

# **POLICY FOR THE DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS CITY OWNED LAND**

City of Ramsey, Minnesota

## **SECTION I: PURPOSE**

- To maximize public benefit and efficient management of City-owned land by considering disposition of lands that are underutilized and/or unneeded for City functions.
- To establish disposition decision criteria and a disposition process.

## **SECTION II: POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the City of Ramsey to periodically review and inventory City-owned land to identify parcels that are underutilized and/or unneeded for current or anticipated City functions. It also is the policy of the City of Ramsey to consider disposition of lands identified through this inventory according to established criteria and procedure.

## **SECTION III: PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The disposition of underutilized City-owned properties has a number of benefits to the community:

- (1) Reduced City property maintenance costs
- (2) Reduced City liability
- (3) Increased base of taxable parcels
- (4) Reduction of surplus parcels unneeded by the City
- (5) Reduced City resources needed for management of City owned parcels
- (6) Reallocation of parcels to fit in line with long term City needs and goals

## **SECTION IV: DETERMINATION OF INVENTORY**

City Council determines sites potentially available for disposition by means of a City owned land inventory developed by City staff. Upon direction from the City Council, staff shall develop an inventory of City owned land and determine an inventory of properties available for disposition by using the criteria outlined below. If a potential site does not meet the criteria, it shall be deemed potentially available for disposition.

The City shall consider the disposition of real estate if the subject property *does not* meet one of the following potential uses.

### **POTENTIAL USE CRITERIA**

- (1) Economic development purposes; including removal of blighted properties and enhancing the City's tax base
- (2) Public works and maintenance facilities, staging and storage areas
- (3) Public safety facilities, staging and storage areas
- (4) Administrative service facilities
- (5) Public Right of Way; including roads, railroads and airports

- (6) Drainage, wetland and utility easements
- (7) Enhancement of housing stock; including redevelopment purposes
- (8) Public parks, trails and open space

Consideration for the disposition of real estate by the City shall be given based on the *compliance and consistency* with the criteria outlined below.

**COMPLIANCE CRITERIA**

- (9) City Comprehensive plan
- (10) City Comprehensive water and sewer plans
- (11) City Master parks and trails plan
- (12) City Transportation plan
- (13) Relevant City boards and commissions review
- (14) City Ordinances, Sec. 117-614. - Subdivision Design Standards

**POLICY STATEMENT CRITERIA**

- (15) The demand for public parks is shifting away from small neighborhood pocket parks to larger regional community parks. The cost to maintain a large number of small neighborhood pocket parks can be greater than the cost to maintain a small number of regional community parks. As such, the City will consider the consolidation of underutilized pocket parks in favor of larger regional parks.
- (16) The City shall not acquire real estate if there is no foreseeable current or future need for the property.

**SECTION V: DISPOSITION DECISION CRITERIA**

After a property is deemed unneeded and/or underutilized by the City, as outlined in section IV, consideration for disposition will be given by the City Council based on the decision criteria outlined below. This information will be presented to the Council in a findings-of-fact document.

- (1) Public input and feedback regarding a potential disposition
- (2) Maintenance costs
- (3) Title restrictions
- (4) Ability to develop
- (5) Stormwater and drainage limitations
- (6) Proposed future zoning
- (7) Utilities availability
- (8) Long term City needs and plans
- (9) Assessed value
- (10) Method to market and sell property
- (11) Cost to market and sell property

For properties that are legally dedicated, the City will consider the criteria below in addition to the previously stated list:

- (12) Legal costs, quiet title action
- (13) Legal costs, removal of legal dedication from title

The disposition decision criteria listed above, 1-13, will be reported in a findings-of-fact document for each property before it is brought forward to Council for consideration.

## **SECTION VI: PROCESS**

As the City investigates the potential disposition of City owned lands, the process below shall be followed.

### **STEP 1**

#### NOTIFY PUBLIC (A):

Notify affected property owners of a potential disposition; and, invite interested property owners to attend the next Mayor's Town Hall Meeting.

The purpose of this meeting is to gather, and document, public input on a potential disposition.

Mail notification will be given to property owners within 350' of the subject property 14 days before said meeting.

#### FINDINGS OF FACT (B):

Staff will create a draft findings-of-fact document to be brought forward to the Council in a worksession meeting. The findings-of-fact document will contain the decision criteria outlined in Section II of this policy.

At the meeting, Council will review the findings-of-fact document and consider moving forward to step two of this process.

Mail notification will be given to property owners within 350' of the subject property 14 days before said meeting.

### **STEP 2:**

#### ORDINANCE:

An ordinance shall be passed to declare the intentions of the council. The City should not move forward with listing or rezoning properties until an ordinance is passed.

Adopting an ordinance allows the public another opportunity to voice their opinion, for the council to discuss their viewpoints and fulfills the legal process of selling City-owned land.

Mail notification will be given to property owners within 350' of the subject property 14 days before said meetings.

### **STEP 3:**

#### ZONING AMENDMENT (A):

Third, properties shall be rezoned to the appropriate classification.

Rezoning a property before it is listed makes the property marketable. If properties are not rezoned, it may make potential buyers apprehensive. Furthermore, a rezoned property allows potential property owners to better evaluate the potential use of a property. This process is done by Ordinance and requires a Public Hearing.

For information on rezoning: Chapter 117, Section 49.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (B):**

If the proposed zoning amendment also changes the land use designation on the Future Land Use Map, a Comprehensive Plan Amendment shall be required. This process requires approval by the Metropolitan Council, often times done administratively. This process is done by Resolution and requires a Public Hearing.

**STEP 4:**

**MARKET:**

Marketing properties could be done by means of a realtor, auction or for-sale-by-owner.

The City Council will make this decision on a case by case basis, based on the criteria outlined in the findings-of-fact document.

**STEP 5:**

**PURCHASE AGREEMENT:**

City staff and a potential buyer will negotiate a purchase agreement. After an agreement is negotiated, a draft will be brought back to the City Council for discussion and approval.

For properties identified as dedicated or restricted will begin this process at step one, as outlined above. Then, under direction of the City Attorney, follow the process outlined below:

- A. Contact previous property owner(s) to if they would be willing to give their property to the City, with free and clear title
- B. Take property title to court and attempt to remove restrictions
- C. Return property with free and clear title to original owner; or retain City ownership
- D. In the event the City retains ownership, the process would continue at step two outlined above. In the event the property is returned to the original owner, the disposition process would end.