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March 25, 2022

Henry Fan (A)  
Bethune Hotel Ventures, LLC.  
10573 West Pico Boulevard, Suite 213  
Los Angeles, CA 90064

Community Redevelopment Agency  
Of the City of Los Angeles (O)  
c/o Dan Kahn, Chief Operating Officer  
448 South Hill Street, Suite 1200  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

CASE NO. ZA-2020-0055-CU-SPR  
CONDITIONAL USE/ SITE PLAN REVIEW  
3685 South Vermont Avenue  
South Los Angeles Planning Area  
Zone: C2-2D-CPIO  
D. M.: 120B197 1114  
C. D.: 8 – Marqueece Harris-Dawson  
CEQA: ENV-2008-1780-EIR  
Legal Description: Lot 2, Tract 23518

Pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 12.24.W.24, I hereby DENY:

a Conditional Use Permit to allow a 168-room Hotel located within 500 feet of a Residential Zone.

Pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 16.05.C, I hereby DENY:

a Site Plan Review for a development project which creates, or results in an increase of, 50 or more guest rooms, in the C2-2D-CPIO zone.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

After thorough consideration of the statements contained in the application, the plans submitted therewith, and the statements made at the public hearing on October 19, 2021, all of which are by reference made a part hereof, as well as knowledge of the property and surrounding district, I find that the requirements for authorizing a Conditional Use Permit pursuant to LAMC Section 12.24-W,24 to allow a 168-room Hotel located within 500 feet of a residential zone and a Site Plan Review pursuant to LAMC Section 16.05.C to allow the construction of a development which creates, or results in an increase of, 50 or more guest rooms, in the C2-2D-CPIO Zone have NOT been established by the following facts:

## **BACKGROUND**

The subject property is within the South Los Angeles Community Plan Area within a Community Commercial land use designation that allows the corresponding zones of C2, C4, RAS3, R3, RAS4, and R4, and the property is zoned C2-2D-CPIO. This subject site is also located within the North University Park-Exposition Park-West Adams Neighborhood Stabilization Ordinance (NSO) District (ZI-2397), the Los Angeles State Enterprise Zone (ZI-2374), the City of Los Angeles Transit Priority Areas (ZI-2452), Local Emergency Temporary Regulations – Time limit and Parking Relief – LAMC16.02.1 (ZI-2498), The Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project (ZI-2488), the South Los Angeles Alcohol Sales Specific Plan (ZI-1231), and the South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) District (ZI-2484). The subject site is within the TOD High Subarea of the South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) District.

The property abutting the site to the north, is zoned C2-2D-CPIO and developed with a one-story church building, and further north is a community serving shopping center and a post office. The property to the west of the site, is zoned RD1.5-1 and developed with a two-story duplex residential building and further west is a well establish residential community of moderate- to low-income households. The properties to the south across 37<sup>th</sup> Street, are zoned C2-2D-CPIO and developed with four-story multi-family senior residential buildings. The property to the east of the site across Vermont Avenue is zoned USC-1A and improved with three-story USC Campus educational and research buildings

Vermont Avenue, adjoining the property to the east (the project's Primary Frontage) is a designated Modified Avenue I, with a designated right-of-way width of 94 feet and a designated roadway width of 70 feet, and improved with a median, curbs, gutters and sidewalks. Vermont Avenue functions as a boundary that demarcates the local community and its commercial serving uses, and those uses or attractions that serve the broader Los Angeles region. The local community serving uses such as the Los Angeles County Family Services Center, Los Angeles County Re-Entry Opportunity Center and a local prep high school are situated along the west side of Vermont Avenue. Additionally, religious institutions, senior housing, and moderate-income housing and community serving non-profit organizations are also situated along the west side of Vermont Avenue.

On the east side of the Vermont Avenue median, the rear side of the University of Southern California, and Exposition Park (the Los Angeles Coliseum, Natural History Museum, California African American Museum, the California Science Center and the new Lucas Museum) are situated. These destination attractions have their frontages primarily along Figueroa Street or a secondary roadway. Several USC buildings have their rear facades along Vermont Avenue, and its maintenance yard is along the street.

37<sup>th</sup> Street, adjoining the property to the south, is a designated Local Street, with a designated right-of-way width of 60 feet and designated roadway width of 36 feet, and improved with curb, gutter and sidewalk.

The subject property is a publicly owned flat vacant site, comprised of approximately 33,400 square feet (0.77 acres) with no above grade improvements. The site has a street frontage of approximately 185 feet along the west side of Vermont Avenue and 183 feet along the north side of the West 37<sup>th</sup> Street. West 37<sup>th</sup> Street terminates in a cul-de-sac at the southwestern portion of the subject site and a walkway extends from the cul-de-sac to Vermont Avenue along the southern boundary of the site. The publicly owned parcel was previously used for community serving purposes including a gasoline station (1920's); used car lot; battery and repair facility; printing shop; plumbing contractor; and fast-food restaurant/bakery (1940's to 1970). The Bethune Library was constructed in 1973 and was demolished in 2010.

The publicly owned site is located approximately 0.22-miles north of the Expo/Vermont Expo Line stop. The Metro Expo Line runs along Exposition Boulevard with a stop at Expo/Vermont, which have the following bus line connections: Metro Local 102 and 207, Metro Rapid 754, and Metro Express 550. Other bus lines within the vicinity of the subject project, include Metro Local 38 along West Jefferson Boulevard, Metro Local 37 along West Adams Boulevard, and Metro Local 102 along Exposition Boulevard.

