



## Legislation Text

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A Resolution Authorizing a Land Exchange Between the City of Colorado Springs for 23.531 Acres of Property Known as the Tutt Sports Complex and Classic Communities a Delaware Limited Liability Company, for 23.531 Acres of Property at the Springs Ranch Golf Course

**Presenter:**

Britt Haley, Design & Development Manager, Parks Recreation & Cultural Services

**Summary:**

This is a proposal to exchange 23.531 acres of undeveloped property on Tutt Boulevard south of South Carefree for 23.531 acres of property with Classic Communities at the neighboring Springs Ranch Golf Course. The proposed land exchange would achieve several major goals identified in the Colorado Springs 2014 Park System Master Plan. It would provide additional sport facilities and ball fields in the north portion of Colorado Springs. It would also facilitate more efficient maintenance and management of park property in this area. Consolidation of land and facilities at Coleman Community Park (Coleman Park) would take advantage of existing operations and maintenance staffing assigned to Coleman Park and allow for a better use of the Coleman Park acreage located on the east side of Sand Creek. Pursuant to the advice of the City Attorney's office, this item was not presented at a Council work session. This item is closely linked to the quasi-judicial items regarding the Greenways at Sand Creek (rezoning ordinance and concept plan). In order to avoid discussing the quasi-judicial items prior to their hearing, presentation of the land exchange was delayed until the quasi-judicial hearing was presented.

**Background:**

Classic Communities (Classic) is under contract to purchase the approximately 171 acre Springs Ranch Golf Course property adjacent to and across Sand Creek from the partially completed Coleman Community Park. As part of the discussion of the impact of that potential purchase on surrounding land uses, and settlement of prior contract provisions which were contingent on the continued operation of the golf course, discussion also began more generally between the Parks Department (Parks) and Classic about land use in the area.

Parks owns a 23.531 acre undeveloped property with frontage on Tutt Boulevard, south of South Carefree. This property was acquired by Parks with the intent to fulfill one of the Park System Master Plan goals of providing addition sports complex facilities in the north and eastern areas of the City. The property is located adjacent to the Springs Ranch Golf Course and Springs Ranch Community.

Since its acquisition, the Tutt Boulevard property's viability as a developed sports complex has changed. It is now less desirable for a sports complex site due to the neighboring land uses, and its long frontage on Tutt Boulevard which makes it a relatively narrow site for its proposed use. The recent development, which has occurred on the boundaries of and across from that site, consists of senior living facilities and apartments which may be incompatible with the active uses, traffic patterns

and lighting associated with the sports complex use. Finally, the acreage and site constraints associated with the Tutt Boulevard property make it too small and too narrow to fully operate as a sports complex given the sizing of regulation play fields and the parking that would be required to serve that use.

Parks staff recognized early that a land exchange could benefit the nearby partially developed Coleman Park. Sports complex features currently exist at Coleman Park with the soccer stadium and adjacent Vibes baseball stadium. The plan for Coleman Park is to develop it with typical community park elements to include additional sports complex facilities such as ball fields. A project that would result in a larger Coleman Park property benefitted by the same or a similar number of acres associated with the nearby but separate Tutt Boulevard property would be beneficial to the development of the Coleman Park, the provision of essential community sports facility needs and operationally for Parks.

More specifically, consolidating parkland at Coleman Park would better utilize the space already available but currently inaccessible at Coleman Park. Coleman Park includes undeveloped land east of Sand Creek next to the golf course. This area of Coleman Park does not have access from the east. Parks has analyzed the cost of providing a bridge across Sand Creek from the northeast side of the community park over Sand Creek to the inaccessible area. If Parks is able to acquire additional property for Coleman Park on the east side of Sand Creek with access from Peterson Road, Coleman Park's eastern area becomes available for use with less cost. The impact of this opportunity is that the park could be developed on the east side with vehicular access from Petersen Road and the bridge that would be necessary in either case could become a less expensive pedestrian bridge as compared to a bridge that is rated to safely handle the weight of vehicles and heavy equipment.

Another advantage of land consolidation relates to Parks staffing for operations and maintenance. Parks currently has operations and maintenance staff and facilities for Coleman Park. An expansion of that site has less impact on the staffing, operations and maintenance requirements than the development of a new site at a separate location. Recognizing that development of Coleman Park into the envisioned community park will require additional personnel and equipment to operate the site, the consolidation of facilities in that location would provide for a more efficient use and deployment of those resources. Finally, and perhaps most appealing to the neighbors to the golf course property, the preservation of some of the existing golf course green space as an addition to Coleman Park will provide more consolidated and connected greenspace than if Parks pursued development of the Tutt Boulevard property separately.

Recognizing that the potential benefits of a land exchange were worth consideration, Parks staff and Classic agreed to conduct the due diligence necessary to pursue a land exchange. As with our other land exchange proposals, this would be a value for value transaction as demonstrated by an appraisal. Real estate appraisals for both properties have been completed. The map included with this presentation shows the area where Parks would prefer to consolidate land for Coleman Park and the property on Tutt Boulevard in the context of a possible redevelopment of the areas.

As part of the redevelopment of the remaining property at the Springs Ranch Golf Course, Classic proposes to build an approximately seven acre neighborhood park which would be operated and maintained by Parks. Classic also proposes to construct a Sand Creek Trail connection through the community, which would also be maintained by Parks. There is approximately 20 acres of open space/native grassland on the east side of Sand Creek that would also be dedicated to Parks. Finally,

Parks is evaluating three pedestrian bridges currently in operation for the golf course for operation and maintenance as part of the trail connectivity throughout the redevelopment area.

**Previous Council Action:**

N/A

**Financial Implications:**

The Tutt Boulevard property owned by the City appraised at \$4,925,500. The portion of the Springs Ranch Golf Course proposed for the exchange appraised at \$4,989,000. Classic proposes to exchange the City's 23.531 acres for the same number of acres at the current Springs Ranch Golf Course which would be a value benefit to Parks of approximately \$63,500. Separately, satisfaction of the prior Springs Ranch Golf Course owner's park credit agreement obligations will result in a payment of approximately \$4 million to Parks which will be used for design, development and construction of additional facilities at Coleman Community Park.

**City Council Appointed Board/Commission/Committee Recommendation:**

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board (Parks Board) voted to unanimously recommend approval of this proposed land exchange at its January 8, 2020 meeting.

**Stakeholder Process:**

With Parks support for the outreach, Classic conducted four voluntary neighborhood meetings in May and June of 2019 to provide information and receive feedback from the public about the proposed changes for the Springs Ranch Golf Course acreage. Classic and neighbors who attended both reported that those public meetings indicated a positive response to the land exchange idea. Additionally, a presentation of the proposed land exchange was made to the Parks Board at its meeting in September of 2019 and the proposal was taken to Parks Board for action on January 8, 2020. Each of these meetings provided opportunity for public comment.

**Alternatives:**

Do not authorize the proposed land exchange or recommend changes to the proposal.

**Proposed Motion:**

A motion to authorize a land exchange between the City of Colorado Springs for its 23.531 acre Tutt Sports Complex property and Classic Communities for its 23.531 acre Springs Ranch Golf Course property to allow expansion of Coleman Community Park as depicted on Exhibit 1.

N/A