

WORK SESSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

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SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Civic Assembly Recommendation on Hughes Property

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to follow up from the May 27 Council Work Session and offer a resolution for consideration of the Civic Assembly recommendations.

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

1. What questions or suggestions do Councilmembers have on the draft resolution?
2. Would Councilmembers like staff to bring the resolution forward to a regular meeting?
3. Are Councilmembers interested in a ballot measure supporting the Civic Assembly recommendations?

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

One of the identified 2024-2026 Council priorities is to develop a Hughes Site Master Plan for the 164-acre site by engaging in an inclusive process to determine desired future uses on the site. Implementation of this objective resulted in a Civic Assembly process. Twenty delegates were randomly selected from across Fort Collins to reflect the city's demographic diversity in terms of age, Council district, housing status, household income, and educational attainment.

The Assembly convened for two full weekends, April 12-13 and May 3-4, to answer the following question:

“Informed by the diverse needs of our community, what use of the Hughes site will contribute most effectively to Fort Collins’ long-term vitality and meet the requirements outlined in the 2021 ballot measure?”

On May 27, 2025, staff and delegates from the Assembly presented the final report and recommendations to Council, which included:

- Property should be utilized for multiple uses
- Indigenous consultation, support, and opportunities should be included
- Natural habitats should be restored throughout the development, as possible

- Outdoor education and interpretation should be included
- Community gathering space(s)
- Minimize light pollution
- Include trail connections to Maxwell and Pineridge
- City will consult with land use experts, planners, architects and designers for the optimal location of site features

In an effort to support these recommendations and add additional clarity, staff has prepared (as recommended by the Civic Assembly) the accompanying resolution. The resolution includes the ability to implement all recommendations while adding more clarity to address park design best practices, acreage limitations to set expectations, and flexibility to acknowledge the uncertainties and likely long timeframe to implement the recommendations.

The resolution addresses all recommendations, recognizing that implementation will take many years and that some, like partnerships, would require additional contracts and operational details. All proposed uses align with the Public Open Lands zoning designation, consistent with the 2021 ballot measure.

Key items:

- On-going consultation with tribes and the Indigenous community throughout the development of the site.
- The site character will be predominantly native and xeric vegetation and have a naturalistic architectural palette
- Natural Areas will acquire and restore/maintain up to 60 acres of the property.
- The remaining space will be managed as a park and can include the following uses and amenities throughout existing lifecycle:
 - Connective trail system throughout the site.
 - Disc golf
 - A sledding hill
 - Bike park features not to exceed 35 acres.
 - A community gathering space available for permitting.
 - Any necessary restroom facilities, shade structures, trash collection, parking, etc.
- Environmental educational partnership opportunity, including associated structures, not to exceed 20 acres.
- Site development will be taken through the City's development review process to ensure compliance with all current standards (e.g. stormwater, lighting, etc.).

Boards and Commissions Super Issues Meeting feedback

On June 23, two civic assembly delegates presented their recommendations with support from staff. Approximately 23 people were present, representing a mix of board and commission members and the general public. All were invited to comment and ask questions. Below is a summary of the comments and questions:

- Substantive questions were around the details and ultimate planning for the site. In particular, if the delegates or Council will parcel off the site for specific uses and if things like flooding and stormwater issues were considered and what kinds of facilities/structures would be permitted.
- Representation of the community through the civic assembly stratification process

- Process around how delegates came to their recommendations and votes and if they were equipped with the information received.
- Recognition that a Civic Assembly process/method is appropriate for large, high profile and high stakes projects -- but may not be the answer for everything.
- General appreciation for the delegates and sharing their perspectives

NEXT STEPS

- Resolution to be considered by Council on August 19
- Resolution to refer to ballot can also be considered by Council on August 19

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft resolution
2. Presentation