The proposed project is for the construction, use and maintenance of a seven-story, 75-foot tall 168-room hotel building totaling 102,069 square feet of floor area with a Floor Area Ratio ("FAR") of 3:1, including 4,067 square foot of ground floor retail, and 5,708 square feet of open space on the publicly owned property. The proposed project intends provide 70 parking spaces, with 20 at-grade and 50 in a subterranean parking level structure, and 40 bicycle parking spaces including 20 short-term and 20 long-term spaces.

In conjunction with the proposed development, the project seeks an approval of a Conditional Use Permit request to allow the 168-room hotel to be situated within 500 feet of a residential zone and a Site Plan Review to allow the construction of a development which creates, or results in an increase of, 50 or more guest rooms, in the C2-2D-CPIO Zone.

**Previous zoning related actions on the site include:**

CPC-2008-1552-CPU – The Community Plan Update amended both the policy documents and the land use maps of the South Los Angeles and Southeast Los Angeles Community Plans. The project also adopted several zoning ordinances to implement the updates to the two community plans, including changes for certain portions of the Community Plan Areas to allow specific uses, development standards (including height, Floor Area Ratio, and massing) and design standards.

ENV-2018-1781-EIR - The project is within the scope of the South Los Angeles Community Plan Program EIR No. ENV-2008-1781-EIR ("Program EIR"), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15168 and 15162; the environmental effects of the proposed project were covered in the Program EIR and no new environmental effects not identified in the Program EIR will occur and therefore no new mitigation is required; and the City will incorporate all feasible mitigation measures from the Program EIR on the Project.

**Previous zoning related actions in the surrounding area.**

ZI-2374 State Enterprise Zone: Los Angeles  
ZI-1231 Specific Plan: South Los Angeles Alcohol Sales  
ZI-2484 Community Plan Implementation Overlay: South Los Angeles  
ZI-2397 Neighborhood Stabilization Ordinance: North University Park-  
Exposition Park-West Adams  
ZI-2488 Redevelopment Project Area: Exposition/University

**Public Hearing**

A Notice of Public Hearing was mailed to property owners and/or occupants residing near the subject site for which an application, as described below, had been filed with the Department of City Planning. All interested parties were invited to attend the public hearing at which they could listen, ask questions, or present testimony regarding the project. Due to concerns over COVID-19, the Office of Zoning Administration Public Hearing was conducted telephonically on October 21, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. The purpose of the hearing was to obtain testimony from affected and/or interested persons regarding the project. The hearing was conducted by Associate Zoning Administrator Theodore Irving for Case Nos. ZA-2020-0055-CU-SPR and CEQA No. ENV-2018-1781-EIR.

**Henry Fan – Applicant Representative**

- The proposed project is at 3685 Vermont Avenue; a 7-story, 168 room hotel development, on approximately 34,000 square feet of vacant land,
- The hotel amenities include 4,000 square feet of ground floor retail, 40 bike parking spots, 70 parking spaces, meeting and conference rooms, a screening room, rooftop terrace, and dog room,
- The Marriot Hotel Brand was obtained from Marriot International,
- The Zoning is C2-2D-CPIO, the CPIO Subarea is G, or TOD High,
- The CPIO Table specifically allows for a hotel use,
- The hotel use is allowed to have a maximum 4:1 FAR or 135,000 square feet, 8 stories, and or 125 feet in height,
- Our proposed project is 3:1 FAR, approximately 100,000 square feet, 7 stories and 75 feet high,
- The 3685 Vermont Avenue project site was awarded to us via an open RFP process,
- The RFP was further approved by the City Council and the Mayor's Office,
- The RFP process was conducted and evaluated by a panel consisting of staff from the Economic Workforce Development Department, City Administrative Office, Chief Legislative Analyst, and the Planning Department,
- This is the third RFP conducted; two previous (affordable housing) RFP processes failed,
- We started the outreach March 2020, but was curtailed; we walked door to door to get support,
- Due to COVID-19, our outreach has been digital, but we gathered 300 signatures,
- We have support letters from the Adams Normandie Neighborhood Association and Leonardo's, who has resided in the neighborhood for over 35 years,



- Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, of Council District 8 supported the project,
- However, the Neighborhood Council did not support the project as they thought the site should be used for affordable housing,
- We acknowledge that affordable housing is needed,
- Within a quarter mile of the project site, there are three large affordable housing projects totaling over 350 affordable housing units,
- Why a hotel? Expo Park is south of the hotel and home to ten destination sites,
- Including the Coliseum, Banc of California Stadium, California Science Center, Natural History Museum, the Aquatic Center, and the to-be-constructed Lucas Museum,
- Expo Park is surrounding by eight bus lines, and a Metro station that is three blocks from the hotel site,
- The site adjacent to the University of Southern California, which has over 40 thousand students and employs over 20 thousand people,
- USC needs additional hotels for commencements, conferences, visiting family members and other events,
- The hotel will create jobs for the local communities, from those working in the hotel, to those supplying the hotel to those maintaining and managing the hotel,
- Hotels support local government through much needed funds,
- Hotels have less environmental impacts; hotels generate less vehicular traffic than normal competing land uses, such as office buildings, or residential complexes,
- From an environmental standpoint, we have provided an environmental technical memorandum, which has concluded that the project does not result in any significant environmental impacts,
- Fifty years ago, a gas station was located on the site that had underground storage tanks that has left some contamination,
- A full remediation action plan has been approved by the LA Regional Water Quality Control Board,
- We've agreed to have LA County Fire Department have oversight and sign-off on the remediation process,
- Transportation consultant has conducted a traffic analysis and has determined there was no significant impacts,
- Other environmental impacts, such as construction, noise, vibration, dust, have been concluded to have no significant impacts,
- This land has been vacant for decades; while affordable housing is an important need, this community has other needs it's facing today,
- This hotel project will be able to address those needs today; the other affordable housing projects have failed to materialize,
- We have been in discussions with the Council District Office to provide a \$1 million community benefits package,
- The project will be finalized through a DDA and the community benefit package will be part of that,

