City of Rolling Hills INCORPORATED JANUARY 24, 1957

2 Portuguese Bend Road
Rolling Hills, CA 90274

AGENDA
Regular Meeting

FIRE FUEL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Wednesday, May 19, 2021

CITY OF ROLLING HILLS
7:00 PM

This meeting is held pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20 issued by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 17, 2020. All Committee members will participate by teleconference.

Public Participation: City Hall will be closed to the public until further notice. A live audio of the City Council meeting will available on the City's website (http://www.rolling-hills.org/). The meeting agenda is on the City's website.

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83444907576?pwd=UHhpMGtIczlZUDhyNmJTVW9tMXJoQT09

Or dial (669) 900-9128

Meeting ID: 834 4490 7576; Passcode: 906138

Members of the public may submit comments in real time by emailing the City Clerk at cityclerk@cityofrh.net. Your comments will become part of the official meeting record. Please provide your full name, but please do not provide any other personal information (i.e., phone numbers, addresses, etc.) that you do not want to be published.

1. **PARTICIPANTS:**
   James Black, M.D. Mayor Pro Tem
   Leah Mirsch, City Councilmember
   Elaine Jeng, P.E., City Manager

2. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

   REVIEW DATA FROM THE APRIL 14, 2021 FOCUS GROUP; REVIEW DATA COLLECTED FROM THE MAY 12, 2021 FIELD TRIP; AND DEVELOP POLICIES AND PROGRAMS FOR THE CITY COUNCIL'S CONSIDERATION.

   RECOMMENDATION: Review focus group data, field observations, continue discussions and provide directions to staff.

   Rolling Hills SOW_2_16_21_v2.pdf
   Focus_Group_Agenda_2021-04-14.pdf
   FocusGroupComments.v2.pdf
   FOCUS_GROUP.pdf
   FocusGroupPresentationToCityCouncil-2021-04-26.pdf
   c9e1f3567ec43dacc2234b9224a4ac5e0.pdf

PriorityCanyonsIdentifiedByFireDepartment2021.pdf

SCHEDULE FUTURE CITY COUNCIL FIRE FUEL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
RECOMMENDATION: Schedule future meetings.

3. COMMENTS WILL BE TAKEN BY EMAIL IN REAL TIME - PUBLIC COMMENT WELCOME

This is the appropriate time for members of the public to make comments regarding items listed on this agenda. Pursuant to the Brown Act, no action will take place on any items not on the agenda.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Documents pertaining to an agenda item received after the posting of the agenda are available for review in the City Clerk's office or at the meeting at which the item will be considered.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting due to your disability, please contact the City Clerk at (310) 377-1521 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility and accommodation for your review of this agenda and attendance at this meeting.

Agenda Item No.:
Mtg. Date: 05/19/2021

TO: **HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

FROM: **ELAINE JENG, CITY MANAGER**

THRU: **ELAINE JENG P.E., CITY MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **REVIEW DATA FROM THE APRIL 14, 2021 FOCUS GROUP; REVIEW DATA COLLECTED FROM THE MAY 12, 2021 FIELD TRIP; AND DEVELOP POLICIES AND PROGRAMS FOR THE CITY COUNCIL'S CONSIDERATION.**

DATE: **May 19, 2021**

BACKGROUND:
On April 14, 2021, Councilmember Leah Mirsch held a focus group meeting to get community input on fire fuel management in the canyons. The data collected from the focus group was presented to the City Council at the April 26, 2021 meeting. The Council appointed Mayor Pro Tem James Black and Councilmember Mirsch to the Fire Fuel Committee to analyze the focus group data and develop programs and policies to encourage fire fuel management in the canyons. The Fire Fuel Committee held an initial meeting on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 to review and analyze the focus group data. The Committee decided to hold a field trip on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 to visit Si's Trail and Upper/Lower Willow Springs Trails to collect site observations for additional discussions. The Committee also scheduled another Committee meeting for Wednesday, May 19, 2021.

DISCUSSION:
At the May 5, 2021 Committee meeting, the Committee developed the following actions:

1. Find locations along the trails for communal green waste bins to deposit trimmings.
2. City Manager to work with Republic Services to have bins placed at identified locations.
3. Identify locations for chippers along the trails.
4. Provide map showing canyons and blueline streams in the city.
5. Invite the Fire Department to educate the Committee on the proper measures to manage fire fuel in the canyons.
6. Conduct a field trip.

The Committee reported on their discussions at the May 10, 2021 City Council meeting.

The Committee's field trip on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 started at Si's Trail, then Upper and Lower Willow Springs Trails, Purple Canyon Trail, Sleep Hollow Trail, Georgeff Trail, Bent Springs Trail,

and Black Water Canyon Trail. The Committee also stopped at Storm Hill Park. The Committee observed many properties that lacked maintenance but they also observed a number of properties that actively maintained the areas of the canyons closest to the residential structures.

Several actions were discussed at the end of the field trip as follows:

a. Properties that show active maintenance should be recognized annually.
b. The Rolling Hills Community Association does a good job of trail maintenance and may be leveraged to perform additional fire fuel abatement work in the community with more resources.
c. Most trails were observed to have the capacity to place chippers but not 40 yard green waste bins.
d. 40 yard green waste bin could be placed at the most northern point of Si's Trail at the corner of Middleridge Lane North and Si's Trail. Another location for a 40 yard green waste bin could be placed at the intersection of Appaloosa Lane and Lower Si's Trail.

The April 14, 2021 focus group came about from a discussion on an incentive program to encourage the community to perform fire fuel abatement in the canyons. The incentive program stemmed from a discussion to leverage the City's recently awarded grant for vegetation management in the canyons. The City's grant project could serve as a demonstration project to allow the Fire Fuel Committee to have more data before developing policies and large scale programs to encourage fuel management in the canyons. The first phase of the grant project will be completed in November 2021. The first phase includes environmental assessment, boundary surveys, and other planning work. The implementation component of the project is expected to commence in January 2022 if the grantor releases phase 2 of the grant funds.

FISCAL IMPACT:
None.

RECOMMENDATION:
Review focus group data, field observations, continue discussions and provide directions to staff.

ATTACHMENTS:
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c9e1f3567ec43dacc2234b9224a4ac5e0.pdf
PriorityCanyonsIdentifiedByFireDepartment2021.pdf

Project Description Summary

The proposed Hazardous Fuel Reduction project will take place within the city limits of Rolling Hills located in the Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA, with 685 homes and 1,960 residents. Project will target canyons in the community for fuel modification. **The goal is to reduce the fuel by 50% - 70% tonnage per acre in targeted canyons.** Thus creating a defensible space required to protect life and property in case of a damaging wildland fire.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department identified 11 canyons with approximately 187 acres that can be treated to provide protection to the communities of Rolling Hills. These canyons have been identified using topography, local weather patterns, fuel load, fire history, and density of homes. Environmental health, natural habitat for wildlife, and stable hillsides for erosion control are considered in the plan. There are three primary ways to remove hazardous fuels from the environment.

- Prescribed Fire – a form of land management in which fire is intentionally applied to vegetation. Prescribed fires are conducted under desired weather and fuel conditions to meet specific objectives, such as to restore adapted ecosystems or limit the amount of dry brush in area prone to wildfires.

- Mechanical Fuel Treatments – are fuel treatments using machine activities designed to change the size and arrangement of the bio mass. These treatment methods include thinning, chipping, and pruning of lower tree branches.

- Goats – are used for fuel load reduction in dense understory and utilized in areas to rugged for mechanized equipment. This technique takes time and the returning of goats to the sites of fuel mitigation for up to four years.

Many of the homes in Rolling Hills are located at the top of ridgelines with the canyon drainages below. Canyons have large amounts of untreated vegetation that can threaten the homes in wildfire. To establish a priority list of project locations from highest risk to low risk, the Los Angeles County Fire Department focused on 11 canyons within the community The County of Los Angeles Fire Department categorized the canyons as follows:

- Canyons that would be at risk from wind driven fires originating from the southwest: Paint Brush Canyon, Portuguese Canyon, Altamira Canyon, and Forrestal Canyon. **Based on fire history maps these south facing canyons have the highest risk for a wildfire in the future.**

- Canyons that would be at risk during northeast winds: Georgeff Canyon, Purple Canyon, Willow Canyon, Sepulveda Canyon, Blackwater Canyon, John's Canyon, Agua Magna Canyon. Most medium or larger fuels are located in the bottom of drainages with pockets of fuel on north facing slopes. Access to vegetation in the bottom of these canyons would be difficult, so hauling out material for chipping

would have to be planned accordingly. Weed whip the fine fuels, target trees for removal which would enhance better fuel spacing.

Some properties have extended the clearance from there fence line down mid slope into the canyon below. This could set the example for other property owners to continue fuels reduction in these canyons. Continue mid slope down into the canyon with homes above, target vegetation for removal with spacing in mind by removing fuel continuously. Some of the canyons do have access to use mechanical equipment and to chip removed materials. Larger brush in the canyons could be trimmed up and ladder fuels removed. Expected out come with these fuels reductions would help slow rate of spread of fire, reduce flame lengths, lower amount of ember cast, reduce fire intensity in case of wild fire. This would allow for better defensible space for structures and allow firefighters opportunities to aggressively suppress wildland fire with ground and air resources.

Rolling Hills Terrain is comprised of many large and steep canyons that are the targets for this hazardous fuels reduction project. Each one of the canyons has homes lining the ridgelines. Home owners have done a good job with brush clearance 100' from structures but with the heavy fuel load in the canyons below topography and wind driven fires will threaten structures with flame lengths and ember cast. The alignment of the canyons makes them more at risk from winds of different directions. Strategically removing vegetation will give proper spacing to slow the rate of spread of fire in these canyons. Trimming and liming trees will reduce ladder fuels and help to keep the fire from getting into the canopy's, this will reduce flame length and ember cast that could threaten structures in the community.

The amount of funding appropriated through the grant for the project should go to the greater good of the community. Focus on canyons with highest threat of fire. Focus on fuel modification from the structures to the canyon bottoms. This project can be the example of what the community needs to keep moving forward towards the achievable outcome of canyons with less fire hazards toward the community.

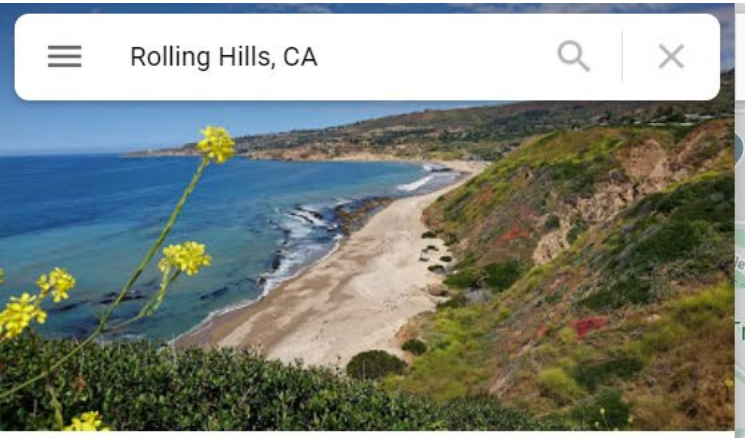
The County of Los Angles has ranked the canyons fire danger threat to the community of Rolling Hills based on Topography Fuel Weather and Fire history. The Canyons with threat from Southwest winds rank as the highest priority for fuels reduction. City limits are an imaginary lines, the canyons below in the conservancy are connected to the city of Rolling Hills. Focusing these grant funds to do fuels reduction on the south side of the city, would continue to build on the vegetation management Rolling Hills has already contributed to in the conservancy lands. Focus on where the city boundaries meet the conservancy, this will continue to break up the fuel continuity reducing fire spread and extreme fire behavior.

