


**Letter Re: Non-Agendized item- Willowick Property**

---

**From :** Cynthia Guerra <cynthiag@kennedycommission.org>      Tue, Apr 14, 2020 01:41 PM  
**Subject :** Letter Re: Non-Agendized item- Willowick Property       1 attachment  
**To :** cityclerk@ggcity.org  
**Cc :** teresap@ggcity.org

Hi City Clerk Pomeroy,

Please find attached the comments regarding today's City Council meeting (4.14.2020):

1) non-agendized item: Letter on the City's compliance to the Surplus Land Act in regards to the Willowick property.

Please confirm receipt of this email and let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you for all your help.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Guerra

Cynthia Guerra  
The Kennedy Commission  
Community Organizer

---

 **Ltr\_non-agendized item-Willowick Site\_4.14.2020.pdf**  
126 KB

---





April 14, 2020

**To:** Garden Grove City Council and Staff

**From:** Rise Up Willowick Coalition

**RE: Updates on the Willowick Property and the CA Surplus Land Act Compliance**

The Rise Up Willowick Coalition (“the Coalition”) is comprised of residents from the City of Santa Ana, the City of Garden Grove (“the City”), and neighboring Orange County Cities as well as local organizations whose goal is to ensure that the Willowick Golf Course property (“Willowick”) is developed to meet the needs of current local residents and their vision-- especially the most vulnerable such as, but not limited to, working class individuals, youth, and immigrant residents -- which includes deep affordable housing, parkland for active recreational use, and open-space.

In compliance with the California Surplus Land Act (SLA), on February 25, 2020, Garden Grove’s City Council declared the Willowick Property as “surplus” through a resolution. The Coalition writes this letter with the purpose of receiving more information as to how the City plans to comply with the SLA, specifically:

***The SLA obligates a government entity to give priority to the notice that sets out to provide the highest and deepest level of housing affordability. -- How does the City plan to prioritize notices of intent?  
How does the City plan to ensure that good faith negotiations take place?***

As we are experiencing the global COVID-19 pandemic, many residents that live near the Willowick site are experiencing economic hardship and emotional distress. In light of this, we are asking if the City can extend the SLA timeline. Specifically, can the City of Garden Grove give interested entities more than 60 days to respond and also extend the 90 day good faith negotiation period with interested priority buyers --

**-- Extend the 60 day notice to respond to 90 days to respond to the notice  
-- Extend the 90 day good faith negotiation to 120 days for the good faith negotiation period.**

Given the already high rents and now the loss of employment and wages due the statewide COVID-19 state of emergency, stay-at-home orders, and the shutdown of non-essential businesses, housing insecurity is a major concern for residents. In Garden Grove, about 42.2% of residents pay more than one third of their income to housing<sup>1</sup> and about 17.4% of households

---

<sup>1</sup> The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines housing unaffordability as paying more than one third of a household’s income to housing.



in Garden Grove live in poverty -- this was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>2</sup>. Any type of development on the Willowick site that is not deeply affordable would only exacerbate the acute housing insecurity in the area. Furthermore, the need for open space as a tool to relax and address mental and emotional issues is further highlighted by this pandemic. For residents who live in overcrowded conditions with minimal recreational space, essential "shelter in place" regulations negatively impact residents' mental, emotional, and physical well-being especially now that schools are closed.

The Coalition is interested in knowing how the City intends to act in the best interest of its residents during this unprecedented pandemic. While it is important to address the direct needs of residents at this time, we also urge the City to act on the best interests of its residents and support actions where long-term investments to vital needs, such as long-term affordable housing with deep levels of affordability and park space, can be supported and facilitated. The Coalition would appreciate a timely response to our letter seeing as the timeline for SLA compliance is moving forward. Please contact Cynthia Guerra at [\(857\) 318-3525](tel:8573183525) and at [cguerra@riseupwillowick.org](mailto:cguerra@riseupwillowick.org).

Thank you,

The Rise Up Willowick Coalition

---

<sup>2</sup> Willowick: The Opportunity to Use Public Land for Public Good. October 2019.  
<http://riseupwillowick.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/riseupwillowickreport.pdf>