



Staff Report

Date: February 9, 2023
To: Mayor Kuhl and Council Members
From: Rebecca Markwick, Planning and Building Director
Subject: Progress Report on the Ross Facilities Master Plan Project

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Town Council receive a progress report on the Ross Facilities Master Plan Project, discuss alternative concept options presented and provide direction to staff as needed.

Background

The Town of Ross is moving forward with the preparation of a Facilities Master Plan for the Town's municipal facilities and emergency services, not including fire, but including both police and paramedic services. These facilities presently include Ross Town Hall, a Ross Public Safety Building, a Public Works Building, and a portable building immediately adjacent to Town Hall. This site, identified as Assessor's Parcel 073-191-16, measures approximately 2.33 acres in size and has Corte Madera Creek along its western boundary. A range of services and functions occupy this site including the Town Council chambers, administrative offices, documents and records storage, the development services permit center, police department, fire and paramedic services, public works assets, and a cellular communications facility. Onsite parking is also provided on this site to support these services and functions.

On October 13, 2022, the Town Council approved a Consultant Services Agreement in the amount of \$162,285 for preparation of the Town Master Facilities Plan and authorized the Town Manager to execute an agreement with The KPA Group.

Discussion

The KPA Group (KPA) began their master planning process in November and has completed multiple site walks, discussions, and on and off-site meetings with Town staff. The initial steps included KPA performing site investigations, walking around the Civic Center site, gathering information, and specifically taking measurements of everything. After the physical spaces were determined, KPA engaged in conversations with individual department managers regarding the

specific needs of each department as well as the current space planning inefficiencies. Once that information was gathered, KPA developed a space program outlining space needs and space sizes for Town functions which will be presented at the Town Council meeting. Over the next few weeks further development and refinement of concept options will be made based on input from the Town Council and from the public. KPA has provided a comprehensive memorandum that elaborates on the details of their work performed thus far.

Fiscal Impact

The cost to prepare the draft Facilities Master Plan is included in the FYE23 budget. No additional appropriation is requested.

Attachments

- Memorandum: Progress Report on the Ross Facilities Master Plan Project

ATTACHMENT 1



**TOWN OF ROSS
Facilities Master Plan
Narrative Report
for
Town Council Presentation - February 9, 2023**

Introduction:

The KPA Group was retained by the Town of Ross in October 2022 to prepare the Town's Facilities Master Plan. The Master Plan will identify and support the operational needs and functional relationships of the Town's municipal government and emergency services. Additionally, the plan shall be sensitive to the surrounding properties, minimize impacts and enhance the valued character of the Ross community.

The Town has tasked KPA to prepare several alternative concept plans for the Civic Center and Kittle Park sites that address the needs, functions and potential environmental impacts for community consideration and discussions. The input and feedback received will then guide the Town's selection of a reduced number of planning concepts for further development.

Background Data:

The Town of Ross is home to over 2,300 residents among 1.56 square miles. Town services and administrative functions are provided at multiple sites throughout Ross including the Ross School, Ross Post Office, Ross Common and Ross Civic Center. Ross Recreation is housed in two classrooms at the Ross School, a K-8 public school. Other Town sites that occasionally host public events and functions include Ross Common and the Ross School.

The Ross Civic Center located at 31, 33 and 35 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard consists of a partially wooded site encompassing approximately 2.3 acres in area. Facilities at the Civic Center include the Town Hall constructed in 1927 with council chambers and offices, and the Fire House. Town Hall and the Public Safety Building were designed by architect John White in Spanish Colonial Revival style and constructed in 1927-1928. Town Hall currently houses council chambers and administrative offices. The Public Safety Building contains the Ross Valley Fire Department (Fire Station 18), Paramedics and the Ross Police Department. Other buildings include the Town Administration building located behind Town Hall which houses the Planning & Building department with reception for public day-to-day interface. Additionally, the Civic Center site accommodates a separate Public Works facility with small offices, shop areas and a utility yard.

A significant future program change to personnel at the Civic Center site will be the closure of Fire Station 18 by 2025. As a result of this vacancy, the Town of Ross is presented with an



opportunity to plan a Civic Center to better serve Town functions while maintaining and improving the visual character and unique charm of the site and facilities. Kittle Park, the small land parcel located across Lagunitas Blvd from Town Hall, provides additional opportunity for future consideration of changes.

