

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Action: Murray Hill Land Transfer

Meeting Date: September 27, 2010
Department: Public Works
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: 3
Staff Contact: Neil Björklund
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-4909

ISSUE STATEMENT

This session is for the City Council to take action to authorize the City Manager to execute a small land exchange in the Murray Hill area of the ridgeline park system, as requested by the Friends of the Ridgeline (a program of the Eugene Parks Foundation).

BACKGROUND

In February 2010, the Parks and Open Space Division received a written request from Friends of the Ridgeline to execute a three-acre land exchange of mutual interest to the Friends of the Ridgeline and to the affected adjacent private property owner. The Parks and Open Space Division has reviewed the request, and has found it to be consistent with the vision, plans and goals for the Ridgeline Park system.

From 1999 to 2007, primarily using funds from the 1998 Parks Bond Measure, 78 acres of Ridgeline parkland were acquired in the vicinity of Willow Creek and Gimpl Hill roads in six separate transactions. The acquisitions provide for a future ridgeline trail connection between Gimpl Hill Road and Willow Creek Road. This portion of the ridgeline park system is generally referred to as Murray Hill.

Conceptual plans for the Ridgeline Trail system contained in the Ridgeline Area Open Space Vision and Action Plan call for an additional trail connection in this area heading due west from the Murray Hill area. The preferred route for this trail would cross property currently owned by Gordon Dorn. The route is preferred because it:

- is the most direct,
- avoids significant obstacles such as nearby Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) towers and private driveways,
- borders a priority habitat area (Oregon oak woodland), and
- facilitates a connection to adjacent land owned by the Reynolds family, from whom the City has purchased land previously, and who have indicated willingness to work with us on ridgeline acquisitions in the future.

In 2003, the City closed on a bargain sale of a 2.3 acre parcel owned by Lane County, which was adjacent to existing parkland and adjacent to Gordon Dorn's property.

Members of Friends of the Ridgeline discussed with Mr. Dorn the desired future trail route, and he has indicated a willingness to exchange the area desired for the future trail connection for City-owned land

adjacent to the Dorn residence, as illustrated on the attached map. This exchange would facilitate the desired and planned westerly trail connection, as well as transfer additional high priority habitat into the City's ownership, and would provide Mr. Dorn a desired additional buffer between his residence and adjacent ridgeline park land.

Upon consultation with the City Attorney, it was concluded that the most appropriate process for this transaction would be the process outlined in Eugene Code Section 2.872, which provides that the council may dispose of City-owned land that is not subject to other requirements (e.g., declaring land as surplus, or governmental transactions) via a proposal submitted to the City Council for action. Consistent with those provisions, the council can adopt a motion authorizing the City Manager to execute the land exchange consistent with the terms described in the agenda item summary (AIS) and its attachments.

The requested land transaction would exchange three acres of land now owned by Mr. Dorn for three acres of land now owned by the City, with no monetary consideration paid by either party. The City would cover the costs of surveying and processing the necessary lot line adjustment. Friends of the Ridgeline would cover any other incidental expenses.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

No policies were found relating to this proposed action.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

- A. Approve the motion.
- B. Decline to approve the motion.
- C. Other, as directed by the council.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager recommends that the council approve the motion.

SUGGESTED MOTION

Move to authorize the City Manager to proceed with an exchange of land between Gordon Dorn and the City as described above, and as shown on the attached map.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. February 5, 2010, Letter from Friends of the Ridgeline
- B. Map of Requested Land Exchange

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Neil Björklund
Telephone: 541-682-4909
Staff E-Mail: neil.h.bjorklund@ci.eugene.or.us



5 February 2010

Mr. Johnny Medlin, Director
Parks and Open Space Department
City of Eugene
Eugene, OR 97401

Dear Johnny,

Friends of the Ridgeline is a program of the Eugene Parks Foundation, established last year with the goal of promoting the recognition, acquisition, improvement and enjoyment of the Ridgeline Corridor, as described in the locally endorsed Rivers to Ridges Vision. Eventually, the goal is to establish a publicly owned, cooperatively managed corridor reaching from Mt. Pisgah in the east to Fern Ridge Reservoir in the west.


We write to you today regarding a land exchange opportunity along the western part of the Ridgeline Corridor. The Dorn property exchange involves a 3 acre piece on the south slope of Murray Hill. The owner is willing to exchange this high preservation value, oak upland for a buffer strip near his house. Everyone who has looked at this proposal, including a member of Parks and Open Space staff, agrees that the exchange appears to be a win-win proposition. Recently, it has become apparent that owning the oak upland parcel would make potential acquisition of the neighboring Reynolds property on Murray Hill easier. We have had a signed letter from the owner Mr. Dorn expressing his willingness to proceed. The reason it has not moved forward is that it involves an exchange of city-owned property, and this action requires the approval of the Eugene City Council.