Tom Bernath – Owner of 37<sup>th</sup> Street Store

- How is 70 parking spaces going to accommodate 168 room,
- How will all that parking be accommodated? Where will construction people park?
- Do we need a building this large to be on the corner?
- Do you expect 37<sup>th</sup> Street to be through way and not be a cul-de-sac?
- There is going to be a problem with people going up and down the street,

- How are you providing more security? how is this going to be enhanced for students?
- Parking is a major problem; there should be one parking space per room,

Charlie – Carnow- Unite Here Local 11

- We represent over a thousand workers at USC and 1,600 in Council District 8,
- We encourage you to reject the Bethune hotel given the housing crisis,
- Unfathomable to use city own property for hotel, given the housing crisis,
- The proposed hotel will serve USC students and tourists who have ample options,
- The Community Plan policies says that strategic use of public property should be for creating 100% affordable housing,
- Community Plan Policy LU 6.1.10 and LU 6.11, which says we create affordable housing by facilitating the below market sale or lease of surplus or underutilized properties, to affordable housing developers,
- Will the file remained open; it's not true that hotels produce less traffic than hotels,
- The VMT analysis didn't address 85% of the VMTs, which are about guests; it was about workers,
- Is this a Categorical Exemption or a finding of consistency with the South LA Community Plan EIR; we request to keep the file open,

Orinio Opindalo – Community Leader with SAJE

- You need to deny the conditional use and site plan review,
- The City Council prioritized the public land for public good,
- South Los Angeles needs more affordable housing not hotels; hotels are for money,
- Our children are abused by USC, developers and the police state,
- We need more community services, like affordable housing,
- Hotels in poor areas have abused children for years,
- After a 10-month pilgrimage to India and the Olympics in 1984, I saw more homelessness in South Los Angeles than in India,
- If the hotel is allowed in this community, then you don't care for children,
- Affordable housing is what's needed to keep our children safe and not hotels,

Fabian Gonzalez - Community Organizer for SAJE

- I urge you to deny the developer's request for a hotel,
- We do a lot of community organizing in South LA,
- We don't need more hotels; there is a housing crisis; we want to continue to fight and urge our elected representatives to continue to fight with us,
- There is a housing crisis and it's because of development and displacement,
- A lot more affordable housing is needed; we need a lot more,
- Sixty-three percent of Council District 8 residents spend more than 30% of their income on housing,
- 39% of district residents spend over half of their income on housing,
- We urge you to deny this proposal,

Christian Torres - Unite Here Local 11

- I represent cafeteria workers at universities across Los Angeles,
- We urge you to reject the project; we need more affordable housing,
- Affordable housing is more of a community benefit,
- There is a crisis in housing and we don't need another hotel,
- The workers at USC will benefit more from housing.

Laura Ahkiam – St. Marks Church representative

- I've been a part of St. Mark's Church since 2004,
- I got involved when as a student we learn the library was about to close,
- Our Pastor, at the time, led us as neighbors to walked through the neighborhood,
- What we heard from families is they wanted a place where kids could do their homework and get other services, places that provide good jobs or affordable housing,
- I have concerns about whether that is coming from this development,
- We had a close relationship with the affordable housing developer,
- It's unclear of the community benefits being offered by this developer,
- We are concern about the way construction is going to happen, given it was an oil site; parking seems oriented towards the pre-school,
- Concern there is no formal environmental impact review of the development,
- Concern about the quality of jobs; there is a lack of clarity about those jobs,
- The people fought hard post 1992 uprising to have fewer liquor stores; we are concern with alcohol sales at the site,
- Given that this is public land, what is the highest and best use of the land?

Matthew Keadle – Pastor – St. Marks Church

- The church has deep concerns,
- We have submitted a letter expressing our concerns,
- This is not just vacant land, but public land and should be used to benefit the public,
- The community benefits should address the environmental impacts, the housing crisis, the economic impact, and the education legacy of Mary McLeod-Bethune,
- We have brought these requests to the developer and the Council Office,
- The responses have been vague,
- They say they have brought in community benefits, but we have not seen them,
- There have only been vague references to the community benefits,
- The project should not move forward until the community benefits agreement is a lot clearer.

Jean Frost – West Adams Neighborhood Council

- We request the record be kept open for two weeks,
- We request a copy of the EAF; we are concerned the required findings,
- You cannot make the findings that hotel will provide an essential benefit
- It will create an environment that has its own security that is not community sensitive,
- There are reasons findings are required; the findings have not been justified,
- The glossy presentation is not an opportunity but rather opportunistic,
- A hotel does not make sense on this site; it is not what the community was promised,
- USC was going to do hotel on the site, but decided to do student housing,
- The glossy presentation mis-represents the specifics of the CPIO and the South Community Plan that did not envision a hotel on the site,
- At the time the deal was struck to allow the hotel project to move forward, a business incubator project and affordable housing project that was waiting in the wings to get a formal sign-off and final agreement.
- This vacant land is a prime piece of real estate that should benefit the community.
- There is an astonishing lack of open space and green space
- The community benefits being dangled are simply inadequate planning considerations,

- To consider this as part of the South Los Angeles Community Plan EIR is an unbelievable far reach,
- We need affordable housing; I'm a greater supporter of a mix of housing,
- It is opportunistic; I'm surprise the Councilmember and his staff has embraced this,
- Today, I'm representing the West Adams Heritage Association that comments on developments in West Adams,
- We do not believe the environmental is adequate, and we'll study what's being presented,
- To link this project to the Program EIR of the South Los Angeles Community Plan cannot be justified,
- The business incubator had its funding and was ready to be signed,
- Much of this development and arrangements were done behind closed doors,
- You cannot make the findings that this provides an essential requirement for the surrounding neighborhood,
- The project's location, size, height and operation will not adversely affect or degrade adjacent properties; that's simply not true

Albizael Del Valle- Council District 8 Representative

- I just want to clarify the community benefit discussions,
- The amount committed to community benefits is not determined,
- We have not met with the developer.

