

Ryan Aeh
Chair

September 23, 2026

Nancy Donnelly
Vice Chair

The Honorable Larry Agran, Mayor
Members of the Irvine City Council

Russell Felbob
Secretary

City of Irvine
1 Civic Center Plaza
Irvine, California 92606

James Mai
Treasurer

**Re: Statement of Directors of the Irvine Community Land Trust Regarding Remarks
Made to the City Council on September 22, 2026**

Leon Napper
Board Member

Patrick Strader
Board Member

Dear Mayor Agran and Members of the City Council:

We are writing as Directors of the Irvine Community Land Trust regarding remarks made about the Land Trust during Council announcements on September 22, 2026. We write in our individual capacities as Directors. The Board's actions described below speak for themselves through its minutes and adopted resolutions.

We were disappointed by those remarks, not because a former Director disagreed with a Board decision, but because the account given to the Council omitted the process that actually occurred, a process she participated in from the beginning.

I. The Sequence of Events, Accurately Stated

The conflict-of-interest issue was not ignored or buried. It was considered by the full Board at its regular meeting on May 18, 2026, as a duly noticed agenda item. Ms. Treseder was present and participated in the discussion. Jon Goetz, counsel to the Land Trust, presented a legal analysis, and the Board deliberated on next steps. The Board then directed the Executive Committee to work with counsel to examine the matter further and return with a recommended action.

That work was carried out over the months that followed. Counsel prepared a written legal memorandum analyzing the matter under state law and the Land Trust's Conflict of Interest Policy. A signed certification was obtained. Staff solicited and compared competing proposals from other entitlement consulting firms. The full Board received all of it: the memorandum, the policy, the certification, the competing proposals, and draft resolutions going in both directions, one to approve the contract and one to cancel it. Ms. Treseder participated in that work as a member of the Executive Committee.

The Board took final action at its August 24, 2026 meeting, adopting Resolution 26-803, which found that the Land Trust could not have obtained a more advantageous arrangement with reasonable effort. The vote was 5 to 1. Ms. Treseder's dissent is recorded, as it should be. Three months of review. A written legal analysis from counsel. Competing bids. Draft resolutions written to permit either outcome. That is not a backroom deal. It is a nonprofit board doing exactly what its bylaws require, in front of the very Director who now tells the Council it never happened.

II. What Followed

In the weeks after the August 24 vote, Ms. Treseder withdrew her acceptances to all upcoming Executive, Finance, and Board meetings. Our Executive Director asked her directly whether she intended to continue serving. Our Chair asked separately. Neither received a substantive answer.

More consequentially, our Chair personally heard her state at the July 1, 2026 Executive Committee meeting, with others present, that she would not support the City's conveyance of Planning Area 40 to the Land Trust unless a particular consultant was removed from the project or a particular Director was removed from this Board. Similar comments were made at the June 10, 2026 Executive Committee meeting.

We want to be precise about why that matters, because it is not a disagreement about a consultant. The Land Trust does not control whether Planning Area 40 is conveyed. The City does. Conditioning that conveyance, and the permanently affordable homes it would produce, on a personnel outcome inside a separate nonprofit board is not oversight. It asks this organization to trade the interests of Irvine families for something that has nothing to do with their housing.

III. Why the Board Acted

The Board considered her continued service at a duly noticed public special meeting on September 21, 2026, held in open session, with the item stated plainly on the agenda and the public given an opportunity to be heard. The Board voted to remove her as a Director under Section 5.5(c) of our Bylaws.

One thing about that meeting goes to the heart of why the Board reached the conclusion it did. The agenda was noticed in advance and stated the question plainly. Ms. Treseder knew the matter was before the Board, knew the concerns that had been raised, and had a full opportunity to appear, answer them, and make her case to her fellow Directors in public. She chose not to attend. The Board was left to act on a record she declined to address. The following evening, she characterized that same record to the City Council, in a forum where no one present had it in front of them and no one could respond.

Removing a Director is an extraordinary step, and this Board did not take it lightly. But the account offered to the Council this week confirms rather than undermines the Board's judgment. It asks the Council to believe that a process was hidden from her, when she sat through it in May, reviewed it on the Executive Committee, and voted on it in August. It treats an outcome she did not prefer as evidence of wrongdoing. A Director's obligation runs to the process and to the mission, not to a predetermined result, and that obligation includes answering hard questions in the room where they are asked.

IV. Where We Go From Here

The Land Trust has no interest in escalating this. Our Directors serve without compensation. Three have served since this organization's founding in 2006. Their work, and the work of our staff, is why Irvine families live in permanently affordable homes today. Our relationship with the City of Irvine matters far more than this dispute, and we will not let a disagreement about one Director define it. We remain ready to work with the Council, the City Manager, and City staff on Planning Area 40 and everything that follows it. Our records are

open, our counsel is available, and we are personally available to any Councilmember who wishes to walk through the full record.

We ask only this: that the Land Trust and its volunteer Directors be judged on that record, and that the homes at stake not become collateral in a conflict that has nothing to do with the families who need them.

Respectfully submitted,

The Undersigned Directors of the Irvine Community Land Trust

Ryan Aeh, Chair
Nancy Donnelly, Vice-Chair
Russell Felbob, Secretary
Leon Napper, Director
Patrick Strader, Director

cc:

Jeffrey Melching, City Attorney, City of Irvine
Sean Joyce, City Manager, City of Irvine
Pete Carmichael, City of Irvine
Jon E. Goetz, Esq., Counsel to the Irvine Community Land Trust
William Hughes, Executive Director, Irvine Community Land Trust