

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: August 14, 2025

Staff Contact: Leslie Herring, City Administrator

Agenda Item: Receive presentation of proposal from Hunt Midwest & Finkle + Williams for former Westwood View Elementary School site

Background/Description of Item

On April 1, 2025, an election was held on whether the City should sell the existing Joe Dennis Park on the corner of 50th & Rainbow Blvd. to enable redevelopment of the site and replacement of the park on the former Westwood View School site. The results were 48% in favor and 52% opposed to the sale of the park. The following week, the City's development partner - Karbank - terminated its purchase agreement with the City, which left the City with no way to fund the purchase of the school site under the current agreement between the City and the School District.

The events and activities that have taken place over the past four months are detailed in an August 4, 2025 staff report accompanying the public presentation of the results of a City-run Request for Proposals (RFP) process to identify an assignee to assume the City's right to purchase the former Westwood View School site. That staff report is accessible [via this link to the Planning Commission meeting packet posted to the City website](#). The presentation from Hunt Midwest – who was recommended for the award by the RFP Review Committee – is available via this link to the project page on the City website:

<https://www.westwoodks.org/projects-and-plans/page/former-westwood-view-elementary-school-site>.

Staff Comments/Recommendation

Staff Comments

The only decision before the City Council is whether to assign the City's purchase rights to a new developer or to terminate the purchase agreement with the School District.

As of end of business on August 12th and since July 31st – when the award recommendation was posted publicly to the City website – City staff has received a total of four (4) emails and one (1) in-person visitor to City Hall on this topic, each a different contactor. Of the five (5) total contacts made to City staff, only one stated an opinion on whether the City should assign its purchase rights to Hunt Midwest. The other four (4) contactors only asked questions about the Hunt Midwest & Finkle+Williams proposal and process of how the recommendation was developed but did not state an opinion as to whether they felt the City should assign its right. Many of the questions posed in the four inquiries were addressed during the August 4th presentation to Planning Commission.

Public Comments

Questions received from the four members of the public about Hunt Midwest's proposal focused on:

- a. Housing types, ownership, and pricing
- b. Design, architecture, and materials
- c. Green space and public use
- d. Parking, site circulation, and walkability

- e. Stormwater management and environmental impact
- f. City review process and community engagement
- g. Developer collaboration and adaptability
- h. Infrastructure, financing, and public investment

Although concepts for the site were required as part of the selection process to find a partner to accept the City's right to purchase the former school site, at this stage, no site plans, architectural designs, or rezoning proposals are being finalized or approved. If assigned, Hunt Midwest will complete their own due diligence and then seek to close on the property — but any detailed plans or approvals will come later, with full public input. That said, responses to questions about topics a–e above would not be able to be fully addressed until and unless Hunt Midwest closes on the purchase of the property and begins engineering and architecture work in earnest.

It should be noted that teams had only one month – June 11 to July 9 – to develop concept(s) to propose to the City. The time necessary for the team(s) to refine plans would take place if – and only if – the City assigns it purchase right for the property to one of the development partners.

Questions received about the team and proposal that have more immediate relevance to the City Council's decision at-hand revolve around topics f–h (and, to a certain extent c) named above. Those questions have been aggregated and addressed in an addendum to this staff report.

Staff Recommendation

To aid the City Council in the decision at hand - whether to assign the City's purchase rights to a new developer or to terminate the purchase agreement with the School District – City staff recommends the Governing Body

1. Receive a presentation from Hunt Midwest in support of their proposal;
2. Consider community feedback collected before and during their meeting; and then
3. Provide direction to City staff and the City Attorney as to whether to bring an action item to the City Council at its September 11, 2025 meeting to formally consider approving the assignment.