



PRESS RELEASE

COURT UPHOLDS CITY OF WALNUT ORDER TO HALT SOLAR PROJECT

Mt. SAC's proposed Solar Project cannot proceed without preserving community health and safety

WALNUT, California (December 8, 2016) – On December 6, 2016, the City of Walnut prevailed when the Superior Court denied a request by Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC) to lift the City's Stop Work Notice prohibiting Mt. SAC from commencing grading and construction of the proposed Solar Project. In the same hearing, Superior Court Judge James Chalfant also granted the United Walnut Taxpayers' (UWT) request for a preliminary injunction against the project. The Court's ruling puts the proposed Solar Project on hold until the underlying lawsuits are resolved. The trial is presently scheduled in March 2017.

"Yesterday was an important win for our community. The City fought aggressively to protect the safety, health, and welfare of our residents, and we have succeeded," said Walnut Mayor Eric Ching. "Resorting to the courts is never our first choice, and I hope Mt. SAC will now recognize that cooperation with the City is a more effective way forward for both our City and the college."

The underlying lawsuit involves disputes between Mt. SAC, the City of Walnut and UWT regarding several college projects, including the proposed Solar Project on the "West Parcel". The West Parcel is a triangular lot of undeveloped hillside bounded by single-family residences along its southern and western borders and separated from Mt. SAC's main campus by Grand and Temple Avenues. Mt. SAC proposes to tear down hillsides and fill in existing ravines to create a building pad. Approximately 10 acres of ground-mounted tracking solar photovoltaic panels will be installed in the leveled area. The City challenged the proposed project alleging that Mt. SAC failed to adequately evaluate the potential impacts of the project under the California Environmental Quality Act and, further, that Mt. SAC failed to obtain necessary City permits, including grading and hauling permits.

"The proposed Solar Project involves a massive grading effort requiring approximately 160 large truck trips per day to import between 163,000 and 260,000 cubic yards of fill dirt, or the equivalent of filling an ordinary football field to over 120 feet in height. The truck activity alone poses a significant safety hazard with large 40-foot trucks coming in and out of the West Parcel every 90 seconds at North Grand Avenue just 200 feet from the intersection at West Temple," said City Manager Rob Wishner.

The proposed Solar Project was "on hold," but on Thursday, October 20, 2016, Mt. SAC notified adjacent residences that grading activity would commence on the West Parcel the following Monday. In response, the City issued a Stop Work Notice, citing Mt. SAC with violations of 14 separate municipal ordinances. Mt. SAC sought an injunction against the City to prevent

enforcement of the Stop Work Notice. Meanwhile UWT additionally sought relief from the court by way of a preliminary injunction to stop the project. Efforts to resolve the dispute by mediation among the City, Mt. SAC and United Walnut Taxpayers on November 17 failed, resulting in the injunction hearings scheduled for December 6, 2016. The court ruled in favor of the City and UWT.

**For more information, please contact:
Rob Wishner, City Manager
(909) 595-7543**

###