



523 West Sixth Street, Suite 826
Los Angeles, CA 90014

213 623 2489 OFFICE
213 623 3909 FAX
laconservancy.org

August 15, 2024

Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning
Attn: Julie Yom, AICP, Principal Planner
320 West Temple Street, 13th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012
WestsideAreaPlan@planning.lacounty.gov

Re: Westside Area Plan & WSAP Draft PEIR

Dear Julie Yom,

The Los Angeles Conservancy has reviewed the draft Westside Area Plan (WSAP) and draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). We appreciate that many of the proposed changes in the plan seem to have been tactical and respond to community concerns. We also appreciate that a historic context statement has been compiled for this area which include some of Los Angeles County’s most important and historic Black communities as well as a wealth of Modern-era resources.

Avoid Potential Adverse Impacts to Historic Resources

Although the majority of proposed changes do not appear problematic from a preservation perspective, there are two sites mentioned in the historic context statement that are located in and slated for opportunity sites and appear at risk. They are:

- University Christian Church, 5831 W. Centinela Avenue, designed by Robert D’Arcy Bolling, Deasy & Bolling Architects, built 1965
- “Jet Inn Motel,” 4542 W. Slauson Avenue, built 1959

Both of these structures appear threatened by upzoning, which will place greater pressure on their potential redevelopment. Although they have yet to be formally surveyed, both appear to be eligible for historic designation at least at the local level. In regard to the church, we do not oppose the redevelopment of the adjacent surface parking lot for suitable housing that supports the character of Ladera Heights, but we ask that the Modernist



church structure be removed from the rezoning and maintained at its current land use designation. My understanding from our call with you on July 9th, 2024 indicated this was an error in mapping and the church will not be included. If so, we thank you and agree, and would appreciate this revision being made to the WSAP and reflected within the PEIR.

In the case of Jet Inn Motel, we ask that immediately-adjacent and underutilized sites along Slauson be identified and considered as suitable for upzoning instead of this Midcentury Modern motel. Though we understand the motel may have been a problematic use in the past, it still provides economic value to the community. Motels of this vintage are often rehabilitated and can be converted for affordable housing, and serve as convenient lodging for tourists, and also double as film locations – the Safari Inn in Burbank is one such location. As has been done with other similar motels, there is additionally the opportunity for the Jet Inn Motel to be adaptively reused as affordable housing. We have recently learned of one such example in Hollywood, where the Hollywood Downtowner will be repurposed as interim housing for transition age youth. The current C-2 zoning would not preclude this use, but the proposed MXD zone would likely encourage its demolition rather than reuse.

As stated, there appear to be other parcels along Slauson Avenue (immediately west of the Let Inn Motel and toward La Brea) that can accommodate upzoning and are better candidates for redevelopment, including multiple vacant parcels and sites with large surface parking lots. As part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the PEIR planning, it is important to avoid significant adverse impacts to historic resources wherever possible. We are asking the County to do this and reconsider this upzoning by looking to other nearby viable sites that can readily accommodate additional housing density. Therefore, we hope a more suitable site can be identified to prevent the needless demolition of a rare and historic Google-style motel. In the Cultural Resources Section of the PEIR, Mitigation Measure 4.5-1 requires a historic resources assessment for properties more than 45 years old. We fully support this mitigation measure, but understand that even surveyed eligible historic structures can be demolished, and therefore we ask for more proactive zoning be adopted to avoid these two apparent historic resources.

Finally, it is imperative that the County follow up on the momentum of the Historic Context Statement and prioritize some of the long-overdue historic surveys. Ladera Heights and Windsor Hills are recommended for surveys in the Implementation Programs as HRI 4 but are scheduled as long-term goals. Given recent speculation and displacement in both communities, we ask that the timing be accelerated to mid-or-near-term to protect potential historic resources from major changes or demolition.

Both Ladera Heights and Windsor Hills are experiencing a lot of changes and there's interest in local historic district designation. The potential redevelopment of Ladera Center is prompting

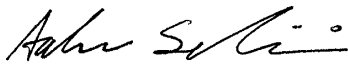


questions about spill-over effects into the neighborhood; therefore we strongly encourage the County to engage these neighborhoods early and seek planning strategies that can help preserve their unique qualities and neighborhood identity.

About the Los Angeles Conservancy:

The Los Angeles Conservancy is the largest local historic preservation organization in the United States, with nearly 5,000 member households throughout the Los Angeles area. Established in 1978, the Conservancy works to preserve and revitalize the significant architectural and cultural heritage of Los Angeles County through advocacy and education.

Sincerely,



Andrew Salimian
Director of Advocacy

cc: Mr. Bruce Durbin
Ms. Katrina Castañeda
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell

