

April 3, 2019

Rolling Hills 4-H Alpaca Project

22221 McClellan Rd

Cupertino, CA 95014

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for considering the request we presented at the March 2019 Parks & Recreation Commission meeting. As stated at that meeting, we are asking to move the fence line around the 4-H area at McClellan Ranch to extend a new pen that will be used to house alpacas. This will benefit not only the 4-H youth, but the community gardeners and the public who will be walking through the new gardens.

If you do not know what 4-H is, the 4-H youth development program is an educational program of the University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources that support leadership, public skills, citizenship and life skills development to youth ages 5 through 19. Activities are youth led; where youth learn-by-doing, where learning is cooperative; where older youth and adults mentor younger youth modeling skills, behaviors and relationships that young people can emulate. 4-H is based mainly off agriculture, with many of the most popular projects in 4-H being goats, chickens, pigs, lambs, cows, and the newly added alpacas, as well as other farm animals. 4-H is not only about animals though, as there are also projects centered around STEM, as well as the arts.

We are asking for a small extension approximately 0.6% of the new community garden space, or 448 out of around 70,000 square feet. We would be extending the existing fence 28 feet into the garden plot area. This 28 by 16 square foot extension would give us enough space for a small herd of alpacas.

This proposal will benefit the community in many ways such as:

- Bringing more visitors to McClellan Ranch Preserve
- Introducing people to farm animals and 4-H programs
- Helping Barbara Banfield, the Naturalist at the preserve, teach visitors the uses of alpaca fiber
- Creating a biosecurity buffer around the 4-H animal barn
- Helping the new animals thrive in their new environment
- Simplifies the path through the community gardens, eliminating a jog in the pathway, making it more accessible

Last year, we recorded over 500 visitors who came to our ranch during monthly ranch tours. These visits provide an opportunity for the community to learn more about 4-H and our animals, as well as an opportunity to visit the surrounding gardens and learn about the preserve at the nature center. In addition to this, Barbara Banfield, the Naturalist at McClellan Ranch, can use the fiber from our alpacas to teach visitors about spinning and using fiber from alpacas.

While this proposal would involve some minor changes to the original plan, it would not cost anything additional, as the trail size and length would stay the same and the trail alignment would be simplified, making the trail more accessible. Although this action of moving the fence would be reducing the size of a single garden plot, the total number of plots stays the same.

We are asking for this space as we would like 3 alpacas and cannot fit 3 animals, shelters, and other necessities they need inside the space we have currently available to us. This extension would give the alpacas a space they feel safe and comfortable in. Alpacas are herd animals and need each other to survive, therefore having only 1 or 2 would not be the best living environment for them.

In conclusion, we hope that this minor change to the plans will be considered to be put on the official agenda of the May Parks & Recreation meeting. We invite you and any other city employees to come to McClellan Ranch to allow us to give you a tour and discuss this change at your convenience. Please let us know what we need to do to advance this discussion.

Thank you and we look forward to meeting you,  
The Rolling Hills 4-H Alpaca Project