

September 7, 2022

Mayor Henry Lo and City Council Members
City of Monterey Park
320 W. Newmark Avenue
Monterey Park, CA 91754

RE: Comments on the Potential Lease/ Sale for the Steelcraft Development Project

Dear Mayor Lo and City Council Members:

Thank you for allowing the community an opportunity to provide comments on this item. As the City moves forward with the discussion on the potential lease/sale for a proposed Steelcraft development project on city-owned properties, the City should consider the following recommendations:

- 1. Receive any presentation regarding the potential lease/sale for a proposed Steelcraft development project during a City Council Regular Meeting and not through a Special Meeting.** For a City Council Regular Meeting, the agenda states that the public can watch the meeting live on the city's cable channel or by visiting the city's website. For Special Meetings, it is stated on the agenda that the meetings are not televised on the city's cable channel or the city's website; therefore, unless you attend the Special Meeting in-person (which the City only provides a 24-hour notice before the actual meeting) at 5 p.m. (which is the time that most people get off at work), there is no way for the public to hear what is being presented to City Council. The lack of an open and transparent meeting hinders public engagement and meaningful participation that should be avoided by the city at all costs.
- 2. Before taking any specific action, the City should take a step back and hold a public meeting to provide additional analysis on whether or not the city-owned sites falls under the Surplus Land Act.** It is best to hold this discussion upfront to avoid any issues in the future or be placed in a situation like the Anaheim Stadium deal (please refer to the attached Los Angeles Times article, *Angel Stadium Sale is Deemed Illegal by State Housing Agency* for more information).
- 3. These city-owned sites should be developed exclusively for affordable housing in which 100% of the units are affordable to low-, very low- and extremely low-income families.** The City's adopted 2021-2029 Housing Element states "... when land is publicly-owned, the City can more easily negotiate this development of affordable housing."¹ To facilitate affordable housing development, the City could also sell or lease City-owned properties on a long-term basis to housing developers in exchange for a long-term commitment to maintain all or a portion of units as affordable housing. These sites

¹ City of Monterey Park 2021-2029 Housing Element Adopted, p. 4-8, January 19, 2022.

should be prioritized for affordable homes to qualified affordable home developers who can effectively leverage the land and available funding to create deeper affordability levels.

The City already missed an opportunity with the proposed mixed-use development, Celadon, that will be built right across the street from these city-owned sites. **The Celadon project included a city-owned paved parking lot but it was not leveraged to include affordable housing.² Of the proposed 109-unit in the condominium complex, ZERO units are affordable to lower income households.**

- 4. Discuss the implications that APN 5255-008-902 was identified in the City's adopted 2021-2029 Housing Element as a privately-owned opportunity site for 8 above moderate income units; however, it turns out this site is actually a city-owned site. It is important to note that APN 5255-008-902 was identified as opportunity sites in the last two planning cycles. Identified sites used in previous Housing Element planning periods should be prioritized for the development of lower income homes.**

Thank you and I look forward to working with the City to effectively address the unmet housing needs for lower income households. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Linda Tang

² City of Monterey Park 2021-2029 Housing Element Adopted, p. 4-13, January 19, 2022.

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Angel Stadium sale is deemed illegal by state housing agency

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Fans stand outside Angel Stadium on April 17, 2021. (Ashley Landis/Associated Press)



BY BILL SHAIKIN

STAFF WRITER | [FOLLOW](#)

DEC. 8, 2021 11:37 AM PT



The [Angel Stadium sale](#) was declared illegal Wednesday by California's state housing agency, which gave the city of Anaheim 60 days to redo the deal or make the land available to interested bidders.

That could put the city in the position of starting over, suing to pursue it, or jettisoning cash from the sale toward state fines.

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Two years after celebrating an agreement in which a neighborhood would sprout on the long-dormant parking lots surrounding Angel Stadium and the Angels would remain in Anaheim through at least 2050, the city is now faced with the prospect that the deal might disappear, the parking lots could remain empty, and the team could leave town in eight years.

The city also has been sued by a citizens group alleging the deal violated state transparency laws. In the wake of the latest development, one city councilman suggested Anaheim start the sale process anew.

READ: State housing committee ruling letter

Dec. 8, 2021

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“Why not just start from scratch and do a much more transparent and open process?” City Councilman Jose Moreno said. “It gives us the chance to make a better deal for the people of Anaheim.”

Mayor Harry Sidhu said in a statement that the city would “remain committed to our stadium plan” and expressed frustration that a deal that would expand affordable housing would be vetoed by an agency with a mission to expand affordable housing.

“We are undeterred,” Sidhu said.

Angels owner Arte Moreno — no relation to the councilman — runs the development company that agreed to buy the 150-acre site from the city for \$150 million in cash. It is uncertain how much of a delay Moreno might be willing to tolerate or how much more money he might be willing to spend to nail down a deal that the city had projected would close in “late 2021 or early 2022.”



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By The Ritz Carlton

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Marie Garvey, spokeswoman for the company had no comment at this time.

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the city, said Anaheim had “many potential paths forward” but said it would be “premature to discuss any specifics at this time.”



ANGELS

State rejects Anaheim compromise, expected to say Angel Stadium deal violates law

Dec. 7, 2021

Under a state law called the Surplus Land Act, public land made available for sale should first be offered to affordable housing developers. If Anaheim chooses not to make the stadium land available to developers beyond Moreno, the California Department of Housing and Community Development said the city could comply with the act by setting aside 80% of the land for housing and reserving 40% of those housing units as affordable.

The state agency said the city had violated the Surplus Land Act in three ways: by not properly classifying the land as surplus; by not making the land available to other developers; and by not notifying the agency of such availability and any negotiations before reaching the sale agreement with Moreno’s company.

The agency specifically rejected the city’s argument that the most recent version of the law did not apply because the city and Moreno were exclusively negotiating before 2019. The City Council approved the sale on Dec. 20, 2019.

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In fact, the agency said, the City Council had voted against entering into a binding and exclusive negotiating agreement on Jan. 15, 2019. Beyond that, the agency said, Moreno's company was not formed until Nov. 20, 2019.



Angels owner Arte Moreno speaks to reporters at spring training in Tempe, Ariz., on Feb. 17, 2020. (Kent Nishimura/Los Angeles Times)

The city said Tuesday that the agency had rejected a proposed compromise in which affordable housing units would be added elsewhere in Anaheim, expanding the number of units to 25% of 25% affordable housing.

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Megan Kirkeby, deputy director of the state housing agency, said the agency would have preferred 25% affordable housing on site, so as not to segregate lower-income families away from the stadium area.

Kirkeby also said the agency considered at least some of the proposed additional affordable housing “already in the pipeline.”

Moreno, the councilman, said he was unaware that the city had made such a proposal before Tuesday and he would not have supported it. In promoting the deal, city officials had touted that the affordable housing units would have been integrated into the stadium development, not isolated into a section of it. The addition of off-site blocks of affordable housing would have represented a step backward, Moreno said.

“That’s the wrong message to send to our city,” Moreno said.

Kirkeby said the agency would like to see the project completed, with more than 5,000 housing units proposed amid shops, offices, hotels, entertainment options, and a new or renovated ballpark.

“There’s a lot to like here,” she said. “We are not throwing up our hands. We are stewards of the law.”

That compelled the agency to find tl
months of discussions had failed to
window could include renewed discussions.

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However, she said, “I can’t engage in any more, ‘Give us another 60 days to come up with an offer.’ ”

In July, Anaheim City Atty. Rob Fabela said the City Council could consider putting the land up for bid among affordable housing developers, a process that he said “certainly could” undo or delay the Angels deal. That would not necessarily mean that affordable housing developers would be interested, or that the city could reach a deal with any of them.

The Angels control development on the site until as far as 2038, which the city argues would make the site unattractive to other potential developers. In a letter to Kirkeby on Wednesday, Fabela warned that the agency could force the city to leave the parking lots vacant until then, rather than allow for the construction of thousands of homes on the property.

“HCD’s threat to engage in actions calculated to frustrate or delay the pending transaction seems fundamentally at odds with HCD’s mission of increasing the supply of affordable places to live in California,” Fabela wrote.

The site was valued at \$500 million but only with the stadium demolition team’s development restrictions gone. The company agreed on \$320 million as the sale price, and the city later

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credited \$170 million toward the inclusion of parkland and affordable housing within the project.



ANGELS

Judge orders Anaheim to redo Angel Stadium sale records search

Sept. 27, 2021

That discounted the cash price to \$150 million. If the city proceeds with the deal as is, Anaheim could be subject to a fine of 30% of the sale price — that is, \$96 million. Kirkeby said her agency also could refer the matter to the state attorney general, who could seek an injunction to stop the sale.

It is not uncommon for state legislators to introduce a bill that exempts a specific project from state law. In this case, that kind of legislative end run has been floated, but it is considered unlikely because the two state legislators who represent the area where the stadium sits — Assemblyman Tom Daly, a former Anaheim mayor, and Sen. Tom Umberg — previously had warned that the sale “may not be in the best interest of the taxpayers of Anaheim.”

The city said Tuesday that it “continues to maintain” that the most recent version of the Surplus Land A



Los Angel

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If the city wishes to pursue that argument, it could do so in court. On Tuesday's City Council agenda, the closed session on this issue was justified under a section of state law that allows nonpublic discussion when "the legislative body of the local agency has decided to initiate or is deciding whether to initiate litigation."

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MP Clerk

From: Je-Show Yang <jeshowy@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 6, 2022 9:51 PM
To: MP Clerk; Bow, Ron; Lo, Henry; Chan, Peter; Liang, Hans; Yiu, Yvonne
Subject: Public Comment on Item 1-A 9/7 Special Meeting

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[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

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Dear Mayor Lo and City Councilmembers,

My name is Je-Show Yang and I am a resident of the West San Gabriel Valley. As a renter and millennial in the region, housing has been a personal issue for me and many of my peers. Rent is becoming increasingly unaffordable for young folks and low-income residents. Many of my peers have had to move out of cities like Alhambra and Monterey Park because rent is simply too high. [Currently, 41% of Monterey Park residents live below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level](#) (that's almost 1 in 2 Monterey Park residents).

We need to focus our efforts on the direct needs of residents you serve - which is housing. We can't allow residents to fall into homelessness or be forced to move out of the City because no affordable housing is being built.

The City owned land that is being discussed should be prioritized for the development of affordable housing for lower income households. City Council and many others often say, "We are built out. We have no place to build more housing or housing for low-income residents." This is the opportunity before you all. Having housing built in this area is excellent because it allows for residents to walk to local restaurants and shop for groceries.

Many cities want to have a place like Old Town Pasadena. And, the reason why places like Old Town Pasadena are so successful is because there is housing in the area. Local residents can walk from a coffee shop, to a restaurant, and grab a beer at a bar. If we don't build the housing for it, we can't expect a busy location for local shops.

I would like to add that the City should not act until there is a public discussion on whether or not this property falls under the Surplus Land Act.

Thank you for your consideration and I hope the contents of this email helps you in considering how to move forward.

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Sincerely,

Je-Show Yang