



Memorandum

TO: Rules Committee

FROM: Councilmembers Yeager & LeZotte

SUBJECT: Joint Grant Application

DATE: 2-24-03

Approved

Date

RECOMMENDATION:

Direct Parks, Recreation, & Neighborhood Services staff to work with the City and County of Santa Clara to explore funding opportunities, including, but not limited to, submission of a joint application for a Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant from the State of California. The purpose of obtaining funding would be to assist in purchasing portions of the BAREC property, located in the City of Santa Clara, to allow for continued agricultural/open space uses.

BACKGROUND:

The State of California is currently in the process of selling surplus land that had been occupied by the BAREC facility. The BAREC facility, located on 17 acres along Winchester Blvd., was one of five centers in the State of California that provided agricultural and horticultural research and education. The City of San Jose and the Environmental Services Department (ESD) have long recognized the value of this rare urban agricultural space to the region, and have provided an ongoing research grant of \$15,000/year since 1997 earmarked for composting programs on the property.

Both the City of Santa Clara and the County of Santa Clara have indicated interest in purchasing portions of this property. In December of 2002, the Santa Clara City Council reviewed a number of reuse plans for the BAREC site that included various combinations of open space and housing. The residents surrounding the facility, both in Santa Clara and San Jose, overwhelmingly expressed their opposition to development of this property for housing. Instead they have asked the agencies involved to look for other solutions that would allow for the continued use of this land for agricultural and open space purposes.

Residents of the San Jose neighborhoods adjacent to the facility have approached Council offices asking that the City of San Jose become involved. Helping to secure grant funding is one way to achieve this without impacting our own General Fund and parks needs. While the property itself is not in San Jose, the future development of the site has a clear impact to the quality of lives of many San Jose residents.