Maria Patino-Guiterrez -SAJE Member

- We submitted a letter; please deny the conditional use on public land,
- The project will not enhance the surrounding environment or provide an essential service to the community,
- We participated in the Community Plan update and Community Plan prioritizes affordable housing; public land should be used for affordable housing.

Jim Childs - North University Park Community Association

- We have not heard that this is part of the redevelopment area,
- I want to go on the record that the project site is in the redevelopment area,
- The redevelopment regulations supersede the municipal code,
- The applicant must make an application for CRA review,
- The issues that are different and superseding can be revealed and addressed,
- A major development was reversed by the Planning Department because the Categorical Exemption was not sufficient,
- If there is a game to play one approval against another, he should be aware that,
- I'm asking people to not re-create the mess that was done on a prior document,
- In my opinion, the CRA would not have approved a hotel on the land they assembled,

Dr. Susan Stouffer – St. Marks Church Member

- I've been living in the community for 21 years, and 15 years working with kids,
- The former use was a safe space for kids; it was a place to go for resources,
- When the proposal was affordable housing, it was going to provide youth services,
- In this space, we have been trying to get something desirable from the developer and the Council Office,
- We had hope to work with the project to see tangle community project such as community space, help for youth programs, broadband for the digital divide,



- I have not seen the community benefit proposal,
- We haven't the concern for the contamination from the gas station,
- We want to see this last space of public land use for a public good,
- We have raised these concerns
- We haven't seen the responses from Marriott about the Community needs or wants,
- We want to see this public space be dedicated to the highest and best use for the community,

Katie McKeon – Staff Attorney Public Counsel for UNIDAD

- We submitted a detailed letter to the file,
- We don't feel the hotel project provides an essential service,
- The site is in a low-rise residential neighborhood and next to a community church,
- The use of the hotel is incompatible with the neighborhood,
- There has been no transparency about the needed remediation of the site,
- The documents required by the developer have not been provided,
- Not requiring an EIR would deny the community residents the information they need,
- The Community Plan makes clear it wants to preserve public land for affordable housing,
- The City's proposed Housing Element is proposing a program to utilize public land for affordable housing and the Bethune site is on the list of sites,
- Can the planning staff speak to the inconsistency?
- The City Council has passed several motions asking Planning to give priority to the development of affordable housing on public land,
- I want to push back on the assertion that there is an overconcentration or saturation of affordable housing in the community, an overwhelming concentration of CD8 residents in the community are rent burdened and have some of the lowest wages when compared to other Council Districts,
- There is an overwhelming number of residents living on the streets,
- There will never be enough affordable housing until all residents are in stable housing,
- Can the staff speak to the inconsistency of the initiative to provide affordable housing on public land? There will never be senior affordable housing,
- We are concern the community benefits discussions are taking place behind closed doors,

Susy Coracero – South Los Angeles Resident

- UNIDAD Coalition member
- I'm speaking on behalf of my neighbors, on behalf of those who face financial housing burdens; I speak for those who are invisibility,
- Talking about community benefits is putting the horse before the carriage,
- It's a slap to the community to take public land and privatize it,
- In 2020, there is a 72% increase homeless population in CD8,
- What community are we looking forward to please?
- It's salt to the wound to bypass the environmental study,
- I question luxury over human lives,
- The unhoused population of CD-8 should not be ignored,
- There is no benefit to providing a hotel across the street to USC.

Cindy Gaete (Empower Congress North Area Neighborhood Development – At-large Representative

- NANDC discussed the hotel project at its November and December meetings,
- The board voted to oppose the project, and asks that an RFP be issued for affordable housing; the full board voted 8-0-0 to oppose the project,
- At the December 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the developer shares its views on the economic benefits and the community their views,
- The community concerns were parking, traffic circulation, environmental concerns and the skepticism on community benefits,
- The NANDC board voted to oppose the project,
- Some of the highlighted reasons where the project does not substantial comply with the Hoover Redevelopment Plan, which has goals to provide housing the satisfy the needs of the community,
- Another goal is to focus on the local community and contribute to neighborhood improvements; this project does not conform to these goals,
- There are a lot of adverse effects to the community because of the project's location, size and height, and it's not compatible to the community,
- It's been mentioned the project is a 7-story building with 168 rooms, located on a RD1.5 site,
- This project site doesn't support a hotel redevelopment and will exacerbate some of the issues the community is dealing with,
- Our board recommends there be a 4<sup>th</sup> RFP process, and done in a manner that is transparent and open to the community,
- Our community doesn't believe public land should be transferred for private ownership,
- At our Neighborhood Council meetings, we had multiple community speakers and a petition that raised concerns about the development of the public land,
- The Neighborhood Council and CD 8 recommends denial of the project due to its location and on city own land,
- We had multiple meetings as a NC, and talked about benefits the project could provide,
- We did not hear about a community benefits package from the developer at any of our three meetings, or from CD8; we asked that you not approve the project.

