

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

NOVEMBER 21, 2017

Repurposing Victoria Golf Course into a State-of-the-Art Community Recreational Center

The Victoria Golf Course, operated by the County of Los Angeles' (County) Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) at 340 East 192nd Street in Carson, has a challenged history. The property was formerly known as the BKK Carson Landfill, which was operated by a private party from about 1948 to 1960 before it was acquired by the County. Following the landfill's closure, the property was subdivided into different parcels, a significant portion of which was transformed into Victoria Golf Course in 1966.

Subsequently, Victoria Golf Course has been hampered by a wide range of issues. For years, the County had an underperforming operator, VICO LLC, which defaulted on lease payments and allowed the property to fall into disrepair by failing to perform routine maintenance, among other responsibilities.

On September 29, 2015, the Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the transfer of the operating lease (Lease) to the current operator, Plenitude Holdings, LLC (Lessee), which has undertaken substantive efforts to enhance the golf course's performance as required by the terms of the Lease. Despite the Lessee's investment of approximately \$800,000 in a renovated driving range, among other improvements, Victoria Golf Course continues to underperform compared to the County's other golf course facilities. For example, in recent years, Victoria Golf Course has decreased

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rounds of play to 47,349, while the average rounds of play at the County's high-performing courses is 92,400. In addition, Victoria Golf Course generated \$19,407 for DPR's operating budget in Fiscal Year 2016/2017 compared with an average of \$1,387,930 revenue generated by the County's high performing courses.

The City of Carson was identified in DPR's 2016 Los Angeles Countywide Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment as an area with a high park need. The County has an average of 3.3 park acres per 1,000 residents. However, in Carson, there is an average of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Therefore, it is appropriate to meaningfully explore alternative uses for the site, with the objective of potentially converting the property into a more accessible recreational facility that would provide enhanced amenities to better serve the surrounding community and region at-large. This is consistent with the Board's previous direction to DPR to expand the uses of golf courses, including developing more community-based programs (Hahn, September 5, 2017) and to provide an overview of current golf course revenues and recommendations on ways of better utilizing golf courses (Barger, September 5, 2017).

The Lessee has proposed exploration of alternative recreational uses for the site, a portion of which they would potentially develop and operate, and other uses that could be separately constructed and operated by non-profit entities. This updated vision for the site could potentially include tennis, soccer, and golf facilities as well as facilities dedicated to after-school youth development programming, which would collectively be operated under the leadership of the Doug Kimmelman Foundation, a non-profit organization (Foundation). In addition, the Lessee has proposed complementary uses including a multi-purpose indoor sports facility, meeting rooms, and a public health and fitness center, along with incidental/ancillary uses that would serve the public recreation facilities.

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Collectively, these features would support high-quality sports training, instruction, and competition activities, as well as health and youth education, while simultaneously creating a destination for community gatherings and entertainment. Such state-of-the-art facilities could attract a larger population of diverse users for a variety of forms of recreation, compared to its current access which is limited to green fee-paying golfers.

The Lessee's proposed exploration of a conversion of the golf course to a recreational center would be fully-funded by Lessee, the Foundation and other potential philanthropic sources. No monetary contribution is currently requested from the County. Moreover, the combination of new recreational uses could generate substantially more revenue for DPR compared to what is currently received from the Lessee from its golf course operations.

In order to facilitate the County's exploration of potential new recreational uses, the Lease should be amended to allow for the reconfiguration of the premises in the event that new or different uses are approved by the County. Accordingly, the Director of DPR, in consultation with County Counsel and the Chief Executive Officer, should engage in exclusive negotiations with the Lessee and the Foundation. Environmental review of any proposed future uses, consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), would be completed prior to the execution of any agreement to change the current use of the property as part of a more comprehensive effort to analyze the viability of converting the golf course into a more diverse and accessible recreational facility. Such agreement or agreements would return to the Board for approval pursuant to Government Code 25536 and, in the case of the Foundation, Government Code 26227.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Find that the proposed lease amendment for the County of Los Angeles (County)-owned property located at 340 East 192nd Street in Carson and commonly known as Victoria Golf Course, is categorically exempt from the

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California Environmental Quality Action (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15301 as it involves an existing facility and no expansion of the existing use;

2. Find that the proposed negotiation and execution of Exclusive Negotiating Agreements (ENAs) with the Plenitude Holdings, LLC (Lessee) and Doug Kimmelman Foundation, a non-profit organization (Foundation) are not subject to CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378 because they do not meet CEQA's definition of a project as ENAs do not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment, in that they do not commit the County to a particular course of action;
3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to negotiate and execute an amendment of Lease No 50215 between the County and Lessee, approved as to form by County Counsel, with such amendment to be executed by the Director of DPR or his designee. Such lease amendment should allow for the potential reconfiguration of the existing premises to allow for its conversion from a golf course to a more accessible and diverse recreational facility, in the event that such a change in use is approved by the County in the future in compliance with CEQA; and
4. Direct the Director of DPR, in coordination with the CEO, to negotiate and execute separate ENAs with the Lessee and the Foundation, respectively, with approval as to form by County Counsel. The negotiations should include the terms for option to lease agreements, which would be subject to approval by the Board of Supervisors, providing for long-term ground leases that comply with all applicable County rules and policies.

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