was approached by the estate of Mr. Richard Bemis to buy the aforementioned parcels. The City and Mr. Bemis's estate have been in negotiations for the past year, and the parties have reached the agreed to price of \$25,000 per parcel contingent upon third party appraisal of each lot.

Opportunities to purchase encyclopedia lots have become increasingly difficult, primarily due to the fragmented ownership and difficulty in locating and contacting property owners. As such, staff recommends approval of the purchase agreement in support of the City's goal of obtaining full ownership and control of available property adjacent to the Huntington Central Park for future open space development.

Sufficient funds are available within the City's Park Development Impact - Non-Residential Fund 23545001.81100 and are restricted for acquisition purchases only.

To fund the purchase of these encyclopedia lots, the City Council is required to authorize and appropriate \$72,000, as referenced in the above recommended action.

**Environmental Status:**

This action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

**Strategic Plan Goal:**

Non Applicable - Administrative Item

**Attachment(s):**

1. Agreement for Acquisition and Escrow Instructions
2. Estimated Acquisition Budget
3. PowerPoint Presentation