Jo Anne Russell – 50-year resident

- Small non-profit business owner
- Bethune site is the first civic activity I got involved with,
- The community has not been informed about the project; it hasn't been transparent,
- Major concern is with safety; traffic is alive and well,
- The major ingress/egress will be along a cul-de-sac,
- Vermont Avenue cannot sustain the level of traffic that will come,
- There was no mention of an elementary school that the traffic will have to be passed to get to the hotel,
- There are three other elementary schools in the community,
- The community is dense behind the building with students,
- Traffic and drug use is alive and well,
- A million dollars for community benefit is a slap in the face, there should be annually 1 million dollars for community benefits,
- There are four affordable housing projects; three are over 25 years old; one is named after Billy G. Mills; the first black judge in Los Angeles,
- If there are four elementary schools, that means there are families,
- We have plenty of second houses for people who already have one,

- We need housing for regular people to live in,
- Their project does not lift the economic development we need,
- University related people are getting things they need, like a place to stay or the best jobs,
- It would be devastating to pull the traffic into this nice little neighborhood,
- The project should not be in this space; it does not fit,
- If allowed, they should come up with a lot more than \$1 million a year,

Silvia Marriogun (SAJE)

- The 40K USC students are already taking a toll on the affordable housing,
- The \$1 million dollars for the community benefits is really not a lot of money,
- COVID-19 has proven we're not prepared; you see more people on the streets,
- Affordable housing is a need; a hotel is not,
- Are we replacing a library with a hotel; is that what we are doing here?
- There is more of a need for affordable housing; I urge you to deny the permit for a hotel and build more affordable housing,

Chelsea Kirk (Researcher – SAJE)

- The research report provided by UNIDAD,
- Based on the research findings, you should deny the request,
- CD 8 is in desperate need for affordable housing,
- 39% of the City's residence spend more than half of their income on housing,
- Last year, CD 8 saw a 72% increase in homelessness,
- CD 8 residents have the lowest wages in the city,
- This library site presents an opportunity for affordable housing, and
- Constructing a hotel at this site, given the current realities, is harmful,
- The needs of the community must come before tourists.

Marcos Hernandez -Resident

- I speak on behalf of the voiceless,
- The Bethune hotel project is not in the best interest of the area,
- There are still lots of homeless issues in LA,
- Right down the street, I see nothing but homeless encampments,
- It's not safe; there has been an increase in criminal activities,
- That leads to other issues,
- I'm opposed to the hotel; it will not bring revenue to the residents who live here,
- We don't need a privatized hotel in South LA,

Laura Meyers (UNNC Member, but Self-Representing)

- 25-year PAC member of the Hoover (University Park) Redevelopment Project area,
- The project does not comport with the requirements of redevelopment plan,
- The City Council's action CF-14-0425-S9 anticipated the project would further the goals of the redevelopment plan and serve the affordable housing and economic development goals of the city,
- The CRA had a combination of affordable housing and catalyst economic development projects; there is no reason why a hotel can't be combined with an affordable housing project,
- The purchase of the land by the CRA occurred in 2008; that was also the year the EIR was funded and begun for the South Los Angeles Community Plan update and the CRA provided the funding,

- While the EIR was adopted in 2017, most of the work was done after 2008,
- There wasn't much money left after 2008, so there was only a tweak as an update not a redone plan 10 years later,
- It would be inappropriate to link this project to that EIR, the circumstances have changed,
- The pine trees are still on the parcel, and they are greater than 8-inches in diameter,
- The trees date from the time original house was on the lot, when it was part of the 120-acre ownership; this should be part of the review process,
- I agree with Mr. Childs that there supposed to be one process.

Mario Perez – Resident and work near USC.

- You are familiar with gentrification, cost of living and homeless,
- I've been homeless because the cost of living is so high,
- I can't afford an apartment for \$1,000; students pay \$800 a month just for a bed,
- The hotel is not essential for the community,
- The need of the community is for senior, our citizens and kids,
- At Expo Park, many kids out of sports because there is no more space for kids,
- The cost of living is high because of gentrification,
- Many workers at USC have to go outside the area to live,
- A hotel is not going to help this community,
- The city should use public property for affordable housing to benefit the people,
- A hotel is not essential to the community,
- We need more affordable housing, services, park, police or fire fighters,
- There is lot stress; what USC brings to the neighborhood is the high cost of living,
- Take an example of the west, people don't have development built on public land,
- Think about gentrification, cost of living and homelessness,
- As 30 -year resident, I've seen things elected officials never seen.
- Where are kids going to live tomorrow, where are communities going to live tomorrow?

Maria Flores – Programs Manager with CD-10

- I live in CD-9, and I've worked with CD-8 students and youth,
- I'm here on behalf of two students the Council Office,
- Melissa Flores, Chicano Youth, say homelessness is an issue in my community; hotels do not solve the issues in the community,
- Amaya Whitfield commented it makes me sad to see these projects where there is violence in the community,
- The youth in South LA are organizing to solving problems,

Correspondence

November 21, 2021 – N.U.P.C.A. submitted a letter expressing opposition to the "Utilization of the SE/SLA Community Plan Updates EIR as a substitute for an ND, MND, or Supplemental EIR, or as if it was itself a Program EIR." The writer states the applicant has apparently asked for relief from Applicant's normal duty to prepare a more complete CEQA evaluation and clearance, rather, the applicant wishes to rely on the Environmental Impact Report prepared well over a decade ago for the update of two Community Plans. The previous EIR failed to evaluate the current conditions of the site and surrounding area specifically homelessness and housing, and the existing the century old trees.



