

RANCHO SIMI RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT

Update Regarding BMX Track

January 23, 2018

The Park District's headquarters location at Sycamore Drive was constructed as condominiums more than 54 years ago. The developer transferred ownership of the facility to the Park District in satisfaction of debts at the time. Over time, the Park District converted the living areas into office spaces, and added recreation and maintenance areas. Many years later the BMX track was also added to the location. Trees were planted around the track to minimize the impact of noise, lights and dust to the surrounding residents. Limitations on operating hours and frequency of races were also imposed to minimize the impact to neighbors.

Over time the District outgrew the Sycamore Drive location. The cost to repair, expand and/or replace the aged structures became much more expensive than the cost to purchase another location more suited to the District maintenance, recreation and administrative requirements. In early 2015 the Board of Directors retained a broker to research alternative locations and to market the 13.23 acre Sycamore Drive property for sale. The District's Board of Directors was interested in a facility that could house the Park District's different departments all under one roof.

The interest in the Sycamore Drive property was very high among residential developers as the property was already zoned for residential development. An agreement was ultimately reached for the sale of the property, and the sale is currently set to close at the end of April 2018 (the BMX track will be allowed to operate at the location on a month-to-month basis thereafter until the developer is ready to start grading of the property).

When the Sycamore Drive property marketing efforts began the District started looking for an alternative location for the BMX track. It had previously purchased an undeveloped 57 acre parcel off of Tapo Canyon several years prior that seemed well suited for the development of the BMX facility. The Board approved the retention of an architect, engineers and design consultants and began the development process for that parcel. However, during the preliminary site design the District learned that the parcel presented extensive landslide risk. County restrictions do not allow a public facility to be constructed with that risk present, and mitigating the risk would entail an unknown amount of very extensive grading and the construction of a large buttress wall. The estimated depth and size of such a wall made this location cost prohibitive.

Other locations were also explored, with significant obstacles identified for each of them. Unfortunately, every potential site that the District owns has residential housing in close proximity. The dust, noise, traffic and light associated with the operation of the BMX track makes those locations infeasible. "Not in my back yard" is something the Park District hears frequently. Neighbor objections and the connection of roads, electricity, sewer and other public infrastructure to a new site would also be problematic and very expensive.

The most recent location considered for the BMX track was the District's Arroyo Simi Equestrian facility located at 3495 Chicory Leaf Lane. That location is designed for equestrian uses. Although the site is big

enough for the BMX track, access to the facility is through a small residential street which is inadequate given the traffic generated by the BMX facility, City approved park location hours are currently dawn to dusk, the parking area would have to be paved at great expense, lighting at the facility is restricted, and the parking area for equestrian users would be severely reduced in the process.

The Park District receives approximately \$900 per year from the operation of the BMX facility, while construction costs would likely be over \$2 million. Most expenditures of that size are directed towards facilities that primarily serve Simi Valley residents and a broader range of recreational opportunities.

District staff will be presenting this summary to the Park District Board of Directors at its meeting on February 15, 2018, which will be held at 1692 Sycamore Drive in Simi Valley. The meeting will start at 6:30 pm. The presentation at that time will serve as an update, as the District will continue efforts to identify a feasible location for the BMX facility.