



To: Mayor Alan Webber
Santa Fe City Councilors
CC: Santa Fe New Mexican, Santa Fe Reporter, Albuquerque Journal North
From: League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County
Date: May 11, 2021
Re: An Open Letter to the Mayor and City Councilors of the City of Santa Fe

Mayor Webber and Councilors:

The League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County is concerned about the proposed sale of the master-planned 228.5 acres known as Las Estrellas at Santa Fe Estates. We have reviewed the history of the land's ownership and development to date, with valuable input from city staff, but we still have questions regarding policy decisions past and ongoing.

We would like to know the strategy governing the decision to sell these parcels in their entirety, almost immediately after title was transferred back to the city last September. What alternatives, if any, were considered and by whom? What kinds of analyses were done and by whom? For example, was immediate financial gain the only consideration? Were risk versus benefit or cost versus benefit analyses done?

Regarding the pause in the Request for Proposals process in March, when will this "pause" be lifted? What are the criteria being used to determine its disposition? Who is working on it? When and how will the public have input into a new or revised RFP? What is and has been the role of the governing body in the RFP process?

The League is mindful of the concerns of Mr. Kim Shanahan, whose column in the Santa Fe New Mexican of March 27 brought this matter to our attention, as well as the concerns of Mr. David Gurulé, whose letter to you of March 21 immediately preceded the RFP pause. The League neither endorses nor opposes their opinions on this matter, but we would like to see a response from the governing body that addresses them.

In particular, we would like to know why the sale of this property, which is three times the acreage of the Midtown project, is being managed so differently. We appreciate that the Santa Fe Estates acreage already has a Master Plan that was approved (1996) and then updated (2005) in accordance with the city's public meetings process. Nevertheless, the processes for disposal of the two properties are markedly different in timing and transparency.

Further, what is the city's response to concerns over the valuation of the property, which, at about \$17,000 per acre, appears to be somewhat low in today's market. Is this seen as an economic development opportunity for local businesses? If not, why not?

The League believes that local governments should go the extra mile to be transparent in all matters of public interest. Even if the city has adhered to the letter of the law in this matter, we believe our inquiries are fundamentally within the realm of the public's right to know. Please disclose to your constituents the answers to our questions and allow maximum opportunity for the public to ask further questions and to submit comments and recommendations. We believe our community will benefit from this approach.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Furlanetto". The signature is written in a dark ink on a light-colored background.

Christine Furlanetto, Chair
LWVSFC Action & Advocacy Committee
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