November 20, 2021 – West Adams Heritage Association submitted a letter expressing concerns with regards to the project’s use of a specified Program EIR. The cited sections pursuant CEQA Guidelines Sections 15168 and 15162, and the statement that the project was considered within the scope of the South Los Angeles Community Plan Program EIR No. 2008-1781 EIR fails to justify the acceptance of this environmental analysis.

November 19, 2021- GK Law submitted a letter on Behalf of UNITE HERE Local 11 raising regarding the Draft Remedial Action Workplan and California Environmental Quality Act. The writer has concerns with the Site’s environmental cleanup under the proposed RAW, the applicant’s failure to consider the project’s entire vehicle miles traveled profile, the project’s inconsistency with applicable land use plans, and the City’s failure to reconsider the site for affordable housing.

November 3, 2021 – Maria Flores (YLEAD Program Manager) submitted an email in opposition to the proposed project.

November 1, 2021 – Nvision Development submitted a letter opposing the proposed project, stating that in June 2018 it entered into an exclusive negotiating agreement with the City to develop a mixed-use project consisting of residential, retail and offices. In November 2018, the firm was notified the ENA had reached its three-month expiration period and would not be renewed. Nvision remains willing and able to deliver on the originally proposed mixed use project.

October 22, 2021 - North Area Neighborhood Development Council submitted its letter containing additional comments to the ZA on findings required for a conditional use. The letter detailed the points that would generally support denial of the project request.

October 20-21, 2021 – Over one hundred emails were submitted to the project planner expressing opposition to the proposed project. “Please reject the Bethune Hotel. We need affordable housing to deal with gentrification in the area, not more hotels. ....More hotels will not provide an essential or beneficial service to our community, which needs more housing – not more hotels.”

October 20, 2021 – West Adams Heritage Association submitted a letter expressing concerns with regards to the project’s use of a specified Program EIR. The cited sections pursuant CEQA Guidelines Sections 15168 and 15162, and the statement that the project was considered within the scope of the South Los Angeles Community Plan Program EIR No. 2008-01781 EIR fails to justify the acceptance of this environmental analysis.

October 20, 2021 – A letter from a coalition of neighborhood serving community organizations submitted a letter expressing opposition to the proposed project stating that the site would better serve the community if developed for housing.

October 20, 2021 – Orinio Opinalodo wrote an email expressing the need for the Zoning Administrator to deny the proposed project. “South LA needs more affordable housing, not hotels” My experiences has been hotels are for money and our children ae abused by

developers, USC and this police state in South LA.

October 20, 2021 – UNIDAD (United Neighbor In Defense Against Displacement) wrote a letter to express strong opposition to the submitted application for the proposed hotel project, as it does not meet the necessary criteria for approval for a Conditional Use Permit or Site Plan Review. The site requires environmental remediation which should be done through a full EIR and not shoehorned into a previously completed EIR process. The proposed hotel project is opposition to Community Plan goals and objectives for the use of publicly owned land and efforts to provide affordable housing. The letter included an “Affordable Housing Report” prepared for Council District 8

October 18, 2021- St. Marks Lutheran Church submitted a letter in opposition to the proposed hotel project and based on research and meetings determined the following as priorities of concern: Environmental Justice, Education, Economic Investment/jobs and Affordable housing. Also, the church expressed that it cannot endorse the hotel project at this time without a strong Community Benefit Agreement (CBA).

September 23, 2021 - An email was received from UNITE HERE Local 11, with the request to be added to an interest list.

September 23, 2021 - A letter of support was received from the Adams-Normandie Neighborhood Association (ANNA), with the following comments:

- The project will provide career opportunities
- Elimination of empty and unkempt parcel of land
- Promotion of South Los Angeles Community

September 24, 2021 - A letter of support was received from the Leonardo’s Real Estate, with the following comments:

- Vermont Avenue is a major thoroughfare that should be occupied by commercial and retail businesses that will support the local residents and community that will create the walkability that this community needs.
- Vermont Avenue desperately needs a retail anchor that will drive much needed patrons for the local community businesses.

February 9, 2021 – The Empowerment Congress North Area Neighborhood Development Council (NANDC) submitted a letter expressing opposition to the proposed project. The board voted to oppose the hotel project on the formerly CRA public land and asked that an RFP be issued to include an affordable housing objective.

January 16, 2020 - CREED LA submitted a PRA request letter to the Planning Department asking that it provides a copy of any and all records related to the proposed project per Public Records Act Request and Request for Mailed Notice of Public Hearing and Actions.

February 9, 2021 - A letter of opposition was received from the North Area Neighborhood Development Council (NANDC) with the following comments:

- The Traffic impacts assessment studies that were presented by the proponent of the project was questioned by the audience in the meeting.
- The actual economic benefits studies that were presented by the proponent of the project were questioned by the proponents of the project.
- The nonunion status of the hotel
- The failure of a hotel project to build community
- Need for housing and especially Affordable Housing

March 31, 2020 - An email was received from Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE) with the request to be added to an interest list.

April 23, 2020 - An email was received from Public Counsel Law Center with the request to be added to an interest list.

After closing the public testimony, the Zoning Administrator took the matter under advisement for 30 days to look into the claims expressed by community members.

### **BASIS FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS**

A particular type of development is subject to the conditional use process because it has been determined that such use of property should not be permitted by right in a particular zone. All uses requiring a conditional use permit from the Zoning Administrator are located within Section 12.24-W of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

Prior to issuing the Letter of Determination, the Zoning Administrator considered all of the testimony from affected and/or interested persons regarding the project as well as written communications received prior to, or at, or subsequent to the hearing as well as the merits of the project as it relates to the existing environmental and land use regulations.

