

## **Glendale Community College Garfield Campus** *Garfield Property Acquisition Information*

### **Background**

GCC's Garfield Campus is a valuable community resource serving as the first step for many people seeking a more stable financial future. A [nationwide study](#) recognized GCC as the #1 community college in America for economic upward mobility. Garfield's Noncredit ESL, Continuing Education, and Workforce training programs have attracted large numbers of students. Unfortunately, inadequate on campus parking has created traffic issues as students compete with nearby residents for parking spaces.

In 2016, 73% of Glendale voters approved Measure GC, a \$325M bond measure to improve GCC facilities as part of its mission to help students achieve their educational goals and successfully enter the workforce. In 2018, the GCC Board of Trustees approved a plan to purchase the thirteen (13) contiguous parcels surrounding the Garfield Campus.

The property acquisition was never intended to provide housing for GCC students. In the short term, the property acquisition allows GCC to address the parking/traffic situation negatively impacting the neighborhood. In the long term, GCC has positioned itself to utilize the property for the community's future educational needs.

### **Public Notification**

GCC took a number of steps to inform the neighborhood of the property acquisition which was also the subject of multiple news articles including these two in the Glendale News-Press ([May 9, 2017](#), [July 28, 2017](#)).

In addition, the following notifications were made:

- A notice of intent (NOI) to adopt the Negative Declaration provided to the public and the Los Angeles County Clerk.
- The NOI published in the Glendale News-Press on March 31, 2018.
- The NOI was also posted on the Garfield Campus on notice signs in two locations.
- The District provided a 20-day public review period initiated on March 31, 2018.
- The District received no comments from other public agencies or the public.
- Earlier this month courtesy fliers were delivered to residents and businesses located within 500 feet of the Garfield Campus informing them of the upcoming demolition of the Garfield properties.

### **Relocation of Property Tenants**

The thirteen parcels (eleven multi-unit, two single family) were made up of 61 residential units. GCC hired Epic Land Solutions, Inc. to oversee the relocation process of all 61 households. Over its twenty years in operation, Epic earned a reputation for treating residents with compassion and professionalism. During the relocation process the residents were:

- Assisted in finding comparable or better housing.
- Compensated for relocation expenses.
- Given as much time as necessary to move to new housing.

### **Addressing Traffic Issues**

Garfield's success has resulted in a deficit of parking spaces and an increase in traffic as students and staff circle the neighborhood looking for a place to park. We listened to the complaints and addressed the situation. A new ground level parking lot will reduce the number of cars on the streets improving the quality of life in the neighborhood. In addition, traffic safety will be enhanced by reducing the number of driveways (ingress/egress) and subsequent vehicles merging into the surrounding streets.

GCC has also worked with both Beeline and Metro to enhance mass transit service to both the Garfield and Verdugo Campuses. This includes new or modified routes, expanded service hours and a student transit pass program which will be implemented following the return of in-person instruction.

### **Reduced Heat Island Effect**

An initial environmental study found no substantial evidence that the project would have a significant effect on the surrounding area. The project does not replace greenscape. Instead, it replaces urban development which includes hardscaped rooftops, multiple parking lots/driveways and stormwater drains. Using modern urban planning techniques for the new parking area, will actually reduce the heat island effect by planting additional trees/greenbelts and creating bioswales to repurpose rainwater.

### **Livability of Properties**

Some people have suggested that the properties be used to house students or the homeless. The majority of Garfield properties were vacated before the start of the pandemic. At that time, an analysis of the properties revealed the presence of asbestos and lead which would require significant abatement measures. The properties have been vacant for more than a year. They are no longer suitable for living.

### **Garfield Project Moving Forward**

GCC's Garfield Campus offers programs that are crucial for some of our most vulnerable citizens (non-English speaking residents, newly arrived immigrants, those seeking a basic education or job skills). Garfield experienced a large drop in enrollment during the pandemic. Many of the students struggle with digital literacy and require an in-person learning environment. Enrollment is expected to rise significantly following the pandemic. GCC is moving forward to address the return of students by enhancing the Garfield property and reducing the impact on the surrounding neighborhood.