

03-15-2022

**City Council Regular Meeting
Supplemental Packet**

Meeting Date March 15, 2022

Council Memo

To: Mayor Palmquist and City Council Members
From: Ron Moorse, City Administrator
Date: March 9, 2022
Re: Ag Preservation Committee Report - Supplemental

The identification and evaluation of ag land that is the highest priority for preservation involves a land survey/mapping analysis to assist in identifying the quality ag land. In order to move forward regarding a land survey/mapping analysis, it is necessary to identify the scope of the analysis, as well as the costs and potential local partners to assist in the creation of the analysis. Provided below is a list of potential land attributes to be surveyed and mapped, and a list of information related to potential partners.

Land Survey/Mapping Analysis Cost

The Washington Conservation District has done somewhat similar mapping analyses for Washington County. The cost for a city-specific mapping analysis would be approximately \$2,000, depending on the scope of the analysis. This cost could be funded mostly by a past donation of \$1,500 which was made for the purpose of preservation and conservation, and partly from the City Council Contingency Reserve, which has a balance of \$5122.98.

Land Attributes to be Surveyed and Mapped

- Agriculture productivity score;
- Soils of statewide or regional significance;
- Classification study to determine lands currently in ag production;
- Overview of lands not currently classified as Ag that could meet the statutory definition to qualify;
- Information on the exempt status of land held by the city as part of any effort that could include the city holding title to lands put into any proposed agricultural easements and leased or rented;

Potential Partners for Funding and Information

- Information on any community foundations for the preservation of ag uses that may be active in other similar communities;
- Information on any municipal efforts in other communities to assist new farmers, and transitions in farmland ownership;
- Information on the role existing farmers have played in the preservation of agriculture and open space in the city and any impacts potential changes could have on their property rights, valuations, and retirement/transition planning;
- Potential funding partners working toward similar goals (Federal, state, county, local, and non-profit).

Council Action Requested

Motion to authorize staff to identify the necessary scope, costs, and potential local partners to assist in the creation of a land survey/mapping analysis of agricultural land in the city, and to authorize an ag land mapping analysis at a cost of \$2,000.