### **FINDINGS**

Following (highlighted) is a delineation of the findings and the application of the relevant facts to same:

1. **The project will NOT enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood NOR will it perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city or region.**

The subject property is an approximately 33,400 square feet vacant (0.77 acres) lot and it is zoned C2-2D-CPIO with a Community Commercial land use designation with corresponding zones of C2, C4, RAS3, R3, RAS4, and R4, within the South Los Angeles Community Plan Area. This subject site is also located within the North University Park-Exposition Park-West Adams Neighborhood Stabilization Overlay (NSO) District (ZI-2397), a Los Angeles State Enterprise Zone (ZI-2374), a City of Los Angeles Transit Priority Area (ZI-2452), an area subject Local Emergency Temporary Regulations – Time limit and Parking Relief

– LAMC 16.02.1 (ZI-2498), the Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project (ZI-2488), the South Los Angeles Alcohol Sales Specific Plan (ZI-1231), and the South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) District (ZI-2484). Further, the subject property is within the TOD High Subarea of the South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) District.

The publicly owned vacant 33,400 square-foot site is located within a well-established community commercial corridor of South Los Angeles south of Jefferson Boulevard, with neighborhood serving retail, uses and services primarily situated along the west side of Vermont Avenue. The neighborhood serving uses consists of local grocery stores, post office, local eateries, childcare facilities, religious institutions, and personal grooming and health care businesses and typically operate within structures that are one or two stories. Further south, the community commercial corridor is comprised of a local non-profit institution, a Los Angeles County public Health building, a senior housing development and a Los Angeles County Probation Building, and a preparatory high school. The institutional and regional serving uses are situated along the east side of Vermont Avenue, which are comprised of the University of Southern California, the Los Angeles Coliseum, the Natural History Museum, the California African American Museum, the California Science Center, the Banc of California Stadium and the Lucas Museum, now under construction.

The commercial uses and services along the westerly side of Vermont Avenue, support the adjacent residential community that extends west of the community commercial corridor. The destination attractions and regional serving uses, which generally front along Figueroa Street, are served by the international, nationally and regional serving brands and goods (Felix Chevrolet, McDonalds, Starbucks, FedEx, Mercedes, Audi, Toyota, Porche, Bank of America, etc....). Uses established to serv the University of South California are typically found along Figueroa Street.

The proposed hotel project is an internationally branded hospitality operation seeking to meet the needs and demands of the destination attractions and regional users that visit and patronize such uses located along Figueroa Street. Additionally, it is intended to meet the USC's needs and demand for lodging. The proposed project is seeking to achieve this objective from a neighborhood serving commercial corner that has historically served the adjacent residential community west of the publicly owned parcel.

The proposed internationally branded project displaces opportunities for affordable housing, a youth center or any other community serving use. As the applicant stated, the proposed hotel is intended primarily to benefit the destination and regional attractions located along Figueroa Street, while secondarily providing some opportunities for local residents from the immediate neighborhood adjacent to the publicly own land. Testimony was repeatedly provided that the 33,400 square-foot publicly own site within the Community Commercial district could be better utilized by providing an opportunity to replace the former community serving



use with another community serving use.

The proposed hospitality project situated within the center of the Community Commercial district that was established to serve adjacent residential neighborhood, will not enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood. A destination attraction or regional serving use is not essential to the immediate residential community that is located west of Vermont Avenue, nor is the location of such a use essential to the uses that front along Figueroa Street.

2. **The project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will NOT be compatible with and will adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.**

Along with local retailers, the neighborhood serving uses are institutions such as churches, preparatory high schools, county family services centers, post office and local non-profit organizations, which are situated along the westerly side of Vermont Avenue. The location of the proposed seven-story hotel is such that its frontage is oriented to the rear-end of the University of Southern California, the Los Angeles Coliseum and other uses it proposes to serve. The University of Southern California's frontage is along Figueroa Street, while its maintenance yard and several buildings have rear facing facades along Vermont Avenue. The Los Angeles Coliseum's frontage is along Figueroa Street, and the Banc of California Stadium fronts Figueroa Street. While the Lucas Museum frontage is not along Vermont Avenue, it will be facing a new roadway that intersects Bill Robertson Avenue.

The proposed hotel is an international brand, which is being sited in a local neighborhood's Community Commercial land use district. From the proposed location, the project intends to provide regional brands and services to the destination and regional attractions, whose rear-end faces the local community. The proposed hospitality project introduces conflicts, not synergy, between the community serving and regional serving patrons from its community serving location.

As stated, the publicly owned 33,400 square-foot site is situated in the Community Commercial land use designated district that abuts the predominantly residential neighborhood west of Vermont Avenue. The typical height of the Community Commercial are one to two stories, with some residential buildings reaching as high as three-stories and some county buildings reaching as high as five stories. Seven-story tall structures do not exist in the immediate neighborhood nor the surrounding community west of the project site. The proposed seven-story project far exceeds the prevailing height of the neighboring Community Commercial land use designated properties.

The adjacent and surrounding residential neighborhoods are served by the Community Commercial uses along Vermont Avenue and to some degree, they

are served by the businesses along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. As stated previously, county services, non-profit organizations and religious institutions operate south of the 33,400 square-foot publicly owned vacant site. North of the site are religious institutions, a post office and moderate-income housing units, and further north is more community serving commercial uses. The proposed hotel intends to meet the needs and demands perceived to be created by the destination and regional attractions fronting along Figueroa Street, and therefore can be said to displace community serving opportunities which contribute to preserving and stabilizing the character and wellbeing of the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Hence, the project's location, size, height, operations and other significant features will NOT be compatible with and will adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare and safety.

