



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: April 17, 2024

SUBJECT: Discussion and Possible Action on Property Identified for the Land Exchange with the Department of State Lands (DSL)

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Conceptually approve the plan to relocate and clean the County-owned 137 acres identified for a land exchange; conceptually approve using the County-owned 45 acres as an alternative location for people living on the 137 acres; and direct staff to return at a future meeting for Board discussion and direction on what services will be provided on the 45 acres.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Over the past 20 years or more, Deschutes County has been working with the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) on a land exchange. In 2015, the County and DSL signed an exchange agreement that would result in the County acquiring 140 acres of land south of the Fair and Expo Center for future Fair and Expo use. In exchange, DSL would acquire 137 acres of County-owned industrial land in east Redmond.

In Spring 2023, DSL informed the County that in order for the land exchange to move forward, the County's 137 acres would need to be clear of people living on the property and free of debris. County staff began planning for a notification and removal of people living on the 137-acres. However, this effort was paused for the following reasons:

- The need for County staff to address code enforcement violations on County-owned property in Juniper Ridge.
- Not having an alternative location for people to relocate to; and
- To allow for projects funded by the Governor's Executive Order 23-02 Declaring a State of Emergency Due to Homelessness to come online and add beds to the housing continuum.

On April 2, 2024, the City of Redmond City Council and Board of County Commissioners held a joint meeting and discussed the DSL land exchange property. The two bodies indicated support for moving forward with relocating people living on the County-owned 137 acres and using 45 acres of County owned land south of the exchange property as an alternative location. City Councilors and Commissioners discussed the importance of providing services on the 45-acres, but the range of services varied.

While the City of Redmond City Council and Board of County Commissioners have publicly discussed using the 45 acres of County owned land as an alternative location, at this point, the Board of County Commissioners has not formally designated the 45 acres for this purpose. It is also important to acknowledge that even if the 45 acres was designated as a relocation option, individuals living on the 137 acres could not be forced/required to move to the specific location identified.

Staff has developed a draft plan for relocating people living on the 137 acres and preparing the land for the land exchange with DSL. The plan includes providing the people living on the 137 acres plenty of notice and time for relocation. Key elements of implementing the plan include communication, coordination and collaboration with the City of Redmond and service providers.

The plan would start once an alternative location is identified, approved by the Board, and available. The draft plan is estimated to take 10 months once an alternative location is available.

There are still many important decision points for the Board before finalizing and implementing the plan. Staff will return to the Board at the appropriate time to discuss these decision points. It will be important to decide what services will be provided on the 45 acres and who will provide them. The 45 acres is part of Coordinated Houseless Response Office (CHRO) RFQ/RFP process to identify potential service providers for a managed camp or other services. Responses to the RFQ/RFP were due April 12, 2024.

There will be many challenges to implementing the relocation plan, including topography; access; securing and storing abandoned personal property; enforcement; addressing new encampments; the storage and removal of vehicles; weather issues; and, once people are relocated, keeping the 137 acres clear. Staff will apply lessons learned from the Juniper Ridge project to the Redmond project. However, there are differences in the two populations and projects.

While difficult to determine the appropriate budget for this project, Property Management has programmed \$400,000 in the FY 24-25 department budget request.

Attachments:

- Map of East Redmond (the County-owned 137 acres identified for exchange is colored in dark blue and the County-owned 45 acres identified for alternatives location is the north part of the land colored in green).
- Draft DSL Land Exchange Remediation Plan

BUDGET IMPACTS:

\$400,000 has been programmed in the Property Management budget for FY 24-25.

ATTENDANCE:

Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator

Kristie Bollinger, Property Manager