



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

PARK COMMISSION MEETING DATE: June 7th 2017

DATE: June 1, 2016
TO: Open Space and Regional Park Commission
FROM: Dennis Troy, Park Planner
THROUGH: Bill Whitney, Director of Planning and Development
SUBJECT: Review and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners regarding a donation to Washoe County from HAWCO Development Group of a 5 acre portion of a larger 21 acre parcel adjacent to Gator Swamp Park.

SUMMARY

This item is to consider and provide possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners for a donation to Washoe County from HAWCO, a local private development organization, of 5 acres of future parklands directly adjacent to Gator Swamp Park within district 2C.

BACKGROUND

Gator Swamp Park is located in an urban portion of the Spanish Springs community, just west of the Pyramid Highway and adjacent to Alyce Taylor Elementary School. Park amenities include: multi-purpose soccer/little league field, volleyball court, horseshoe pits, walking path, picnic areas, children's play area, and open space. (See vicinity map)

HAWCO is the original developer of the Spanish Springs Master Plan. They have been a driving force behind development in the Spanish Spring Community, while donating lands for parks, schools and open space (see attached Spanish Springs Master Plan). HAWCO donated the 4.35 acre Gator Swamp site which was developed as a neighborhood park by Washoe County.

The current Spanish Springs Regulatory Zone Map identifies the 21 acre parcel directly west of Gator Swamp Park as "Parks". This parcel has remained un-improved for the past 15+ years after being identified as parklands within the Spanish Springs Master Plan. Funding and staffing levels have limited the opportunities for development of this site. The property is currently held in ownership by HAWCO.

In July of 2015 Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space staff met with HAWCO regarding converting a portion of this site from a regulatory zone designation of "Parks" to "medium density suburban" residential zoning. Staff and Division Directors thoroughly reviewed the future needs for this area and identified the maximum buildout size for this park. Through this exhaustive review an additional 5 acres of parklands were identified for future improvements (parking, flat fields etc.). The donation of the additional 5 acres would bring the Gator Swamp Park to a total of approximately 10 acres

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which is comparable in size to existing neighborhood parks throughout the County. Eagle Canyon Park at 20 acres, is located approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile away from this facility and provides services of a regional capacity. Future trail connections between these two facilities have been identified. The remaining 16 acres of the 21 acre parcel would be rezoned to residential zoning.

If approved, HAWCO would make a donation of land to be accepted by the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners. The property would allow for an expansion of the existing Gator Swamp Park at an appropriate size such that County Operations Staff could still provide a high level of service to the facility. Future development proposals for the site would come before the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission and the ultimately the Board of County Commissioners.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Open Space and Regional Park Commission recommend to The Board of County Commissioners acceptance of a donation of 5 acres of a larger 21 acre parcel of parklands adjacent to Gator Swamp Park to Washoe County from HAWCO.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with the staff recommendation, a possible motion would be:

“Move to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners acceptance of a donation of 5 acres of a larger 21 acre parcel of parklands adjacent to Gator Swamp Park to Washoe County from HAWCO.”