Project Progress:

KPA initiated the planning process in November 2022 at a Project Kickoff meeting attended by the Town Manager and key department staff. The following reflects an overview of tasks accomplished to date:

November 2022

- Project kickoff meeting
- Site investigations and verifications
- Town staff discussions and interviews related to needs and inefficiencies
 - Paramedics
 - Police
 - Public Works
 - Town Administration
- Review Town ordinances, municipal and local codes to recognize site parameters, opportunities and constraints, planning considerations and environmental impacts

December 2022

- Site documentation and drafting
- Develop conceptual space program to define departmental needs and adjacencies
- Develop initial Conceptual Options for consideration
- In-person progress meeting

January 2023

- Refine Conceptual Options
- Finalize space program
- Site tour at City of Cotati Police Department to gain operational and functional insight
- Prepare presentation of Conceptual Options for Town Council Meeting

February 2023

- Prepare Narrative report
- Prepare PowerPoint slide presentation of Conceptual Options for consideration
- Present Conceptual Options at Town Council meeting on February 9th



Conceptual Site Options:

KPA, with the cooperation and support of key Town staff, has developed several Conceptual Site Options for presentation at the February 9th Town Council meeting. Below are brief descriptions of each option under consideration. Refinement of concepts will benefit greatly from Town Council, stakeholder and community input during and after the February 9th presentation.

The KPA Group considered multiple options and scenarios for rehabilitation and new construction of the Ross Civic Center. Throughout the initial phases of the planning process, multiple new and existing site features and attributes emerged as being important inclusions for all options. Improvement recommendations for Kittle Park are still in progress.

As a foreword to the descriptions, each conceptual option is proposed to reflect the following common site improvement features:

1. Vehicular drive realignment to public roads at Lagunitas Road and Laurel Grove Avenue
2. Preservation of major site trees
3. Removal of existing modular Administration building which currently houses Planning and Building upon relocation to main Civic Center building
4. Removal of existing modular Fire dormitory structure and temporary storage structures after Fire relocation
5. Removal of existing Public Works building and relocation of cell tower to reserve site area for Town allocation of six (6) housing units with resident parking
6. Optimization of onsite parking with improved vehicular circulation for Town staff and public use

Conceptual Site Option 1 proposes to renovate the existing Town Hall and Police/Fire buildings. The existing Town Hall building in its entirety and the front façade of the Police/Fire building would be retained. Proposed improvements to existing buildings will incorporate Spanish Colonial architectural features and shall modernize and expand each building as required to meet programmatic needs and adequately house all Town municipal and emergency service functions.

Conceptual Site Option 2 proposes to retain and modernize the existing Town Hall building to facilitate council chambers and related functions. The existing Police/Fire building is proposed to be replaced with a new Civic Center building to effectively house all Town municipal and



emergency service functions. Spanish Colonial architectural features shall be incorporated in the new building to complement the existing Town Hall.

Conceptual Site Option 3 proposes to retain the existing Town Hall façade only with a new single building addition to efficiently house all Town municipal and emergency services including council chambers and related functions. The Spanish Colonial architectural features would be incorporated for the new building to complement the existing Town Hall façade.

Additional Considerations:

In addition to the three Conceptual Site Options described above, there may be two additional considerations to be examined should the Town be interested in further development.

Consideration “A” – Additional Housing Units at Civic Center Site (8-12 housing units): Additional housing units may be accommodated at the Civic Center site. This addition would require relocation of the Ross Police Department to a standalone new building located adjacent to the Ross Post Office. Advantages of this consideration include a larger Public Works Yard that serves as an ideal buffer between Civic Center public buildings and the residential housing units. Potential disadvantage may be further reduction of the Civic Center site area in order to facilitate an increase in housing units with resident parking.

Consideration “B” – New Town Civic Center: This clean-slate concept proposes all existing buildings on the Civic Center site to be removed and then replaced with a single new building to house all Town municipal and emergency services including council chambers and related functions. The new building design would incorporate the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style, preserve the site’s natural setting, incorporate building efficiencies, and embrace technology and energy savings with state-of-the-art building materials and features.

Next Steps:

The Town of Ross wishes to incorporate resident and stakeholder points of view into the Facilities Master Plan. KPA will plan a public outreach event in late February. Through public outreach efforts and continued discussions with Town staff and individual stakeholder groups, KPA will strive to keep the community engaged and the Town informed on the production and documentation of the Ross Facilities Master Plan.

The work anticipated over the next couple of months includes the following tasks:

- Refinement of concepts based on feedback
- Planning and Hosting of Public Outreach Event
- Selection of Preferred Concept(s) for further development



- Definition of Costs for Plan concepts and Additional Considerations
- Documentation of Ross Facilities Master Plan Report
- Town Council Presentation

The Final Facilities Master Plan Report will be completed and submitted to the Town of Ross in summer of 2023.

END OF NARRATIVE REPORT