Paint Brush Canyon has two areas to target. The canyon between Cinchring Rd and Portuguese Bend. Canyon area below Running Brand Rd and Burma Rd (motorway).

Portuguese Canyon has a two areas to target. South of Crest Rd near Fire station 56 and End of Qual ridge Rd.

Forrestal Canyon has two areas to target. End of Packsaddle RD E and End of Rigbit Rd E, also end of spur road dead end of Crest Rd E.

Klondike Canyon is connected to Forrestal Canyon and has two area to target, between Southfield Dr and Portuguese Bend Rd also end of Packsaddle W.
A. Scope of Work, Section 1: Hazardous Fuel Reduction/Removal of Dead or Dying Tree Projects, sections 1-5 seen above, will be rewritten with specific detail to the South facing only canyon for submission to Cal OES grants.



Rolling Hills, CA

Rolling Hills
California

Clear with periodic clouds · 51°F
7:13 PM

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Quick facts

Rolling Hills is a city on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, in Los Angeles County, California, United States. Rolling Hills is a gated community with private roads with three entry gates. Homes are single-story 19th century California ranch or Spanish haciendas exemplified by architect Wallace Neff. Wikipedia

Three priority locations identified by the Fire Department:

(1) near the end of Quail Ridge Road,
(2) Paintbrush Canyon along the length of the Paintbrush Canyon Creek within the limits of Rolling Hills,
(3) south of Running Brand Road

GOOD EXAMPLES





BAD EXAMPLES







CANYON WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT
FOCUS GROUP

6:30PM, APRIL 14, 2021

1. INTRODUCTION
   (Meeting will be recorded)

2. PURPOSE

3. MEETING PROCESS

4. WHY ARE WE NOT MANAGING VEGETATION IN THE CANYONS?

5. IDENTIFY POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

6. CLOSING

    a. QUESTIONS
    b. REVIEW
    c. NEXT STEPS – PRESENT FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK TO CITY COUNCIL ON 4/26 OR 5/10

FIRE FUEL MANAGEMENT IN THE CANYONS
FOCUS GROUP

Index	Date Receivec	Comment	Resident
1	3/25/2021	Have fire department rate 6-7 major canyons for danger and mitigation strategy that would significantly reduce risk and enhance fire department fire management. Then property owners involved are notified of a plan and cost to accomplish the mitigation plan and are required to pay the fair contribution based on an estimate of cost of work. The major tree trimming companies bid the work as a master contract to faciliate quality control, eliminate property line disputes, and overall efficiency and the City agree to pay x% of the cost just like undergrounding poles. The City needs a fire safety ordinance to faciliate this and I believe it would have community support. And each owner involved gets credit for one dumpster of debris removal for material which can't be chippped and spread on canyon trails or new fire roads.	Don Crocker
2	4/3/2021	Tree companies to render competitive bids to the City for individual homeowners who live above canyons containing flammable material. Those homeowners who do not have houses above canyons could not be involved in the costs.	Ron Sommer
3	4/8/2021	Please refer to Committee re Zoom mtg next week: Do a drone survey of each RH canyon and have the fuel load analyzed for configuration risk and ease of mitigation action. There are 2 parties: risk to the owner to his residence AND litigation from other area homeowners who have done fuel mitigation if damage occurs and he has been notified of a dangerous condition; second the risk and cost to the whole City if there is massive damage and even loss of life like Paradis suffered for the next many many years in ability to continue to function and impact on property values. We need to move ahead.	Don Crocker
4	4/10/2021	Have a meeting of owners of a particular canyon in RH to view the Drone film and understand the risks and mitigation strategies and try to develop a plan for that particular canyon eg Flying Triangle to Crest Rd; Portuguese Bend Road rd North to Crest etc. probably some owners do not know what portion of a canyon is in their title.	Don Crocker
5	4/9/2021	(1) Gaining access to the canyons to perform mitigation and remove vegetation is a huge challenge. For many of us, the only practical way is via the trails. It would be a great help if the Assoc./City would provide pick up for cut vegetation using the trails, once or twice a year, just like the green waste pick up via the streets. I think this would provide a good start to solving a very large problem. (2) We, as a community, need to become educated in how to best reduce the volume of fuel in our canyons. It is important to know which plants are highly flammable (usually the oranmentals) and which are Natives (less flammable) and remove them accordingly. There are many experts to guide us in the correct procedures: what percentage of vegetation should be removed, which shrubs to keep and which to eliminate, how to prune correctly for fire safety, etc. It is going to be a big undertaking and we ant to get right.	Sue Breiholz
6	4/13/2021	Leah, I noticed the dwelling live brush removal note about your focus group tomorrow. I wanted to let you know that when this issue arose a few years ago I told the City Council in a meeting that they convened on the subject that clearing the canyons on hillsides was very likely to result in mudslides during heavy rains. I reminded them that after most major fires mudslides were the result. I got the normal rolling eye response from many in the audience and some on the City Council and some disparaging comments. The Fire Chief who had been invited to this meeting spoke up in my defense. He said that I was correct and that this was one reason that this is not required. He said that clearing canyons could result in mudslides and they could be destructive. He also noted that this is why evacuations are often required after major fires. Given the steepness of our canyons and our mud/landslide problems, this is a real and present danger. In addition when you clear our vegetated canyons this can lead to very fast moving grass/weed fires. When the last preserve fire happened I saw what looked like a small puff of smoke very near the ocean and called the fire department. Jim immediately started loading pets in the car just in case, as I called neighbors to warn them. In about 10 minutes I had to stop calling as we had a roaring fire in the preserve very near Rolling Hills. As to coyotes loving canyon vegetation s protection and avoiding open areas- the many coyotes who trapse through the property morning and night going to and from the preserve deep into Rolling Hills always take the trails. They are not nervous or afraid and have in the past, turned toward me rather than away, when I attempt to chase them away.	Cathy Nichols

