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Mark Personius, AICP
Director

Memorandum

TO: Honorable County Councilmembers
Honorable County Executive Jack Louws

FROM: Chris Elder, Planner II

DATE: September 11, 2019

SUBJECT: Update to Rural Land Study and request for approval of supporting resolution

The Agricultural Advisory Committee is pleased to present an update to the Rural Land Study. The primary objective of the original Rural Land Study (2007) and this update (2019) is to identify and map areas within the Rural 5 (R5A) and Rural 10 (R10A) zones that are of agricultural significance and may require additional protection to ensure long-term agricultural viability. This update to the Rural Land Study is a research document meant to provide guidance in the development of heightened agricultural protection measures for the areas identified. In addition this study is an integral component of the 2018 Agricultural Strategic Plan as approved by Council on August 8, 2018 through Resolution 2018-027.

The report provides not only an evaluation of the agricultural and ecosystem characteristics of the approved Rural Study Areas, but also tracks land cover change over time (2004-2016) and single family residence permit approvals (2000-2018). These assessments required significant Geographic Information System (GIS) map work and data analysis. To support other Agricultural Strategic Plan priorities, staff has also performed an assessment of land use characteristics and change over time in the Agriculture Zone. Since the Agriculture Zone is large, staff broke it into six (6) areas to allow for a more effective area review of current conditions and change over time.

The attached resolution affirms Council's support for the update to the Rural Land Study and commits time and resources to support the work of the Agricultural Advisory Committee and Agricultural Programs as identified in the Agricultural Strategic Plan.

There is a significant amount of data in this update to the Rural Land Study. Please do not hesitate to contact me for clarification or additional information. Thank you, Chris Elder, 778-5932.