

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Date: 09/17/12
Item No.: 13.b

Department Approval



City Manager Approval



Item Description: Twin Lakes AUAR Discussion

BACKGROUND

The Twin Lakes Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) environmental review document was originally approved in 2001 in consideration of redevelopment of the Twin Lakes area. On October 15, 2007, the City of Roseville adopted an update to the 2001 Twin Lakes AUAR. Under Minnesota State Rules, an AUAR is required to begin the process to be updated prior to the expiration of five years from the date of adoption. In the case of the Twin Lakes AUAR, it will expire on October 15, 2012.

The lack of an AUAR would not necessarily halt development in Twin Lakes. To the extent that a particular development does not meet a mandatory threshold of an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), it may proceed. If a development exceeds the mandatory threshold for an EAW or EIS, the environmental review will need to be conducted. As the City Council is aware, having the AUAR in place eliminates the need to conduct further environmental review.

Staff would like to discuss with the City Council possible options for the Twin Lakes AUAR. At this point, staff has come up with three options for the City Council to consider and discuss.

- 1) *Begin the Twin Lakes AUAR update using the same scenarios as previously used.* This option would use the same scenarios that were used in the 2007 Twin Lakes AUAR and review the previous analysis and refresh the information as needed. This is perhaps the most timely option, as it will not require the drafting of a whole new document. This process would take several months and require third-party consultants. Depending on the depth of the analysis needed, staff estimates that this option would be between \$25,000 - \$50,000.
- 2) *Let the Twin Lakes AUAR lapse and begin a new visioning process for Twin Lakes and complete a new AUAR once the visioning is complete.* This option would entail revisiting the whole vision of Twin Lakes and basing a new AUAR on the newly crafted vision. In the interim, after October 15th, there would not be any “official” environmental document covering the Twin Lakes area. However, we will still retain the knowledge of the past environmental documents that we can implement if projects come forward. The City could also consider a moratorium in Twin Lakes, but staff would not recommend a moratorium given the past decade of stalled developments. A moratorium would put the property owners in a position where they cannot sell or develop their land when the economy is starting to improve. This option could be quite involved and lengthy

depending on what process is utilized. The visioning process could cost anywhere from \$10,000 to \$50,000 (or more) depending on the approach. This does not include the creation of a new AUAR, which would be between \$75,000-\$100,000. (The 2007 Twin Lakes AUAR update cost approximately \$85,000).

- 3) *Let the Twin Lakes AUAR lapse and let the existing zoning code and regulating plan govern development.* This option would mean that there would not be any over-arching environmental document regarding Twin Lakes. As mentioned previously, the knowledge and concern regarding environmental issues will still remain and very likely could be addressed as part of individual developments. If any developments exceed the mandatory thresholds, an EAW or EIS will need to be completed. If this option is chosen, staff would suggest a thorough review of the existing ordinance and regulating plan be undertaken to make sure that the zoning code has sufficient language to address concerns and issues arising out of development in Twin Lakes. This option would not require any additional expenditures and the work would be done by the staff, Planning Commission, and City Council.

POLICY OBJECTIVE

The Twin Lakes Redevelopment Area has long been established as an important priority for the City of Roseville. Ensuring that proper environmental study is undertaken for the Twin Lakes area will help in the success of the Twin Lakes Redevelopment Area.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Depending on the option chosen, costs would range from zero up to \$100,000. It is anticipated that these costs would be paid for by TIF 17.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff would like for the Council to have a discussion about how to proceed with the Twin Lakes AUAR. The options presented above are not meant to limit of the discussion, instead it is a starting off point. If there other options or ideas on how to proceed, they should be brought up and discussed. From the above identified options, staff is leaning towards Option #2 and re-visioning Twin Lakes. Even though, it is the most costly and most time intensive, staff feels a revisit of Twin Lakes is long overdue.

REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION

No direct action is requested. The City Council should discuss options on how to proceed with the Twin Lakes AUAR and give direction to staff on what to prepare for future City Council consideration.

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Attachments: None