7	4/15/2021	1. As a resident whose property includes the 75 foot County easement for the Lower Willow bridle/hiking trail and the 25 foot RHCA easement, I have long wondered whose responsibility it is to manage the vegetation on and around the trail. A joint effort with RHCA and the property owner would seem to be a reasonable solution. If the owner can get the vegetation trimmed, could the RHCA equipment be used to haul/mulch the trimmings? Since vehicles are not allowed on the trails (and as an equestrian I wholeheartedly agree with this!!) perhaps a dedicated maintenance period during the year for specific locations could be coordinated with RHCA's annual maintenance schedule. This would be much safer than expecting individual property owners to haul away trimmings along the trails down in the canyon, and avoid the use of unauthorized private/vendor vehicles on the trails without oversight. 2. Does the Fire Inspector view properties from the vantage point of the trails to recommend clearance/trimming of vegetation, particularly large dying trees? 3. There are many fences along the trails that have been neglected to the point that they would be considered fire fuel and should be removed or repaired as part of the fire fuel management process. 4. Neighborhood Zone meetings seem a good starting point for residents to discuss with neighbors the best solutions for their properties. Perhaps initiate some zoom meetings until in person meetings can resume. The trail system in our beautiful city should be viewed as a vital part of the fire department's defense of our hill in the event of a fire, and to that end ensuring that the trails are cleared for their job should be a priority.	Jana Cooley
8	4/14/2021	Elaine reading question from meeting: Q. Is there a clean map with each canyon names clearly of the canyons relevant to this discussion? A. No, there is not a map generated by the city, we have been using Google Map, that tells us which canyon is which. The Fire Dept. does have a mapping system that they use, it s much more sophisticated, it's that data that they use to figure out what canyons they want to prioritize, they gave the city a list of 11 canyons within the city, that is part of our grant project, out of the 11 canyons, they prioritize 4. Currently we don t have the names of the 4 canyon, but will request the names from the Fire Dept. which we can provide that to you via email, place your email address in the chat function.	
9	4/14/2021	Drafted plan for everybody to think about. The fuel load is actually an urban forest, rather than a wild land fire area, because that s what the forest service told me when they inspected my property a few years ago. Obviously a very dangerous condition, so the City has jurisdiction over the situation, so we need to plan, we need to budget a person that is committed and that is going to follow through, one that is on the payroll, that will develop plans, and sets priorities, etc.. He proposed to have a drone record the canyons however if the fire services already have these recordings, then that is great. But then overlay it with the ownership maps that each of us have, that plot lines for our titles and because land moves, your title stays the same as far as the definition as to where those lines are and so there would be an overlay of the photo with peoples title and who owns what in that canyon, so everyone of us for the first time may have discovered the property line is based on the meets and bounds lines that are recorded at the Recorder s Office. He suggested that they have field trips of groups that are identified of being owners of that particular canyon so they can understand exactly what the issues are based upon what the Fire Department is recommending. He suggested that there be groups, just for that particular canyon, they would get together and they would discuss what mitigation plan would be and that the city would gain the ability to permit trespass, so if someone says that don t want anybody coming in inspecting their property and/or having anybody bringing access across my easement line, because probably everybody has a 10 Ft easement at the bottom on our canyon and it s joined by the 10 ft easement and the adjoining landowner, so this probably ingress/egress through the Association to come in and create an access to that area for the purpose to using these machines. We have other ways to get rid of the brush and trees. You can bring in a grinder to grind up the vegetation. Use a chipper to chip it out, to the extent that you have to physically put stuff brought and that everybody would have a dumpster, free once a year, so the combined owners would have their dumpsters, filled and not charged to the owner, but accepted by the city to get the material out that can t be properly chipped and left in there. Let there be a report by Recorder, as far as what s happening, and we need a couple of demonstrations of canyon, and he proposed Size canyon because of access and the amount of fuel load coming right up to PBR and Crest Road where there is an enormous amount of fuel or also the Fying Triangle, cause that s where the fires come, the last 2 times and burned, or almost burned houses and is a very dangerous condition. Elaine: Mr. Crocker your combined thoughts and feedback will be combined. Will discuss hauling out, property management and other possible solutions.	Mr. Don Crocker
10	4/14/2021	One of Don s suggestions is excellent, that is to get the neighbors adjacent from the canyon together because there is a small manageable group and a lot of the times they don t even know the neighbors across the canyon, so that s an excellent start. Second: If we can get some direction from the Fire Dept. as to what vegetation is down in the canyon and what should be removed and what can be managed, I don t see us removing all vegetation in the canyon that is an unworkable solution, so is there something that works as an understandable standpoint. Those are 2 points to consider.	David McKinnie

