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City of South Gate  
CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF SOUTH GATE  
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
3:50pm

AGENDA BILL

For the Regular Meeting of: October 9, 2018

Originating Department: Community Development

Department Director:

*Joe Perez*  
Joe Perez

City Manager:

*Michael Flad*  
Michael Flad

**SUBJECT: LETTER OPPOSING PROPOSED HOMELESS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT AMERICAN LEGION SITE IN THE CITY OF DOWNEY (11269 GARFIELD AVENUE)**

**PURPOSE:** To consider approving a letter to the City of Downey and Los Angeles County Supervisors Janice Hahn and Hilda L. Solis stating the City of South Gate’s opposition to the proposed homeless housing development at the County-owned property located at 11269 Garfield Avenue (Property) in the City of Downey. The letter is intended to preserve and enhance the quality of life for South Gate residents that are in close proximity to the Property.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- a. Authorize the Mayor to execute a letter stating the South Gate City Council’s opposition to the proposed homeless housing development at the County-owned property located at 11269 Garfield Avenue in the City of Downey (American Legion Site); and
- b. Direct the City Manager or his designee to send this letter of opposition to the City of Downey and Los Angeles County Supervisors Janice Hahn and Hilda L. Solis.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** None.

**ANALYSIS:** The Los Angeles County owns a 2.2 acre property at 11269 Garfield Avenue, located at the northwest corner of Garfield Avenue and Gardendale Street within the City of Downey. This property is on the border of Downey and the Hollydale community of South Gate. The site contains a vacant field, a parking lot and 6,840 square foot building. The Los Angeles County (County) leases the property to the American Legion Hollydale Post #723.

The City of Downey and the County are in the preliminary stage of developing this Property, with both having entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the exploration of an affordable housing project at the site. The MOU calls for a collaborative effort between Downey and the County in preparing a Request for Proposals from the development community for a possible supportive housing development for homeless and low-to-moderate income veterans.

Several South Gate residents from the Hollydale community have expressed concerns about the potential impacts such a development could have on their neighborhood. These concerns have

been communicated to the City in numerous e-mails and phone calls, as well as at two very well-attended community meetings at the American Legion site on August 15, 2018, and at the South Gate Municipal Auditorium on September 6, 2018. The same concerns communicated by South Gate residents have, in turn, been expressed by individual South Gate City Council Members and staff to the offices of Los Angeles County Supervisors Hilda Solis (District No. 1) and Janice Hahn (District No. 4), and Downey City Council Members.

The South Gate City Council has the option of formally opposing the proposed homeless housing development at the Property. Attached is a proposed letter that states the City Council's opposition to the proposed project and urges the County and City of Downey to: consider other land uses at the Property that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood; consider constructing the proposed homeless housing development on other County-owned property in Downey that is appropriately located for such a use (e.g. Rancho Los Amigos campus); and discuss the possible purchase and annexation of the Property by the City of South Gate.

**ATTACHMENT:** Draft Letter of Opposition

October 9, 2018

**Subject:       *South Gate Opposition to Proposed Homeless Development at American Legion Site (11269 Garfield Avenue, Downey, CA)***

Honorable \_\_\_\_\_:

On behalf of the South Gate City Council, I write to express our strong opposition to the proposed homeless housing development at the County-owned property located at 11269 Garfield Avenue (Property). While located within the City of Downey, the 2.2-acre Property is situated on the border of the City of South Gate and adjacent to a stable single-family neighborhood. Over the last few months, the City Council and numerous residents of South Gate have expressed our significant concerns about this proposed project to you and your staff.

The City of South Gate recognizes the need for affordable housing, as well as each local government's responsibility to do its part in addressing the challenge of homelessness. As a result, South Gate has recently taken decisive and substantive action by approving a permanent, supportive housing development for homeless individuals, with a particular emphasis on veterans. Unlike the County's Property, the site selected for our approved housing development, within South Gate is appropriately situated on a major boulevard and complies with South Gate's zoning code and general plan. It important to note that the proposed homeless housing development at the County-owned Property is not an allowed use under Downey's current zoning/specific plan or general plan.

We clearly support efforts to provide housing for homeless individuals, however do not believe that the County Property proposed for this new housing development is the best site for this use, especially given the availability of County-owned property within Downey that is vastly better suited for this use. An example of such property is the expansive Rancho Los Amigos south campus, which contains over 74 acres of underutilized land and is currently being evaluated for development.

We, therefore, urge you to please redirect your current efforts to explore a homeless housing development at the County-owned Property and, instead, consider other land uses for the Property that will benefit both your current and past constituents of the City of Downey and City of South Gate. In addition, we request that you select a land use that is compatible with the surrounding schools and residential neighborhood. Alternative uses that would complement and

be embraced by the surrounding community include a public library and the continued use as an American Legion Hall that serves local veterans.

The City Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the quality of life of South Gate residents and, as such, is determined to ensure that the future use of the Property is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. In light of this, we are prepared to discuss with the County and the City of Downey alternative uses as well as the possible purchase and annexation of the Property by the City of South Gate.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to your response. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Director of Community Development Joe Perez at (323) 563-9566.

Sincerely,

María Belén Bernal  
Mayor

cc: Honorable Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ District  
Mayor Sean Ashton, City of Downey  
City Manager Gilbert Olivas, City of Downey