We write to you to request that you please consider this exchange and, if approved, take the issue forward to the City Council for their approval. This is a small step among many that must be taken to secure a publicly owned Ridgeline Corridor as is envisioned in public agreements. We believe the only expenses involved would be minor staff time and surveying costs.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have further questions or concerns. If you choose to move ahead with the exchange, we will provide testimony in support to City Council.

Our mission is to earn, raise, accept, and distribute money and other items of value to improve and enhance public parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities and services for the benefit of Eugene area residents.

Sincerely,


Art Farley, for
Friends of the Ridgeline

ATT:

Letter from Gordon Dorn
Map of Proposed Exchange

Our mission is to earn, raise, accept, and distribute money and other items of value to improve and enhance public parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities and services for the benefit of Eugene area residents.

From: Gordon Dorn
29323 Gimpl Hill Road
Eugene, OR 97402

To: Eugene Parks Foundation
Friends of the Ridgeline Committee

Re: Proposed property exchange

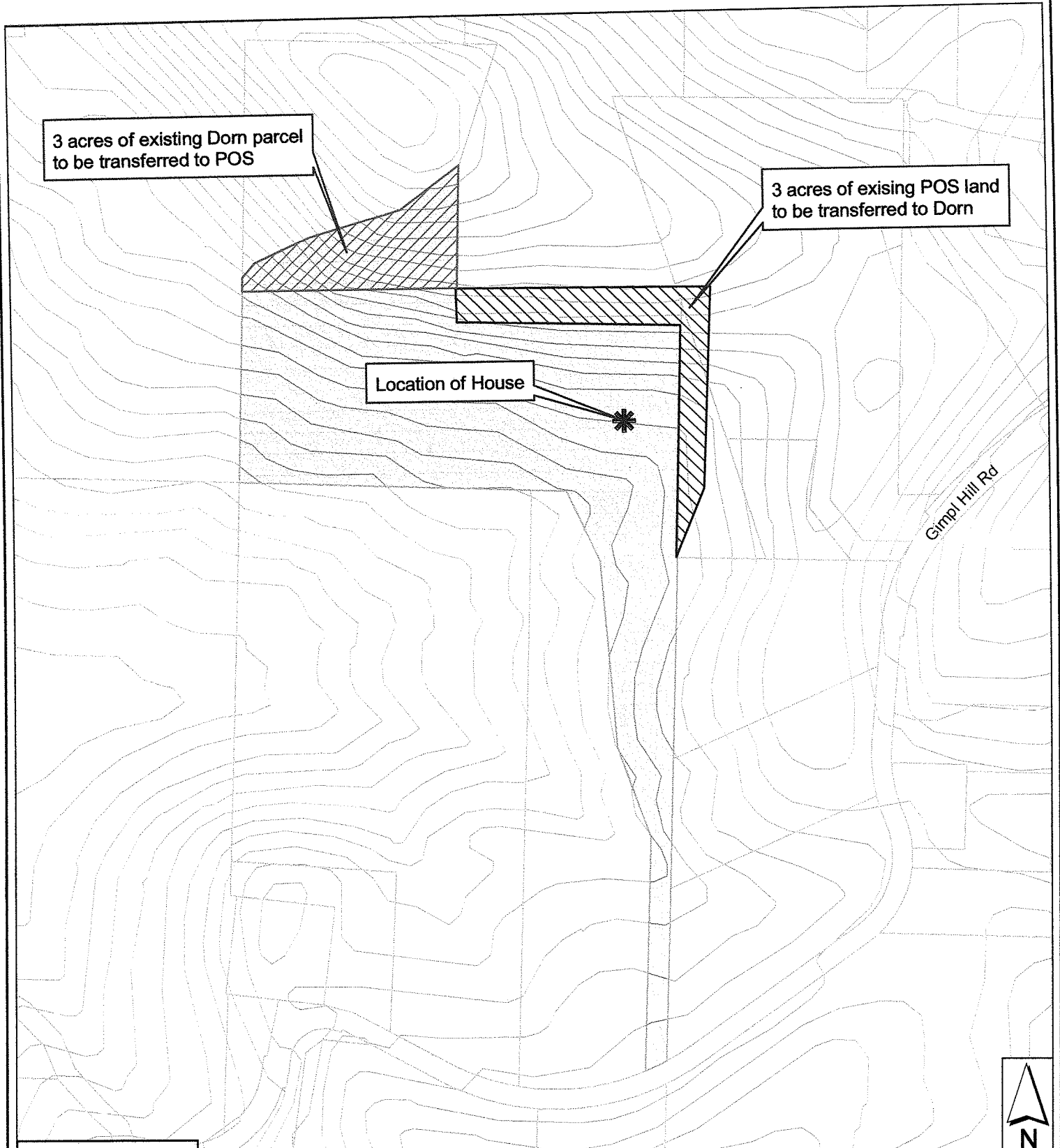
I have reviewed the attached preliminary map of a proposed property exchange between my current property and the Eugene of Eugene property as proposed by the Friends of the Ridgeline Committee.