11	4/14/2021	Having heard enough of board meetings and residents, nobody here wants to take the initiative, therefore, we can spend the Associations money to clean brush away but some resident do not want to pay. Also managing the canyon fire fuel is something that requires a little bit of care, so I have no problem, I can cut so many trees and cleaned out so much, that I would be happy to do more but it may be best if the city decides to use their own staff or their own people to clean things up properly. This is dealing with fire and paying for the clean up, whatever fees they charge, I m not trying to escape the charges but I m trying to have a uniform work done so we know the job is done correctly and the risk associated with that, if you don t have the vegetation cut and left there. That would be the most effective way of doing this, our residents are, or most of the residents are not very supportive but those particular ones that we have seen in the past don t want to take this on, but if the city has a city wide initiative, then that s their job. Accordingly that would be the most effective way to make the town safe from fires coming from the canyon.	Dr. Goodarzi
12	4/14/2021	The reasons this has not happened is because it is extremely expensive to remove the vegetation and to manage the canyons. The other problem is getting the brush from the canyon to a place where it can be picked up. You mentioned the dumpster, which that s great but we ve figured that our canyon, from the bottom to the top of the street, where would a dumpster be placed, it's 500 feet and it is a steep terrain, it would be physically impossible to get that vegetation from the canyon up to the street. Those are the 2 obstacles preventing this from happening.	Sue Breiholz
13	4/14/2021	Arlene Honbo: Liam, from our property, we do try to manage it but we manage what we can access, which is the square footage that is closest to the house. We live on Size Canyon, we do cooperate with a few of our neighbors who actually have the sides of the canyons that is also accessible. They manage it every year but the growth that is at the very bottom of the canyon, is similar to what Sue Breiholz is saying, it's very dense, very steep and it s not easy to manage because how do you get it out of there without dumping it out on the trail. I have spoken to landscapers, which they will only go so far down the canyon. They will stop because it s too dangerous for them. Part of it is the physical limitations, how do you access the vegetation? Gene Honbo: Don, it s not Size Canyon, it s Sepulveda Canyon, it was one of the canyon s that the Fire Dept. said that it was dangerous and to get to the canyon is tough. Sue, as far as getting the material out, the idea is to push it down the canyon and remove it from the bottom instead of moving it up. I think we need to get an idea from the Fire Dept., what the instate vision looks like? There are some people that worried about all vegetation will be removed, which it is not. What is a safe amount? What is a safe amount that would be pleasing, and make us look like a rural environment? I think we need some guidance from the Fire Dept. on how much should we remove and what is safe. It is going to cost a lot of money and I agree with Sue that it s not going to be cheap.	Arlene Honbo Gene Honbo
14	4/14/2021	The problem is a lot of us trying to get out of the canyon but there is stuff that is set, that actually has a real canyon below them, but they own. Not just ones that are set in here and have to clean up our canyons that don t really have canyons below them. Example, there is a gentlemen on Middleridge that cleaned off his deep incline, he got all the brush cleared off, he spent 3 years trying to get the right dun off this property. He made a small trail so he can get his tractor down there to clean out the dead vegetation. He spent a lot of money, he didn t destroy anything because he went down to where there was a creek, there is more to this than to just saying, well, I can make a trail down the hill side to clean my property. The other thing is that the canyons are steep, you can t get down and you can t make trails. I don t care where your easement are because they're steep enough that puts them into slide territories, so then you re thinking about this, you really need to think hard because it s not that simple.	Mr. Aichele
15	4/14/2021	NAME?: Before COVID, I have a biology background, I would walk the Raddle Snake Trail every day and would watch how the Black Mustard plant would grow and soon turn brown and become these vertical match sticks. I actually came up with some ideas, the problems that you guys are saying they're on steep slopes that we don t have access too, it has a lot of air to it cause these vertical dry sticks and the question I was trying to think of a way that we could get some type of futuristic engineering approach, from a bioengineering school, I tried all last year sending emails to Berkley, because my daughter is a bio-engineer, which I never got a response but maybe some of the local school. Black Mustard covers the preserve area, I believe that is a major fire fuel, it's very brittle, and soon after it dries out, I was thinking of all kinds of mechanical ways to roll it down the canyon so it wouldn t be such a fire hazard on the slopes. I spoke with the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, but did not get too far. Do we have a lot of Black Mustard in our canyons? Does anybody have contacts from local Universities, as far as an Engineering Dept., because this would be an excellent engineering project to figure out how to get to these slopes that are full of fuel that we really can t get access to. Another question, have the goats been effective on getting rid of this fuel in the past?	Name??

