

Office of the City Clerk
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: February 14, 2005

TO: City Council Members

FROM: Vice Mayor Kleinberg and Council Member Mossar

SUBJECT: Report Back to Council on Potential Grant Monies Available for the Purchase of the Peninsula Open Space Trust Arastradero Gateway Property for Open Space Preservation

At the direction of Mayor Liz Kniss in February 2000, we have been working with City staff and members of the Friends of Palo Alto Parks to identify sources, and secure funding, for the acquisition of the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) Arastradero Gateway property (formerly owned by Jacqueline Bressler) at the guaranteed purchase price of \$3,560,000 by October 2005.

To date, Palo Alto has received commitments for several grants, as follows:

California State Per Capita Grant Program	\$266,000
California State Roberti-Z'berg-Harris Block Grant	\$163,825
California State Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$162,385
California Coastal Conservancy	\$1,000,000
Santa Clara County Park Charter Fund	\$1,000,000

We also approached the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation for a conservation grant of \$1,500,000. In October, we met with the Foundation's San Francisco Bay Project Manager, Frank Jordan, and discussed the merits of the acquisition to protect this valuable inholding. Unfortunately, because of numerous recent contributions to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, East Bay Regional Parks, Sonoma Land Trust, Peninsula Open Space Trust and Solano County to acquire hundreds of acres of open space land, the Foundation is not able to consider our request at this time. Mr. Jordan suggested the City of Palo Alto return with a new request if we are able to secure a challenge grant from

another private foundation. Staff and the Friends of the Palo Alto Parks are actively pursuing this concept.

In addition, we have received contingent pledges from both the California Coastal Conservancy and the County of Santa Clara for significant funding of this acquisition.

Both of these agencies have advised the City that they are focused on the Regional significance of this parcel, and the valuable opportunities it could provide, as an important trailhead for three Countywide trail connections. The completion of the purchase would, in fact, complete the Enid Pearson-Arastradero Preserve, remove the real threat of private development in the heart of the Preserve, and provide important trail connections currently envisioned by both the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan (Transportation Element Policy T-25) and the Santa Clara Countywide Trail Master Plan (Trail S-1, C-1 and the De Anza National Historic Trail).

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) has expressed its enthusiastic support for this acquisition because it could complete a trail system that would literally connect the San Francisco Bay Trail to the San Francisco Ridge Trail at Skyline Boulevard through both City and MROSD properties. Hikers would then be able to continue over the ridgeline to the Pacific Ocean.

In meetings between staff and representatives of the Town Council, Portola Valley has also expressed interest in connecting its community-owned open space trail system to Palo Alto and MROSD trails.

We are now at a critical juncture in the funding of this acquisition. In order to secure the funding of \$2,000,000 from both the County and the Coastal Conservancy, these granting agencies would like formal assurances from the City that the aforementioned trail systems could be completed, and that the City of Palo Alto will make a commitment to work with its Regional partners to accomplish that goal.

Therefore, we request that our colleagues join with us to direct staff to provide information to the Council about possible trail alignments consistent with the Comprehensive Plan to satisfy the critical pedestrian trail connections that would link the trailhead at the Gateway property to the San Francisco Ridge Trail. Because of the urgency of these funding opportunities with the County and Coastal Conservancy to provide a significant portion of the acquisition amount, we ask that the Council agendaize a Council discussion and possible action on a funding agreement as soon as possible.