



THE CITY OF  
**NOVATO**  
CALIFORNIA

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City Manager  
Michael S. Frank

December 7, 2015

(Emailed)

Re: Novato Community Garden O'Hair Park Agreement Status Report

Dear Diet, Veronica and Live Well Network:

The purpose of this letter is to clarify the City's understanding of the status of the Community Garden project and where we are headed. The City of Novato is committed to improving and preserving our resident's health through a number of strategies and partnerships. One of those partnerships is with the Healthy Eating Active Living Cities Campaign, a statewide initiative focused on the built environment, workforce wellness, and access to healthy food. As you are well aware, community gardens can play a critical role in improving access to healthy food for our residents, and provide residents with the opportunity to connect with nature and people, enjoy the outdoors, and grow nutritious food that enhances their health.

A number of years ago, the City and the Live Well Network began working to create a community garden in O'Hair Park, on undeveloped city-owned land adjacent to Dogbone Meadow. The effort began following Council and the Zoning Administrator approval of a Design and a Variance for the development of a community garden on approximately 1½ acre parcel in October 2013. The approval and time extension was granted for two years, which expired in September, 2015. A lease agreement #4603, was entered into October 2012, following the first Design Review approval in September 2011, and has also expired.

We recognize that great effort and many hours of volunteer commitment have gone into the community garden, and that your fundraising efforts are continuing. The City, however, is no longer interested in pursuing the location of the Garden adjacent to Dogbone Meadow given other location options and the need to proceed with the redesign of Dogbone Meadow. The City continues to have strong interest in making a community garden a reality in Novato and began efforts to relocate the concept to a more desirable central Novato location, which requires property acquisition. This effort, underway for nearly a year, continues to move forward, albeit slowly, navigating the legal property acquisition process – with City Council support. I have met with Community Garden representatives during this time, who expressed interest and support for relocation to this new site, should we successfully acquire it. We ask for your continued patience as we work to relocate the community garden and acquire the land to make it a reality.

We are committed to assisting community garden efforts in Novato, so that those who do not have access to healthy food, or those who cannot grow food at home, can do so. I wish to thank you all for your hard work, dedication, and community spirit as we collaborate to make a Novato community garden a reality.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Frank  
City Manager

cc. Friends of Dogbone Meadow, City Council, Don Foster, John Rieke, Pam Shinault,  
Russ Thompson, Cathy Capriola