16	4/14/2021	The amount of energy that Mustard Seed has, clearing the hill, a fire barrier, we are making this issue so big, so large, so scary of the cause. We only have 3 canyons, we can start someplace and do so much, this month, next year, and so and so on. I have removed 48 trees and trimmed them, yes it s doable and if I have to bring that wood from 300 feet, I would have to worry about it, I would need to have 20-30 feet of fire barrier, so the fire canyon from the canyon does not jump up to the house, to the residential area. That s why, if you do this through City Planning, it would be much easier and we would not be disengaged, there will be no risk for the residents and no risk for the contractor. The fire barrier is not much, but this was what I would like to recommend. Remember, 3 months ago, we have spent so much money, clearing brushes for people who claim 10 ft fire clearance, here and there and wanting the city to pay for something that they should have done. And now your saying this is so big, I don t know where to start. Start at one place, and if you want my house, I m at the first canyon, start at mine, even though my neighbor is very unfriendly, very uncooperative, I have no problem. If the City is there, I will say I will take care of the trees on the canyon path to break that path and maybe there will be some cooperation, but right now the way I hear this, it s not a starter. As an engineer, I would take this as a solution, my house is against the canyon and maybe yours is not, we are talking about fire barrier but no eliminating the fire, let the hill burn, if it happens naturally due to some goofy fault, we just want to have a fire barrier, so the fire doesn t cross. That s what we really need to do with the canyon, otherwise to imagine we are going to eliminate all of that PV, which is those green stakes, it s not practical and that s what I would like to see, dry or green, it doesn t make a difference. That is my comment, it s better to approach this thing as a City point of view. If the city decides to charge each resident for their portion, for one out-pay, the first thing to do is to get authorization from every single resident that will give the city their permission, so the City can bring in a contractor or professional to review and assess. Otherwise if you don t do that we will never get it started because someone going to say that I m not going to let them on my property, that s my easement, I don t want to do this I v been hearing this for the past three years. That s the fact about our residents. I would strongly recommend to have a starting point, it doesn t matter how small it is. Start at someplace and set a precedence, then expand and grow and continue through the canyons. Thank you	Dr. Goodarzi
17	4/14/2021	If we can put a marsh rover, we can certainly figure out how to do this. Second: It s very easy if we take access through the canyon bottoms. Using the Association easements, and not being on the board, the Association has the authorization to go over the easements, in which the easements are at the bottom of the canyon and most likely will be at least 20 foot wide, on both sides, obvious we have blue line streams to worry about, environmental issues that would have to be taken into consideration. But basically, if you can take a vehicle, an all-terrain vehicle that you can place in there, we would have a master bid, all the tree trimmers bid competitively for the job, to clear the canyons, so you can get the very best price. These guys are extraordinary in what they do. They are not afraid going up the hillside and chopping down trees, basically you would have to cut it up more. You would have a vehicle that would have a bin, which you can throw all the vegetation in and drive up the street to haul it out, thereafter get another load. Some of these workers would carry the debris, a quarter of a mile, on their backs. So you could also drag the larger items, up the hill. The important thing is to take away the larger fire fuel vegetation that burns quickly and that has a lot of oil in it which will throw the ambers up the hill. My experience with Black Mustard is when it dies back, there is no fire value there, and it s just a dry, tiny stick. So I don t thing Black Mustard is a big risk, it s all those shrubs and bushes that are in the canyons. The idea of dragging this 300 feet, up the canyon, into a dumpster is unnecessary. Bidding out a contracter for this type of work, anybody would be very excited about getting a job for the City. Get competitive bids. When you consider the impact of a fire that destroys Rolling Hills, as the Paradise did, it financially impacts the city, as well as destroying the property value, even if your house doesn t burn down. This fire guy told me that this was an urban forest and would never permit to having this again in the State of California. Plus the State of California is coming up with money to manage fire, if that's the case we can somehow try to get some type of a Grant. I m happy to pay my fare share, we need access, the Association has access to the bottom of the canyon, it s easy to do this at the bottom of the canyon, gravity feeds, takes all the heavy stuff down the hill, you cut it and it roles down the hill to the bottom and cut it up, I ve done this myself. Let s not say that they re barriers, let s try it, one of these canyons are the top 3. I bet it can work, I ll be happy to pay my fare share and happy to pay for somebody else s share if they can't pay for it. To get it done, for example in the Flying Triangle.	Mr. Crocker
18	4/14/2021	In my humble opinion, the biggest problem is authority. The Council and City has to establish authority, whether they force the owner or the City pay, whatever it is, based on the last 4 years that I ve been here, every year is based upon authority. If one neighbor does not follow protocols, then it destroys the whole plan. The plan needs to be coordinated. I believe it is important to establish the authority of this initiative, on behalf of the Community Association, and of the residents. Establishing authority in my humble opinion, based on the character of our city and the board meeting is the biggest element, especially given the comments that was provided on your/this report. Having establishing that authority we have the right on behalf of the community and if somebody doesn t want to do something, we will deal with it somehow, that is important.	Dr. Goodarzi

