



Legislation Text

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Agenda Information Sheet

DEPARTMENT: Community Affairs

CM/ACM: Todd Hileman

Date: March 7, 2017

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion and give staff direction regarding the use of the Prescott Tract at US 380 and Virginia St., which is currently owned by Denton Municipal Electric.

BACKGROUND

In October 2015, the City Council authorized Denton Municipal Electric (DME) to purchase approximately 10.94 acres on two tracts of land, known as the Prescott property. DME needed an easement along the west side of the property for a 138kV power line, and the City also needed a public utility easement on the northeast corner of the property. City Council approved the request for DME to purchase the two tracts for \$1.7 million.

DME has built the 138kV power lines it needs and has no other use or plans for the remaining property. In May 2016, DME was approached by a developer who submitted a proposal to purchase a portion of the Prescott property. This proposal was shared with the City Council in a Closed Session in July 2016. As part of that conversation, the City Council was given some information on alternative uses for that tract of land. Staff was directed to do some further research and return to the Council with a more formal proposal. DME continues to receive inquiries from the developer interested in purchasing some of the Prescott Property.

The Prescott property is located at US 380 and Virginia St. The property, as well as the properties around it, are zoned Employment Center Commercial (EC-C). Because the site will drain directly to a major stream, no detention is required on site. There are no gas well pad sites in the vicinity. Any development will have to comply with the Denton Development Code (DDC) with regard to finish floor elevations and parking lot elevations. Driveway access to US 380 is not likely to be approved. The existing turn lane and the close proximity of the Loop 288 ramp and Virginia Circle allows insufficient space to place a driveway under current code.

The Fire Department is interested in using approximately 2.5 acres of this property for the location of a new fire station. The Prescott tract has been identified as a primary location for deployment of resources from a future infill fire station. Accessibility from this location to the eastern portions of Denton will be critical in the future as growth continues to expand from the core of the City.

The Police Department (PD) is interested in having an office in this new fire station that can be utilized by police officers. The PD has expressed a desire to have dedicated office space in any new or remodeled Fire Stations. Keeping officers in the field is one of the fundamentals of reducing police response times. Officers are currently required to travel back and forth to the main police station for a number of reasons including booking-

in arrestees, completing reports and affidavits, logging in evidence, and uploading and reviewing body cam video. Small offices, equipped with computer connectivity, phones, and body camera docking stations, would allow officers the efficiency of remaining in the field to complete many of these tasks and avoid multiple trips to City Hall East per shift, reducing travel time and time out of service, and maximizing the effectiveness of field deployment. Small offices attached to Fire Stations and other newly constructed or remodeled City facilities could reduce the need for expensive new construction of dedicated police substations for many years.

The Parks Department is interested in using this location as a trailhead. Cyclists and pedestrians can use the trails to access public transportation or park at this location to access the trails. As this site develops, the Parks Department would partner with the Fire Department to construct public restrooms. These restrooms would be accessed from outside the building and would not require users to enter the main structure. There are plans for future trails to connect to this site from the north and connect to Cooper Creek to the UNT Discovery Center and North Lakes Park. The trail would also run under Loop 288 and east along 380. The trail would connect with the side path on Mayhill that will run south to the Rail Trail that currently connects to downtown Denton and will eventually extend to Dallas. The 380 trail continues east and connects with the Greenbelt trail that runs north to the Lake Ray Roberts Dam.

In July 2016, the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) submitted a Letter of Interest (Exhibit 1) in the property to mitigate immediate parking needs for DCTA and its partners, to implement new transit service along the US 380 corridor, and for future extension of the A-train rail corridor. DCTA would utilize approximately five (5) acres of the property to address their near-term and long-term plans.

Near-Term Agency Plans (Park and Ride Location with approximately 350 Parking Spaces)

- Shared Parking with Denton Trail Head and Fire Department
- Remote Parking and Shuttle Service for Downtown Denton Transit Center (DDTC)
- Remote Parking and Shuttle Service for Texas Woman's University
- Park and Ride Location for High Intensity Bus Service along US 380

Long-Term Agency Plans (Rail Station and 150 Additional Parking Spaces)

- A-train Extension North with Rail Station at 380/288

There is a floodplain on a portion of this property. Staff was asked to complete an engineering study in order to get a better understanding of the amount of land that might be able to be recaptured, the type of work that would be needed, and the possible impact to any Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA). DME contracted with Teague Nall and Perkins, Inc., to conduct a floodplain study and they determined that there are two options as set out in an email to Glen Gillum (Exhibit 2). The first is to submit a model to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that simply shows the existing floodplain as it should be based on existing topography. This is shown on Exhibit 2 as a yellow line. This option will not require dirt work and will not require a variance.

The second option is to do some excavation and fill to reclaim a little more land along the railroad, if that is needed. It would require a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR), construction plans, excavation and grading, a variance from Planning and Zoning to allow the floodplain modification, and probably an Alternate ESA to allow the excavation in the floodplain ESA.

Any work would avoid any impacts to the riparian ESA. This option would increase the effective frontage along the railroad from 270' to 325', and the total developable area would be approximately seven (7) acres.

Fire stations are classified as a “Community Service” use in the Denton Development Code (DDC), and is permitted in the EC-C District. Several other land uses are permitted in the EC-C District. Most notable land uses are Hotels, Commercial Parking Lots, Light Manufacturing, and Parks and Open Spaces. The site would be subject to the landscape code for parking lots, including landscape areas, street buffers, etc. However, no buffer is required to any adjacent property.

Staff was also asked to look at the property west on US 380 and north of the Prescott property, focusing on zoning, allowable uses, and any planned developments in the review process. The property to the north of the Prescott property is zoned Employment Center Industrial (EC-I). The property to the immediate west is zoned EC-C. And, the property further west of Old North Road, is zoned Community Mixed Use General (CM-G) and Neighborhood Residential Mixed Use (NRMU). The allowable uses for these zoning categories are provided in Exhibit 3, 4, and 5. There are some single family homes that are being built just north of this NRMU area. The homes are part of the Old North Park Phase II-A subdivision that was platted in 2016.

OPTIONS

1. Direct DME to work with private developers to sell parts of the Prescott property.
2. Direct staff to move forward with other uses proposed for the Prescott property.
3. Direct staff to take come other action.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

July 19, 2016 - City Council Closed Session discussion.

FISCAL INFORMATION

DME purchased the approx. 10.94 acres for \$1,700,000 under its CIP Budget.

Possible Purchase Price

Fire Department	2 acres	\$311,018
Parks and Recreation	0.2 acres	\$31,102
DCTA	5 acres	\$777,546

EXHIBITS

1. Denton County Transportation Authority Letter of Interest
2. Teague Nall and Perkins Floodplain Study
3. Community Mixed Use Centers Allowable Uses
4. Employment Centers Allowable Uses
5. Neighborhood Residential Allowable Uses

Respectfully submitted:

John Cabrales Jr.
Department of Community Affairs