

January 31, 2020

Erin Strellich
Major Projects Section
City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
200 North Spring Street, Room 750
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Via Email erin.strellich@lacity.org

cc: Councilmember Gil Cedillo at councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org

RE: 2750 2800 W. Casitas Avenue Draft Environmental Impact Report (Case No. ENV-2016-2862-EIR) – Request for Extension of Comment Period

Dear Ms. Strellich,

We are writing on behalf of Clockshop, Friends of the Los Angeles River, Los Angeles River State Park Partners, and Natural Resources Defense Council. We submit this request for an extension in the provided 45-day public comment review period for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”) on the proposed mixed-use development at 2750-2800 West Casitas Avenue, Case No. ENV-2016-2862-EIR.

Our coalition encompasses community groups that have a strong standing within the communities this proposed project will be impacting.

Clockshop believes in the power of contemporary art to connect people to the land on which they live and imagine its possible futures. Since 2004, Clockshop has commissioned new works by artists and writers, curated inclusive public programs about pressing political and environmental issues, and used collaboration to catalyze large institutions. Clockshop brings their mission to their partnership with California State Parks on the Bowtie Project, an underused public space along the Los Angeles River and immediately adjacent to the Casitas site that will be the next urban state park in Los Angeles.

Friends of the Los Angeles River (“FoLAR”) has endeavored for over 30 years to restore community connection and natural ecology as the single largest unifying force on the River – educating, empowering, and mobilizing over 50,000 Angelenos to repair habitat and fight for the policies that will reclaim our collective right to a healthy, thriving, and equitably accessible Los Angeles River.

Los Angeles River State Park Partners (“LARSPP”) is dedicated to supporting the California State Parks adjacent to the Los Angeles River: Los Angeles State Historic Park, Río de Los Angeles State Park, and the Bowtie parcel. LARSPP aims to preserve, protect, and enhance the community, cultural, natural, and historic resources of the Parks. LARSPP does this by enriching the

interpretation and education programs, supporting infrastructure improvements, and advocating on behalf of the Park.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (“NRDC”) works to safeguard the earth – its people, its plants and animals, and the natural systems on which all life depends. NRDC combines the power of more than three million members and online activists with the expertise of some 700 scientists, lawyers, and policy advocates across the globe to ensure the rights of all people to the air, the water, and the wild.

The California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) requires a transparent and engaging public review process, and it strongly emphasizes the importance of public comments and participation. The proposed project is requesting significant discretionary approvals from the City and would dramatically alter the underlying General Plan land use designation and zoning of the site. Given its proximity to both the Los Angeles River and the Taylor Yard G2 River Park Project, these proposed changes and their potential impacts require the careful consideration of the public.

The DEIR released yesterday is over 800 pages in length, not including the over 2,000 pages of appendices. To date, despite repeated and ongoing requests for more robust and regular communication and engagement with the community, the proposed project’s development team has failed to adequately respond to community requests and feedback. The surrounding community is diverse, speaking languages other than English and with a wide range of backgrounds in land use, planning, and real estate development. However, the community is clear in its interest in understanding all of the potential impacts this proposed project will have on their neighborhood and lives.

Therefore, the current allocated time period for public review and comment is insufficient to allow for adequate and meaningful public review, analysis, and preparation of comments on this proposed development of much concern to the community.

As such, we respectfully request that the public comment period be extended by an additional 45 days (new proposed deadline for public comments being May 1, 2020) to allow for a 90-day total public comment period.

Respectfully,

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