



November 8, 2016

Mayor Cheryl Selby
Olympia City Council
PO Box 1967
Olympia, WA 98507-1967

Dear Mayor Selby:

At our October 20, 2016 meeting, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) discussed potential property donations in the area near the Olympia Woodland Trail, particularly the segment of trail from Eastside Street to Boulevard Road.

Olympia Parks, Arts and Recreation (OPARD) recently received a parcel donation offer from Mr. David Thysell for a two acre parcel just north of the trail approximately a quarter mile from the Eastside Trailhead. The property is undeveloped and contains wetland and wooded habitat areas. The Thysell parcel is located near a number of undeveloped parcels that are owned by Thurston County. Thurston County owns these vacant parcels because the owners stopped paying the property taxes. The County is willing to transfer the parcels to the City in exchange for the City's payment of the back taxes owed on the parcels, approximately \$28,000.

PRAC discussed the benefits and drawbacks of OPARD acquiring the parcels in this area. Although this area is often impacted by encampment activity, it contains environmentally sensitive habitat, primarily wetlands, and would allow opportunities for OPARD to expand public access and use of the trail. Safety could also be better managed if the area was under City ownership. For these reasons PRAC members voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council accept the Thysell property donation, and that the City pursue other private property donations in the areas, as well as the Thurston County owned parcels.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached at (360) 431-4581 or jnieland@ci.olympia.wa.us.

Sincerely,

Jim Nieland, Chair
Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee