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**Residents Sue Garden Grove To Prevent City's Planned
Destruction of Affordable Housing To Make Way For Water Park**

Group Alleges City Violated State Law by Failing to Provide Replacement Housing Plan or Adequate Relocation Benefits in connection with Plan To Destroy 100 Homes for Hotel and Water Park Development

On August 10, 2009, residents of the Travel Country RV Park, together with the community organization Orange County ACORN, filed a lawsuit against the City of Garden Grove, its City Council and Agency for Community Development. The lawsuit seeks an order requiring the city to replace over 100 units of affordable housing slated to be destroyed to make way for a hotel and water park. The plaintiffs also seek an order requiring the city to adopt a new relocation plan that includes adequate relocation benefits for residents to be displaced for the development.

Most of the plaintiffs have lived in the park for over 10 years. Some have lived there for more than 20 years. "We are taxpaying residents of Garden Grove, and we love where we live," said lead plaintiff and ACORN member Marina Limon, a 22 year park resident. "Many of us have kids in local schools, and many of us work in key industries that keep Orange County's economy going. All we're asking for is the ability to continue living, working, and raising our families here."

"Destroying over 100 units of affordable housing to build a water park at public expense is not responsible redevelopment -- particularly without a plan for replacement of that housing or adequate relocation for the tenants," said staff attorney Remy De La Peza of Public Counsel, the largest pro bono law office in the nation. "The lawsuit simply asks the city to comply with state mandated affordable housing requirements before taking actions harmful to its residents. Public Counsel and its co-counsel, California Affordable Housing Law Project and Fulbright & Jaworski LLP, are committed to protecting the rights of these residents."

In 2005, when the City of Garden Grove Agency for Community Development ("Agency") acquired the park, over 100 families resided there. Since then, the Agency has used questionable tactics to push some of them out -- including offering one-time relocation payments without advising them of their rights under relocation law. In May of this year, the City Council and the Agency entered into a disposition and development agreement with Colorado-based developer McWhinney. The agreement involves the City contributing some \$20 million to McWhinney, including giving the developer land at the park and an adjacent business at no cost, as well as a public subsidy for construction of a parking structure.

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