TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CITY MANAGER  DEPARTMENT: UTILITIES
DATE: JANUARY 14, 2008  CMR: 109:08

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND ADOPTING A PARK IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR FOOTHILLS PARK AND APPROVAL OF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE LOS ALTOS HILLS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT FOR A JOINT FIRE HYDRANT AND WATER MAIN UPGRADE PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that Council adopt an ordinance approving and adopting a park improvement plan for Foothills Park; and approve an agreement with the Los Altos Hills County Fire District (LAHCFD) to augment the existing water system in Foothills Park and along Page Mill Road for enhanced fire protection.

BACKGROUND
Staff has been working with LAHCFD for the past 18 months to develop a project that will provide enhanced mutual fire protection benefits for each entity. The agreement with LAHCFD for the joint fire hydrant and water main project (the Project) will add five fire hydrants to the City’s foothills fire fighting capabilities: one in Foothills Park at Towle Campground in Wildhorse Valley and four along Page Mill Road. The Project will include reconstructing a section of water main that was identified in the 1999 Water Study as in need of replacement. Replacing this main will improve fire fighting capabilities in Foothills Park, on Page Mill Road above the Foothills Park entrance, in the Hewlett Subdivision, and along Los Trancos Road. The Palo Alto portion of the project will be designed and constructed by LAHCFD. Palo Alto will review and approve project plans and inspect the construction work. Staff anticipates the design and construction cost of the Palo Alto portion of the work will be approximately $500,000. Upon completion of construction, the facilities will be turned over to Palo Alto to own, operate and maintain. Palo Alto will reimburse LAHCFD for expenses for the Palo Alto portion of the
Project. Utilities engineering staff has worked closely with Fire Department, Planning Department and Open Space staff to ensure that the Project was designed in such a way as to avoid significant impacts to the natural resources of the park. Through this concerted planning for the Project design, park community outreach, the Project construction zone and habitat protection, and terrain restoration methods, all aspects of the Project were thoroughly discussed in order to ensure a successful project and the careful protection of the natural environment. The Project, as designed, will greatly enhance the ability for staff and fire fighters to protect the park, its visitors and resources from the threat of wildfires.

**DISCUSSION**

The scope of work contained in the LAHCFD joint agreement will include the preparation of final bid documents; design and engineering support services; issuance of the Notice inviting bids; solicitation of bids; evaluation of bids; award of contracts, and daily construction inspection.

Final bid documents will consist of general conditions, special provisions, technical specifications, plans/drawings, and forms seeking price quotes for the Fire District’s portion of the construction work. The bid documents will also include bid schedule items seeking price quotes for Palo Alto’s portion of the construction work. The Project will be awarded based on the total bid for the LAHCFD and the Palo Alto work.

Commencing on January 15, 2008, Pakpour Consulting Group (“PCG”) will be the vendor for the design of Palo Alto’s facilities and for engineering support services during the bidding and construction phases of the Project, including bid document development, bid evaluation and contract management. (LAHCFD has used PCG for project design on previous projects and currently uses PCG as its “District Engineer.”)

The contract will be awarded to the lowest, responsible and responsive bidder for the Project which will include work for both LAHCFD and Palo Alto, if Palo Alto approves. Daily construction inspection will be provided by Palo Alto engineering inspection staff.

**Park Improvement Ordinance**

A park improvement ordinance is required for the installation of a new fire hydrant, water mains, and relocation of existing pressure-reducing valves to a new underground pressure-reducing station at the Foothills Park entrance.

Utilities engineering staff has coordinated the project planning and construction schedule with the Community Services Department Staff at Foothills Park to ensure that the Project will not interfere with park access or services. Construction activity for the proposed Project will most likely occur in the spring of 2008, after the rainy season. Construction is planned for weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**RESOURCE IMPACT**

Funding for the City’s portion of the Project is available in Water Capital Improvement Project WS-07003. Council approved funding for this project as part of the FY 07-08 budget.
Maintenance costs are included in the Water Fund operating budget for these proposed replacement facilities.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**
The approval of this agreement is consistent with existing City policies. This recommendation is consistent with the Council-approved Utilities Strategic Plan Key Strategy No. 1, “Operate distribution system in a cost effective manner,” Strategy No. 7, “Implement programs that improve the quality of the environment” and Objective No. 2, “Invest in utility infrastructure to deliver reliable service.”

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**
This project is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 21080.21 of the Public Resources Code (excluding pipelines of less than one mile). The City of Palo Alto Department of Planning and Community Environment filed a Statement of Exemption with the County on September 17, 2007, attached as Exhibit C.

**ATTACHMENTS**
A: Agreement for Joint Fire Hydrant and Water Main Upgrade Project  
B: Ordinance Approving and Adopting a Park Improvement Plan for Foothills Park  
C: Statement of Exemption

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