



**Western Hills 40-acre Land Acquisition;
Here are some answers to the questions we are most frequently asked.**

What does this project entail?

The scope of this project is the acquisition of a forty-acre parcel in the western hills. The City will enter into a Property Purchase Agreement with the owner and follow the terms of the agreement which include amending the existing environmental documents, pre-zoning the property as required by LAFCo, and amending the annexation application with LAFCo to include the parcel. As an end result the owner will retain fifteen acres for development of up to three parcels and the City will secure twenty-five acres as open space.

What are the benefits of the acquisition?

The City's goals/benefits include: (1) preserving property in the Western Hills as open space and watershed for the Ukiah Valley; (2) creating opportunities for access trails, including, but not limited to, public hiking, biking, and associated recreational activities; (3) developing public facilities for various municipal purposes provided that their development and use do not unreasonably conflict or interfere with the preservation of the property as open space and for watershed protection.

What impacts will this cause to neighborhood streets?

There are no anticipated impacts to any streets. The access point to the property is from a private driveway on Redwood Avenue. There would not be any public access associated with this driveway.

What are the plans for public access?

Any development of public access of City owned open space will go through the public process and require planning, environmental analysis, and funding. No plan is proposed at this time.

Will the project increase fire hazards?

One of the motivating factors to City ownership of property in the Western Hills is to gain control of fire mitigation activities. The impacts of this forty-acre acquisition add to the property the City will have the ability to easily maintain. Additionally, the development area on this parcel is on confined to the lower elevations and will have zoning code R1-H restrictions.

Furthermore, per the California Fire Code, a portion of the water (varies based on size and number of homes) will be required to be allotted for fire protection services and cannot be used for residential use; this will be accomplished by a float switch that will be installed in the tanks. In addition, Public Resources Code Sections 4290 and 4291 contain additional requirements for lands within Very High Fire Severity

Zones that would apply to the Project. These include, but are not limited to, the following which are designed to provide defensible space and fire protection for new construction and ensure adequate emergency access: increased property line setbacks for all applicable construction; on-site water storage for fire protection, driveway/roadway types and specifications based on designated usage; all weather driveway/roadway surfaces being engineered for 75,000lb vehicles; maximum slope of 16%; turnout requirements; gate requirements and setbacks, parking standards, fuels reduction regulations, etc. All future residential development would be reviewed by the fire department and be required to adhere to all fire safety standards, including those etc.

What plans are there for maintenance of the open space?

The property will undergo an initial evaluation with an environmental survey and habitat assessment components. It will then be incorporated into the Western Hills Watershed Protection Area Management Plan (currently in draft form). This plan determines the best treatment approach for fire mitigation efforts including a Forest Management Plan. There are no fire breaks on this parcel to be maintained. A Long-Term Monitoring Plan will be developed, with stakeholder input, and will be used to guide baseline and ongoing efforts. Monitoring efforts will be coordinated with City staff, the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority, and other partners.

Are there any permits associated with the project?

No. Any site development would require all necessary applications and permits to be filed prior to commencing.

Are there any costs associated to the tax payers from this acquisition?

Funding for the purchase of this parcel is provided by a combination of community donations and Water Resource Department funds, there is no general fund impact to the purchase. Likewise, any development costs such as utilities and roadwork would be borne by the developer.

Will any cannabis cultivation be allowed?

Under the City's zoning code, certain indoor cannabis uses are listed as being allowed, with an approved Use Permit by the Planning Commission, in all zoning districts, with the exception of **residential zoning districts**. However, the Public Facilities-zoned property will be owned by the City, has no structures, and the City has no plans to engage in these activities.

If you have remaining questions, concerns, or would like more information about the project, please call Maya Simerson, Project Administrator at 707-367-0699.