



City of South Gate

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MARÍA BELÉN BERNAL, Mayor
JORGE MORALES, Vice Mayor
MARIA DAVILA, Council Member
DENISE DIAZ, Council Member
AL RIOS, Council Member

October 9, 2018

Mayor Sean Ashton and City Council Members
City of Downey
11111 Brookshire Avenue
Downey, CA 90241

SUBJECT: SOUTH GATE OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED HOMELESS DEVELOPMENT AT AMERICAN LEGION SITE (11269 GARFIELD AVENUE, DOWNEY, CA)

Honorable Mayor Ashton:

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. The development in South Gate is located at 5610 Imperial Highway, which is less than a half-mile from the County Property. 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

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campus, which contains over 74 acres of underutilized land and is currently being evaluated for development. We believe this is one of several properties within Los Angeles County that are more suitable for the proposed housing project and that should be considered for future 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Bernal', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

María Belén Bernal
Mayor

cc: Honorable Supervisor Hilda Solis, First District
Honorable Supervisor Janice Hahn, Forth District
City Manager Gilbert Livas, City of Downey