19	4/14/2021	We have two models here, do what s right , which we all recognize if we can get 100% buy in, I dislike this term, however, if we get a buy in incompliance, it would be virtually impossible because there will always be someone who will not voluntary do anything, for numerous reasons .you can t tell them what to do. If your going to go with the voluntary approach, you will have to accept what degree among participation is acceptable and what can we do to work around that situation. The second model of course is the deliverable model. I, amongst everybody else, do not like to be told what to do on my property, however if you want 100% participation, the regulatory model is what you ll be stuck with. How/What has to do done and who is going to pay for it and how it s going to be paid for, those are the issues which will need to be addressed. So there are numerous ways to handling that issue. I agree that you have to establish whether it s going to be voluntary or regulatory. My own personal opinion is, as far as payment is I don t own any of the canyon, although I m right against the Paint Brush Canyon. I look down on it every day, it s all dead Mustard, it s full of Acacia, Lemonade Berry, and full of burnt tree from the 2009 fire, that were never dealt with, so I ve been hammering away for years now about the dangers of the Paint Brush Canyon. I also look down on the Nature Preserves, from the Southern border, it's full of dead Mustard, even though a lot of it has been cleared, thanks to our City for paying for it and still full of Acacia, Lemonade Berry and flammable vegetation. There is quite too much vegetation, the wrong kind, in the wrong locations in and surrounding the City. The canyons are absolutely critical, so I m going to hold off on the solution part, cause I have some specific ideas on that also, but I do agree with Don on if there is a will, there is a way. I agree with the Engineers, we can do, what we have to do. And if there is truly vegetation that is NOT accessible, I have a solution for that also, but I ll hold off on that.	Mr. Visco
20	4/14/2021	Especially along the canyons, water feeds canyons causing vegetation growth. We have to control dumping water in the canyons, it doesn t cost that much, believe it or not, at least for the brush canyon to install an 18 inch pipe, to take out all that water, it would cost $50-60K, so we have to be creative to say that if we do not feed water to that canyons, there would be no vegetation growth around the canyons, which equals less cutting of the vegetation. So if we can consider that and put it in your plan, it may be a lower cost, never mind landslide, also it controls the wild animal, coyotes going to the water source. Please consider that, by controlling the water, it may be a cost solution for this area.	Mr. Goodarzi
21	4/14/2021	I think Don brought up that s very important, to begin to control the canyons, is to control the bottoms of the canyons. That s where we can push our materials down, instead of up. It s easier to push material down in the canyon, access by four wheel vehicles, to the dumpsters. The canyons to be the safest are the ones that have access to the bottom of the canyons, such as Sepulveda Canyon, Blackwater Canyon, they have on the bottom of the canyon access routes where the Association can come in with their equipment and clear off the sides. Other canyons do not have access to the bottoms and maybe that s where we should start looking. How do we start gaining access to the canyon, so we can start clearing the hillsides of those canyons and push that material down to the bottom so we can easily remove them. I would think that controlling the bottom of the canyon and having access will remove the material.	Gene Honbo
22	4/14/2021	We have to involve the Community Association, the RHCA in most cases probably have a 20 ft easement in the bottom on the canyons, where the properties come together. I think it s critical to map the trails and easements correctly, so the Community Association has the right. You have to declare a dangerous condition, when you declare a dangerous condition the city has an enormous amount of power to correct that situation. The Fire Dept. will give you a letter, you can get a legal opinion on that. Then you have the right to take the legal steps, be very careful on the environmental issues, blue line streams are protected, there are environmental issues that we ll have to work around. But the fact is, if we go from the bottom and use the easements from the Association and the City makes it a dangerous condition, therefore the city says, we are going to do this a responsible and careful way, we aren t going to damage the environment but we are going to mitigate the types of materials that are most combustible and most likely create a more serious problem and thin it out and do the right things that the Fire Dept. as experts recommend, then we will have a legal basis to do it and everybody will have to cooperate. Just like right now, they are cutting down their trees, even though they don t want too, they are complaining about it, but I see an enormous amount of dumpsters filled with trees and debris from the Fire Dept. actions, right now, because it s a dangerous condition affecting the evacuation routes of our city, which is critical to keep open.	Mr. Crocker
23	4/14/2021	I have noticed that there are a lot of dead fuel in trees near homes, how is it being enforced besides a notification from the Fire Dept.? Is there a follow up?	Elizabeth Calfas
24	4/14/2021	When a wild fire hits, the Fire Dept. does 3 things: 1) they dump water on the fire; 2) they go out there like crazy, to create fire breaks, in front of the fire to contain it, and; 3) they drop Phos Chek in front of the fire, that's the orange colored stuff, Phos Chek naturally is not that color, they add dye to it so the Fire Dept. can see where it drops. I had the local Phos Chek rep come to my property. Phos Chek is considered a long term fire retardant, it stays on the vegetation until a certain amount of rain fall comes down. From a chemistry stand point Phos Chek basically is kind of like a fertilizer, that s why there isn t any environmental concerns, once it rains, it will wash off. It can be applied to your accessible areas and will last until the next rail fall. The cost is fairly reasonable, they recommend spraying twice a year. This can be one possible solution for the inaccessible areas in the canyons.	Mr. Visco
25	4/14/2021	What s the story on Lemonade Berry plant, because it s all over, including my property.	Jeff

26	4/14/2021	I had a representative from a tree service come out, spoke about the Lemonade Berry, Acacia and Mustard and his take on the Lemonade Berry is that it s a native plant, it grows fairly wild, large and manageable. It s not as ignitable as other invasive plants such as Acacia, Eucalyptus and Pine Trees but once it gets going, it is an intense flame, just like a lot of our native plants. At one point the LA County was pushing to have Lemonade Berry planted because of its erosion control capabilities not realizing its flammability. It s harder to get started but once it goes it burns quite well.	Mr. Visco
27	4/14/2021	Sepulveda Canyon is prioritized by the Fire Dept.	Arlene Honbo
28	4/14/2021	Controlling the growth vegetation along the canyon is part of the solution, you don t want to hear about the storm water litigation, run out water litigation but the fact is vegetation grows where water is at. Mitigation control over the growth of vegetation along the canyons.	Dr. Goodarzi
29	4/14/2021	We have to consider the environmental aspect of it, I think Don brought up an issue of blue line water, I do know of several canyons that do have running water all year around, which are protected, so we have to look at fire fuel management in the canyons and the environmental impacts. It s a real thing and there are California Laws about protecting canyons. So we have to work in that type of environment to really understand what the regulations are, and how to work with these regulations, so we can t stop water going through these canyons.	Gene Honbo
30	4/14/2021	The Blue line fresh water are protected.	Annie Occhipinti

FOCUS GROUP
APRIL 14, 2021
WHITE BOARD

Problems

1. Expensive
2. Steep slope/no access
3. Difficult to remove vegetation from the canyons to the streets
4. What is the proper mitigation? Vegetation type, density of fuel, fuel break?
5. Lack of authority (regulations)?
6. Environmental issues

