

**STAFF REPORT****October 15, 2015**

**TO:** Recreation and Park Commission

**FROM:** Michael Webb, Assistant City Manager  
Heidi Tschudin, Contract Project Manager  
Kerry Daane Loux, Park Planner/Grants Specialist

**SUBJECT:** Continued Discussion of Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center

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**Recommended Actions**

Staff recommends that the Commission take the following action:

1. Provide formalized written comments to City staff for further discussion and consideration of the City's public review and community comment period for the DEIR for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center.

**Background**

On September 17, 2015, Contract Project Manager Heidi Tschudin presented information related to the content of the draft EIR for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center, including an overview of the project description, specific components addressing park amenities and/or negative impacts to the proposed project, and specific Chapters in which the Recreation and Park Commission would most likely have the most interest and concern (i.e. Chapters 2, 3 and 4.13 – 4). H. Tschudin also suggested that the Commission also review Table 3.3 on page 3-31 and Table 3.4 on page 3-37.

Below is a list of summary comments provided by the Commission at the September meeting, and which have been shared with the project staff thus far:

**General questions in need of further clarification:**

1. How is the construction of the parks and public spaces going to be phased as compared to the proposed phasing of the project?
2. Are there any existing parks or open space areas in Davis, or in the region, that are privately owned and maintained? (same maintenance levels as other City parks, hours of operation, access to restroom facilities, liability for users)
3. How or would the City be able to control pesticide use and maintenance methods consistent with the City's IPM policy if privately maintained?
4. What uses are proposed for the oval space and other public green spaces, both for residents of Davis and employees of the project? What is the vision behind the design?

5. If the parks and public spaces are privately owned and maintained, then the property should be subject to the Park Maintenance Tax? How is this being addressed?

Commission Comments:

W. Arnold – Views this project as favorable as it assists the City in diversifying its revenues - potentially allows or eases some of the financial constraints for the City; would like to see more definition of what areas are specifically being proposed to be maintained by the private property owner and that in which the City will be maintaining; would like to see same level of care/maintenance standard and public accessibility as any other City park or greenbelt; interested in reviewing more detail and clarity in later design phases. Lends the idea of being more dense and more creative with parking- can't we squeeze down the parking and potentially add more green park space, gravel path around perimeter; parking dominates footprint.

C. Greenwald – needs further clarification of proposed private parks – how are the private spaces to be used by public? Hours of operation? Standards of service or level of maintenance care? Would like to see more detail on proposed bike lanes and alternative fuel vehicles (i.e. electric vehicles); potential partnership with UCD for Research & Development or housing; promote uses for start-up companies; the potential work/live scenario needs to be balanced adequately so as to provide ease and accessibility to the arts, music, restaurants, coffee shops, theatre or other night life.

E. Griswold – interested in learning more about the concept of privately owned and maintained property; how to ensure public access; wants same level of care as other City parks and greenbelts; the amount of proposed parking surface is dramatic and would like to see alternative design that reduces that footprint. Confirmed that this is a conceptual plan and if the project were to become more dense, then it would require further review and approval.

T. Westlund – would like to defer providing official comments until the next meeting in October so that these concepts can be further discussed amongst Commission members. Would like to suggest that the Commission formalize their comments at the October meeting so that everyone has more time to formulate their thoughts and ideas.

I. Bray – supports the income generator to assist in supporting parks and recreation services in the community. Believes that there are some flaws in the Master Plan calculations as it does not take into account the density of a development (refer to NRPA standards); would like to see more detail on public use standards and conditions for after hour use and access; who carries the liability for privately owned/maintained spaces for public use; park designs need maximum flexibility and adaptability and should not be created for a specific sport or interest; would like to look at other examples of Innovation Centers (i.e. Palo Alto), and bring back the discussion in October.

The Commission agreed by consensus to formalize comments at the next meeting in October.

Supplemental Information

On Monday, September 28, 2015, City staff received the following information provided by Commissioner T. Westlund for consideration by the Commission in its continued discussion of this item.

“I (Commissioner Westlund) have prepared a list of suggested comments and responses to the Mace Ranch Innovation Center DEIR. They are meant to include areas that need to have responses from the Recreation and Park Commission. They can definitely be edited during our next meeting.

The items are as follows:

1. The DEIR states that the parks and green spaces are private, but available to the public. Who will own the land and the total extent of these areas should be clarified.
2. The well for gray water irrigation, piping and sprinklers are also listed in the DEIR as private. Is the maintenance and upkeep also private?
3. The trees, grass and landscaping are also listed in the DEIR as private. Is the maintenance and trimming of the trees private?
4. If the parks, greenbelts and bike paths are available to the public, will rest room facilities be provided for public use?
5. What if any is the extent of maintenance of the parks, trees, landscape and open spaces areas the responsibility of the City of Davis?
6. When the Mace Ranch Innovation Center becomes part of the City of Davis, the land will be subject to the City tax to maintain parks. Has this issue been addressed?
7. Private ownership of parks, greenbelts, trees and open spaces at the proposed Mace Ranch Innovation Center can be a very good idea, but since it is different than the rest of Davis, this concept needs to be clarified and well understood prior to approval.

I hope these items will assist in developing the Commission responses at our next meeting.”

As the Commission continues its discussion and trying to formalize comments related to the DEIR for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center, the above comments provided by Commissioner Westlund is not intended to be all inclusive, and other commissioner comments shall be considered.