



WK Preservation Group Inc.

1810 Mariner Drive #302
Tarpon Springs, Florida 34689

To the citizens of Largo and their government:

WK Preservation Group Inc. is a Pinellas County-based organization with a mission to preserve the natural heritage of our undeveloped land and the plants, trees, and wildlife that are disappearing in Pinellas County and the Tampa Bay Area. Several of Largo's citizens have contacted our organization to ask for help and support in their opposition to the City of Largo selling an 88-acre tract - mostly a closed landfill next to the Largo Central Park Preserve - to a developer with big plans for a sports venue and outdoor recreational attraction complex that has lately been branded as "The Preserve."

We oppose "The Preserve" project as it is defined today because the real work that is required to maintain sustainable and responsible development has not yet been done by either the City or the developer. These considerations must be resolved when considering the future of the landfill property and the Central Park Preserve.

- The Central Park Preserve is an established nature preserve, successfully sheltering birds, wildlife and native plants. It is largely buffered and protected from exposure to traffic and encroachment by surrounding reservoirs and importantly, the undeveloped 88-acre plot in question. Without that protection, it is vulnerable.
- The proposed development would remove the largest protective buffer and convert it into high-density recreational space. The impact on the real and established nature preserve will be a reduction of safe space for wildlife and increased encroachment from the development's facilities on the natural boundaries of the preserve. Once preservation lands are lost from exposure to traffic and people during construction and after opening day, they are never easily restored.
- The development of the landfill into a sports and recreation complex requires more attention to environmental investigation and evaluation before considering turning it over to even a well-intentioned developer. Questions must be addressed *before* the City enters into negotiations. The sale and utilization of landfill property that may contain hazardous materials ranging from asbestos to other carcinogenic toxins such as PCBs, dioxins, and furans without proper evaluation and mitigation is not acceptable.
- The proposal to put a lagoon into the development is of deep concern. Extraordinary measures would be required to keep the lagoon from becoming a toxic leachate pond for the landfill.
- A simple truth: for the developer to be successful, The Preserve sports and recreation complex will have to attract thousands of paying visitors every week. Traffic load and human support infrastructure will change the nature of the land surrounding the Central Park Preserve long before opening day when the bulldozers and heavy equipment move in. Plants, trees, birds and animals will be gone.

If the people of Largo vote yes and permit the negotiation and sale of the property to a developer, the city must take care to protect the natural environment and the existing preserve and secure firm and irrevocable commitments from any buyer to do the same *before* focusing on an agreement on fair market value. If the people of Largo vote no, the city will be able to take the time to resolve these issues and find safe and effective uses of this land to strengthen the resilience of the Central Park Preserve and serve the citizens. Continuing to nourish the Central Park Preserve and the surrounding area is the right decision for us all.

Regardless of the vote on November 8, the people of Largo deserve to have the Central Park Preserve protected from the negative impact of development so that its wildlife and its forest are protected and enjoyed by generations to come.

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Visit us at www.wkpreserve.com or join our group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1344488682424655>
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Our Mission: To preserve the natural heritage of open space land by protecting its natural forest, plant life, and all native animals in their community. We envision accomplishing this through education and collaboration for the benefit of present and future generations.