I am willing to proceed with such an exchange, provided there is no expense to me.


Gordon L. Dorn

Date 2/5/10

Land Exchange Proposal - Concept Map



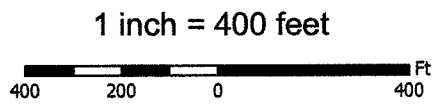
3 acres of existing Dorn parcel to be transferred to POS

3 acres of existing POS land to be transferred to Dorn

Location of House

Gimpl Hill Rd

- Legend**
- Dorn Parcel
 - Taxlots
 - Parks
 - 20-Foot Contours

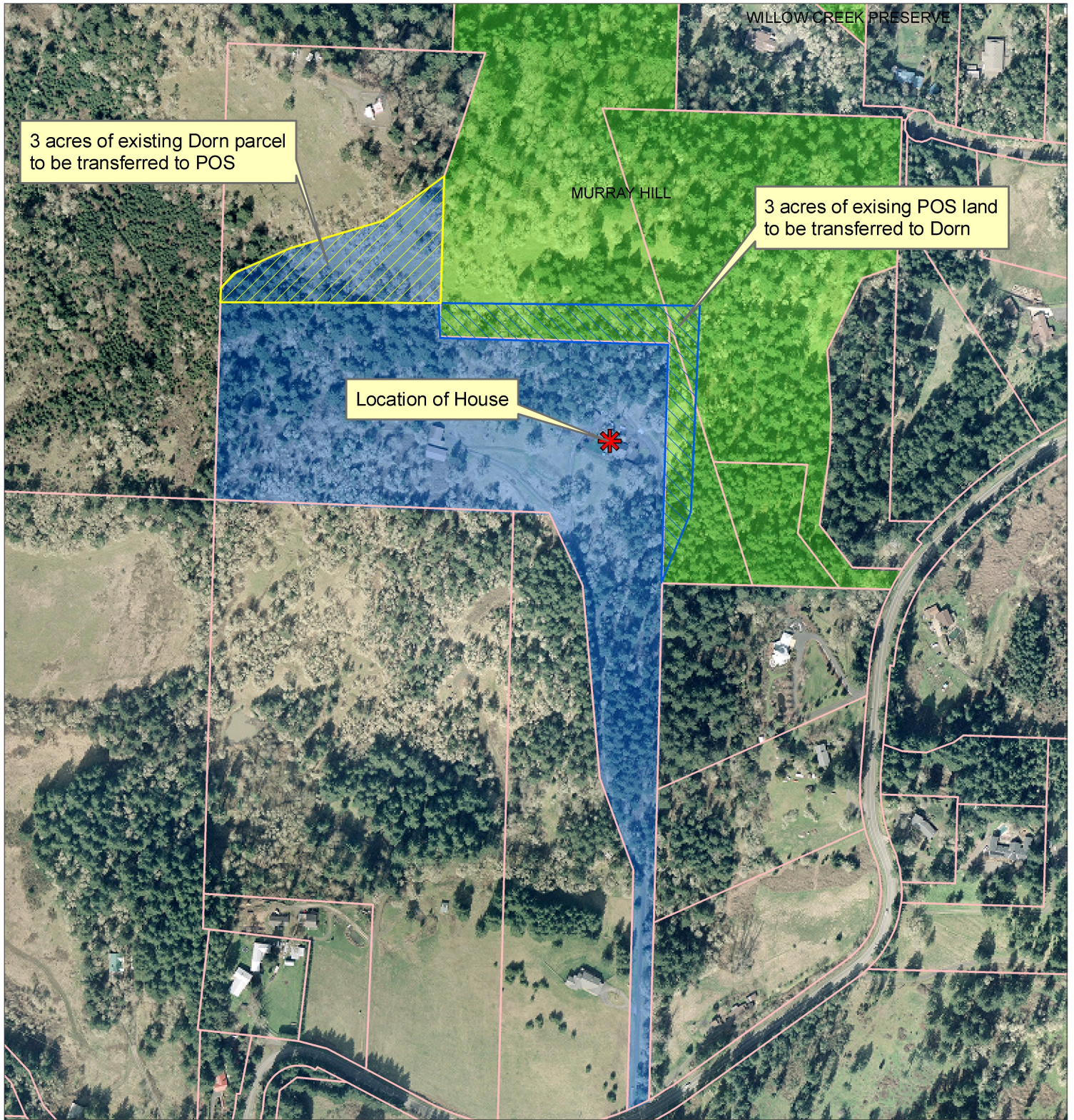


Caution:
This map is based on imprecise source data, subject to change, and for general reference only.






September 23, 2009

Murray Hill Land Exchange Request



Legend

-  Dorn Parcel
-  Taxlots
-  Current city park land

1 inch = 400 feet



September 2010