Solutions

1. Priority areas Si's canyon and Flying Triangle
2. Provide dumpsters
3. Group homeowners together and target priority areas for the small group of homeowners to work together
4. Fire Department provide guidance on scope of work
5. More regulations
6. Find access and trimming pick-ups through the bottom of the canyons
7. Involve the Rolling Hills Community Association (RHCA); using RHCA's easement access
8. Phos Check Spray canyon (Visco)
9. Controlling growth of vegetation by controlling stormwater
10. Mitigate environmental impacts (blue line stream)

FOCUS GROUP BRIEFING
by Councilmember Leah Mirsch

City Council Meeting

APRIL 26, 2021

7pm

COUNCILMEMBER MIRSCH'S OBSERVATIONS

- Good attendance
- Positive feedback on focus group during the meeting and to Councilmember Mirsch post meeting
- Frustration in the community that the issue was discussed repeatedly but resulted in no actions
- Group expressed regulations are needed to impact action
- The community and leadership not moving fast enough
- Sweeping actions needed
- Valuable for neighbors to hear each other's opinions

OBSERVATION (CONT.)

- Mission of focus group: gather information from participants
- Some feedback came in the form of questions for the City
- Discretions exercised on answering questions or move beyond the questions to get feedback from participants
- In keeping with the mission, not all questions were answered

ADDITIONAL REASONS FOR INACTION

- Unaware property in canyons is property owner's responsibility to maintain
- Need referrals for vendors to perform work
- Feel it is a public safety issue, therefore city/RHC should be responsible
- Don't think it's a significant problem, no action needed
- Fear of erosion caused by removal of vegetation on hillsides
- Oppose any reductions in vegetation - like the look and feel of the natural vegetation
- Any reductions harmful to wildlife habitat
- Why should I do my property if others don't do theirs? No value unless entire canyon area does it. "All or nothing at all" concept
- Requirement for ongoing maintenance - never ending
- Not going to do anything until forced to - City and RHCA should enact ordinances/rules to require control, then enforce if work isn't done

Recommendations

- Move quickly to analysis phase
  - Create a subset of the standing Fire Fuel Committee, an ad hoc subcommittee to analyze and develop recommendations from focus group data
  - Dissolve subcommittee once recommendations are developed
- Demonstrate City's commitment
  - Keep the public informed and engaged
  - Ad hoc subcommittee report progress at City Council meetings
  - More outreach meetings as needed throughout the process
- Don't delay working on both easy and complex issues

City of Rolling Hills INCORPORATED JANUARY 24, 1957

Agenda Item No.: 10.B
Mtg. Date: 05/10/2021

TO: **HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

FROM: **ELAINE JENG, CITY MANAGER**

THRU: **ELAINE JENG P.E., CITY MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **REPORT ON FIRE FUEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MAY 5, 2021.**

DATE: **May 10, 2021**

BACKGROUND:
The City Council Fire Fuel Committee met on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 6:30pm. One member of the public attended the meeting. The Committee met for nearly two hours and discussed potential city actions to encourage the community to manage vegetation/fire fuel in the canyons. The Committee explored the suggested solutions from the community, collected as a part of the April 14, 2021 Focus Group.

DISCUSSION:
On Wednesday, May 5, 2021, the Committee developed the following actions:

1. Find locations along the trails for communal green waste bins to deposit trimmings.
2. City Manager to work with Republic Services to have bins placed at identified locations.
3. Identify locations for chippers along the trails.
4. Provide map showing canyons and blueline streams in the city.
5. Invite the Fire Department to educate the Committee on the proper measures to manage fire fuel in the canyons.
6. Conduct a field trip.

The Committee scheduled a field trip on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 at 1pm. The field trip will be facilitated by a Rolling Hills Community Association (RHCA) staff to ride on Si's Trail or Upper/Lower Willow Springs Trails. The Committee also scheduled a follow up meeting on Wednesday, May 19, 2021, at 7pm to continue to explore city actions to support the community in encouraging vegetation/fire fuel management in the canyons. The Los Angeles County Fire Department is confirmed to attend the Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 19, 2021.

FISCAL IMPACT:
None.

RECOMMENDATION:
Receive and file.

ATTACHMENTS:

LOS ANGELES COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT
PRIORITY CANYON LOCATIONS FOR FIRE FUEL REMOVAL

List provided to April 14, 2021 Community Focus Group Participants

The Los Angeles County Fire Department conducted site visits in Rolling Hills between December 2020 and February 2021 to identify priority locations to apply the recently awarded CalOES/FEMA Grant for vegetation management in the canyons.

The Fire Department assessed 11 canyons and prioritized canyons based on directional winds. Canyons at risk from wind driven fires originating from the southwest are as follows:

1. Paint Brush Canyon
2. Portuguese Canyon
3. Altamira Canyon
4. Forrestal Canyon
5. Klondike Canyon

Based on fire history maps, these above listed south facing canyons have the highest risk for a wildfire in the future.

Canyons that would be at risk during northeast winds are as follows:

6. Georgeff Canyon
7. Purple Canyon
8. Willow Canyon
9. Sepulveda Canyon
10. John's Canyon
11. Agua Magna Canyon

City of Rolling Hills INCORPORATED JANUARY 24, 1957

Agenda Item No.:
Mtg. Date: 05/19/2021

TO: **HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

FROM: **ELAINE JENG, CITY MANAGER**

THRU: **ELAINE JENG P.E., CITY MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **SCHEDULE FUTURE CITY COUNCIL FIRE FUEL COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

DATE: **May 19, 2021**

BACKGROUND:
NONE.

DISCUSSION:
NONE.

FISCAL IMPACT:
NONE.

RECOMMENDATION:
Schedule future meetings.

ATTACHMENTS: