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11 acres in Citrus Heights coming for sale

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Citrus Heights is moving into formal marketing for sale of an 11-acre site at a key intersection for the city, with some strong hints of what city officials would like to see a new owner do.

Any development concepts for the Sylvan 40 property should tie in if possible to the neighboring Sylvan Plaza, incorporate outside dining in any restaurant uses, and not include auto-centric uses such as gas stations or drive-thru restaurants.

"We really are excited about this because we see this as an important corner for the city," said Colleen McDuffee, the city's community development director.

Sylvan 40 is 11 undeveloped acres on the northwest corner of Old Auburn Road and Auburn Boulevard, next to Sylvan Middle School and otherwise surrounded by residential neighborhoods and a cemetery to the north.

Other city planning goals for the property include compatibility with neighboring uses and being financially feasible with long-term benefit to the city. Housing, with a mix of styles and ownership status, is also encouraged.

Thursday, the Citrus Heights City Council approved taking the property to market, McDuffee said, though with an interim step of discussions with a cemetery district over selling about an acre of the Sylvan 40 property on its north side.

From there, McDuffee said, the city envisions marketing Sylvan 40 for about 90 days, with hopes of moving forward on a sale and toward a development plan in about six months.

She acknowledged the COVID-19 pandemic and its overall dampening effect on the economy could play a part in those timelines.

"We don't know what the impacts of COVID-19 are yet," she said. "We'll adjust as we go along."

The city's planning goals for the site will be part of the marketing, she said, but they're not the same as a strict condition, under an ordinance or specific plan, for example.

Citrus Heights bought the property, previously a school site, for \$3.43 million last year. That was based on assessed value at the time, McDuffee said, adding the city hasn't set a price yet for sale but would hope to at least break even.

Ben van der Meer

Staff Writer

Sacramento Business Journal



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Citrus Heights will begin marketing an 11-acre site at Old Auburn Road and Auburn Boulevard within the next few months, with planning goals for a future project.