



March 15, 2016

Mayor Steven Choi  
City Councilmembers  
City of Irvine  
One Civic Center Plaza  
Irvine, CA 92612

Dear Mayor Choi and Irvine City Councilmembers,

As you are aware, in 2014, Assembly Bill 1453 (AB 1453) was introduced in the California legislature to establish a Southern California Veterans Cemetery in Orange County. The California legislature adopted AB 1453 and Governor Brown signed it into law in September 2014. AB 1453 became effective January 1, 2015 and began a process led by the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet).

On March 11, 2014, the Irvine City Council adopted Resolution 14-27 which:

1. Expressed the Council support for AB1453 establishing a Southern California Veterans Cemetery in Orange County; and
2. Expressed the City Council's "strong interest" in identifying and designating a site at the Orange County Great Park for conveyance to the State for purposes of creating and operating a State Veterans Cemetery.

The City's Veterans Cemetery Committee met twice to discuss options for the siting of the Cemetery.

On July 22, 2014, the Irvine City Council adopted Resolution 14-92 which:

1. Expressed: that the City Council designated the Amended and Restated Development Agreement (ARDA) Transfer Site at the Great Park as the best possible site for a State Veterans Cemetery; and

2. Expressed its intent to convey up to 125 acres of such property to the State for purposes of creating the Southern California Veterans Memorial Park and Cemetery subject to all necessary and appropriate studies, procedures, and agreements with the State and Federal governments.

CalVet is in the process of submitting a pre-application requesting Federal Veterans Cemetery Grant Funds (administered by the US Department of Veterans Affairs) to design, develop, construct and equip the cemetery. They are attempting to meet the July 1, 2016 Federal grant pre-application deadline.

CalVet shared with the City and with us that they are unable to predict timing for the project beyond the July 1, 2016 pre-application submittal goal because the US Department of Veterans Affairs determines project eligibility and timing is dependent on the Federal Veterans Affairs' evaluation of applications received from all States.

Based on this uncertainty and the fact that some neighbors of the site have voiced concerns over the adjacency, and as CalVet and DGS complete their study we have been in contact with FivePoint Communities regarding possible alternative sites. FivePoint has been extremely helpful and has come to the table with a genuine willingness to explore all options.

Through this effort, FivePoint has offered to consider a "swap" of the ARDA Transfer site for land it owns in the South-East part of their property. We believe that this site would meet all of our internal criteria for an appropriate cemetery site and we are anxious to have the CalVet team include the alternative in their pre-application.

We hereby request that the City Council 1) consider a swap of the ARDA transfer site with a rough equivalent site which FivePoint owns and 2) assist our group with presenting this alternative site to CalVet for their inclusion in the pre-application.

We thank the Council for your leadership to date and for your support of our cause. We stand ready to move this forward with you.

Regards,



Bill Cook  
Chairman

**ORANGE COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK FOUNDATION**  
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