Ardenwood/Coyote Hills Agricultural Land Lease RFP Questions and Answers

1. **Section II. Land usage. What might be included or excluded from "generally accepted farming practices"?**
   Generally accepted practices are those that follow the regulations of the California Department of Food and Agriculture: [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/)

2. **What do "historical and current agricultural practices" include or exclude? How does these intersect with organic farming and "climate smart" agriculture, especially innovative techniques or established but not widely adopted practices such as "no-till"?**
   Ardenwood Historic Farm gives a glimpse of life on a family farm between 1890 and 1930. The purpose of the park facility is to preserve agricultural land, provide an opportunity to demonstrate historical and current agricultural practices, and to offer educational, cultural and recreational opportunities relative to historical heritage, farming, and horticultural practices. Historical crops included oats, barley, wheat, potatoes, cabbage, onions, garlic, turnips, carrots, tomatoes, corn, beans, squash, sugar beets, peas, and rhubarb. In recent times, Ardenwood’s fields were planted with grain, hay, a variety of lettuces, cauliflower, and broccoli. Most importantly, park interpretive messages that the farming practices should support include:
   - Farms provide everyday sustenance through the cooperation between farmers and the land.
   - Farms cultivate innovation.
   - Farms cultivate community.

   Coyote Hills is a climate-smart park focused on Ohlone culture, and therefore supports work that brings Native land management techniques and Traditional Ecological Knowledge into conversations around stewardship and climate resilience.

3. **Section II. Details for Ardenwood. What are criteria for determining "a reputable farm"?**
   A farm that is certified organic and follows the regulations of the CDFA.

4. **What are the criteria by which the park would approve a crop schedule?**
   Coordination with park staff is primarily based around crop rotation needs. Fields used on rotation for corn, an important Ardenwood program crop, are scheduled under the cooperation of both parties.

5. **Is an analysis of the water at Ardenwood and Coyote Hills available?**
   An analysis of Ardenwood water is attached.
The Coyote Hills Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) Chapter 5.6 Ground Water and Hydrology provide detailed information about the water quality. The LUPA and related documents can be viewed online: https://www.ebparks.org/about/planning/default.htm#patterson.

6. **What is the water quality at Coyote Hills given proximity to the Bay?**
   Ground water and aquifers were tested in 2018 and found to have different levels of alkaline and saline. The report is attached.

   In 2018 the existing well was sampled by a contractor and found to have higher levels of alkaline and saline than optimally desired, this could have been the result of the deterioration of the old well or the water quality. Per the contractor, these levels of alkaline and saline may occur at the new well but will not be verified until the well is installed.

   The contractor recommended using gypsum and sulfuric acid to counter the effects of the alkaline and saline. The higher levels of both compounds could contribute to clogging a micro irrigation system or could impact smaller vegetables. The Perry’s found no noticeable effect from the alkaline and saline on their pumpkin crop the year they planted and that was without the use of gypsum or sulfuric acid as adjuncts.

   The Park District is in the process of constructing a new well, the construction plan attached.

7. **How much time and effort are expected for the composting program? Does the lessee need to procure special equipment for this?**
   The level of involvement with the composting program is negotiable, and compost upkeep - including the procurement of equipment used to maintain the piles - can be coordinated with the park. Work put towards the compost program can be considered in-kind deducted from the lease payment.

8. **What is meant by "grazing tenant" at Coyote Hills? Is there a current tenant or does this refer to a hypothetical one? Is there a grazing lease separate from the current RFP? (that is, will the farm at Coyote Hills necessarily have a grazing neighbor) **
   There is a grazing tenant with a Park District grazing lease, it is separate from the agricultural lease. The grazer has rights to that land through their lease, but it does not preclude the agricultural lessee from having grazing animals with park staff approval. It is hoped that the new agricultural lessee will work with the grazer but not obligated to.

9. **Considering the prohibition of contacting park personnel other than Tiffany Margulici, may applicants contact and discuss questions with the former Ardenwood farming tenant?**
   No, the former tenant was at the site visit to give an overview of his operation.

10. **Would it be possible to get a written overview from the outgoing lessee about his perspective on the opportunities and challenges of the site?**
    No, the outgoing lessee was at the site visit to give an overview of his operation.
11. Section VII Agreement requirements, 5: what are criteria for approving proposed products for sale on premises?
   Products for sale on premises must be consistent with the themes of the Ardenwood and Coyote Hills Parks (see response to question 2 above).

12. Section VII Agreement requirements, 10: What is intended by "all prices, fees, and increases for any and all proposed products and services offered by the lessee must be at or below local prices"? Does this refer to retail prices at the farm stand? Yes.
   ○ Does it refer to wholesale prices? Yes.
   ○ What standard would be used for "local prices"? The farmer will be trusted to determine the local price.

13. Section VII Agreement requirements, 12: what does "total security" entail specifically?
   It means the Park District is not responsible for the farmers equipment or supplies. The farmer must develop a plan to secure the site.

14. On page 13, how are the following statements reconciled?
   "All information submitted in response to the RFP will be considered official information acquired in confidence and the Park District will maintain its confidentiality to the extent permitted by law."
   It means the RFP and any proposals received are in the public domain, but The Park District will obscure any information that includes financial identification, such as bank statements or tax returns. Once a successful proposal is identified or all proposals are rejected, all proposals shall be deemed public records.

15. Would you please share a list of attendees at the June 3 tour so that it might be possible for folks interested in exploring collaboration, to contact each other?
   The Park District determined that all attendees have agreed to share information and it will be shared on the Park District’s web site.

16. Do you allow teams to apply?
   Only one legal entity may be the legal applicant /lessee and responsible for all requirements of the proposal and the lease, if chosen.

17. Is onsite housing for workers provided as part of the lease?
   No.

18. Is worker housing permitted?
   Approval of worker housing is not guaranteed. However, proposals may include a plan for limited worker housing that must include the following:
   • Demonstrate the business need for worker housing.
   • Provide a plan on how the worker housing would be provided in a safe and legal manner.
- Quantify the Capital Investment that the proposer would make for worker housing, if any.

19. **Do you require a minimum rent?**
   No. Recent rates for Agricultural leases in the Park District is an annual fee of $150 per acre.

20. **What was the previous price per acre for the Ardenwood site?**
    $150 per acre per year. Can be paid annually or biannually.

21. **If there is a conflict between climate smart practices and historical farming, how would these two be reconciled?**
    Coyote Hills: The Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) for Patterson Ranch describes the vision for a Climate Smart Park. (See LUPA Chapter 3.4.4 AGRICULTURAL LAND USES AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES). Certified organic farming is required. And they should not set up anything like a coal plant. The LUPA and related documents can be viewed online: https://www.ebparks.org/about/planning/default.htm#patterson.

    Ardenwood: Climate smart practices are a part of the District’s mission and are welcomed. Proposals will be the strongest if they are able to describe how historical crops, demonstrations, or messaging will be incorporated into the operations; however, any proposal that supports any part of the park purpose statements and interpretive themes will be relevant.

22. **Are animals allowed at the Ardenwood site?**
    This is an agricultural lease. If there is a need for animals, please include in the proposal.

23. **What is the price per gallon of water at the Ardenwood site?**
    A well that provides good water for crops and is monitored for salt content. Treated water for irrigation of crops, if necessary. If treated water is used, Lessee agrees to pay $24.00 per acre-foot reimbursed to District. If well water is used, Lessee agrees to share half the cost of pump service and maintenance and 100% of the electric pump costs based on Lessee’s electric meter for pump.

24. **Can you list the in-kind work that has been done in the past?**
    Examples of In-Kind work performed by the outgoing Lessee include planting, tractor work, pipe laying and removal, and brush clearing.

25. **How much of the lease was reduced for the listed in-kind work?**
    Not a consistent amount. Amount of work needed by the park dependent on Park District staff, Park District equipment, and climate.