

Thursday, June 19, 2008

Great Park board looks at next round of development

Focus could be on western portion of park site in meeting today.

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IRVINE – The Great Park Board of Directors today will discuss the first wave of development on the old El Toro base, with staff suggesting a focus on the Sports Park, Bosque, Trabuco Gate and Cultural Terrace projects.

The planned projects are on the western portion of the Great Park site, next to where the first phase of Lennar's adjacent development is expected to take place.

Great Park staff members are recommending a "broad and smart" approach to park planning, continuing to design the overall framework of the park while moving forward to build several features within one to three years.

Any Great Park development would be preceded by the demolition of runways and existing buildings, according to staff reports, as well as mass grading.

The proposed development of the Sports Park, Bosque, Trabuco Gate and Cultural Terrace would also take place near the 27-acre preview park now under construction. The first phase of the preview park is slated to open on July 12.

The staff says focusing on the western portion of the Great Park would also allow the unused portions of the facility to be used for temporary, revenue generating uses, such as land leases for agriculture. The board on Thursday will decide whether to extend a lease with El Toro Farms, LLC, and staff expects to return with plans to extend farming operations within a few months.

Staff is also asking the board to weigh in on which projects warrant further study in the Great Park plan. Among the proposals under consideration are an amphitheater, aviation museum, botanic garden, equestrian center, fire museum, library, multi-cultural center, national archives facility and water science park.

The board meets at 10 a.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 1 Civic Center Plaza. The full agenda is available online at www.ocgp.org.

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