3. **The project DOES NOT substantially comply with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any specific plan.**

There are eleven elements of the General Plan. Each of these Elements establishes policies that provide for the regulatory environment in managing the City and for addressing environmental concerns and problems. Most of the policies derived from these Elements are in the form of Code Requirements of Los Angeles Municipal Code. Except for those entitlements described herein, the project does not propose to deviate from any of the requirements of the Los Angeles Municipal Code. The Land Use Element of the City's General Plan divides the city into 35 Community Plans and the South Los Angeles Community Plan's goals, objectives and policies apply to the 33,400 square-foot publicly own parcel.

The South Los Angeles Community Plan Map designates the property for Community Commercial land use with corresponding zone of C2 and Height District 2D-CPIO. The Community Commercial Land Use Section of the Community Plan states its goals and policies seek to revitalize the Community Commercial corridors through the implementation of design standards and guidelines, as well as by limiting the proliferation of undesirable uses and encouraging an equitable and diverse mix of quality uses along the corridors. The plan also establishes guidelines that improve the transition between new development along the corridors and adjacent lower-scale, single-family and multi-family homes. The intent of the Community Commercial land use designation is to provide a variety of retail establishments, services, and amenities for residents, employees, and visitors of the surrounding area.

Land Use Element – South Los Angeles Community Plan

In part, the proposed hotel project aligns with the intent of the South Los Angeles Community Plan including the following:

*Goal LU6: A commercial sector that is strong and competitive, that serves the needs of individual neighborhoods and the broader community, and that provides local residents with access to high quality jobs providing a pathway out of poverty.*

*Policy LU6.3: Attract a diversity of uses that strengthen the economic base and expand market opportunities for existing and new businesses and provide a distribution of desirable amenities throughout the community, including full-service grocery stores, sit-down restaurants, and entertainment venues.*

*Policy LU6.5: Make it a priority to provide a range of health services (e.g. primary, preventative, dental care, prenatal, counseling) in locations that are accessible to the community, particularly Federally Qualified Health Centers.*

*Policy LU6.11 Prioritize the creation of affordable housing by facilitating below-market sale or lease of surplus land and other underutilized property to affordable housing developers or for the creation of new parks space, where there is a demonstrated need for one or the other, consistent with state law.*

*Goal LU8: High quality, context-sensitive design that is reflective of the desired community character, and preserves the historic and cultural character of the district.*

*Policy LU8.1: Create adequate transitions between commercial uses along the corridors and adjacent residential neighborhoods through elements such as transitional height requirements and landscape buffers.*

*Policy LU8.2: Support efforts to enhance community character, scale and architectural diversity, by promoting quality site and landscape design for new commercial uses.*

*Policy LU8.3: Enhance the public realm in commercial areas by promoting quality site, architectural and landscape design, as well as vibrant streetscapes.*

*Policy LU8.6: Encourage the redevelopment of existing vacant lots throughout the community that create unsightly and blighting conditions along the corridors,*

*Goal LU12: Strong and competitive community commercial area that serve the needs of the surrounding community while preserving historic commercial and cultural character.*

*Policy LU12.1: Locate higher densities and a mix of uses in areas*

*designated community commercial, as appropriate, unless identified as commercial-only.*

*Policy LU12.2: The scale and massing of new development along corridors should provide appropriate transitions in building height and bulk that are sensitive to the physical and visual character of adjoining neighborhoods with lower development intensities and building heights.*

*Policy LU12.3: Recommend that new development projects conform to design standards and guidelines that promote high-quality and attractive buildings, as well as an active pedestrian-oriented environment.*

The project is the construction of a seven-story, 75-foot tall, 168-room hotel building with a proposed Floor Area ("FAR") of approximately 3::1 and 102,069 square feet of floor area. The project will provide 5,359 square feet lobby/lounge space, 4,067 square feet of ground floor retail space, 2,453 square feet of meeting space, and 1,473 square feet of recreation areas. The proposed redevelopment of the publicly owned land is intended to meet the demands of the users, patrons and visitors to the destination attractions and regional uses situated along Figueroa Street; however, the proposed project fails to meet the demands of the community in which the publicly own land is situated, as repeatedly stated in the public testimony and in written correspondence.

While the project substantially complies with the Community Plan Design Guidelines by providing a pedestrian-oriented environment and promoting a high quality and attractive building through a covered pedestrian entrance along Vermont Avenue with transparent glazing, articulating the street facade with design treatments, incorporating landscaping along setbacks to serve as a "green screen", providing one vehicular access from the Vermont Avenue, and breaking up the building mass that faces the lower-density residential neighborhood. The proposed project is not community serving but rather intends to serve destination and regional attractions, it far exceeds the prevailing height limit of community serving buildings and displaces opportunities to allow the publicly owned land to continue to provide community services.

The project fails in that its frontage is oriented to the rear-end of the destination and regional serving attractions it intends to serve. University of Southern California, the Los Angeles Coliseum, the Banc of California Stadium, the California Science Center and the California African American Museum are regional and national serving uses which have their frontages along Figueroa Street. Also, the rear of the proposed 7-story hotel building faces the adjacent residential neighborhood, which consists predominantly of one-story residential buildings and 2-3 story multi-family buildings. The proposed vehicular ramps, the loading/trash/storage area, and mechanical equipment are situated in close proximity to these adjacent residential uses, which adversely affects their quiet enjoyment.



South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay District

The proposed project is in the subarea G: TOD High of the South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO). “The intent of the supplemental development regulations in [the TOD Subareas] is to provide for well designed, pedestrian-oriented projects that are appropriate to the scale and context of each specific transit neighborhood. Use regulations promote the establishment of much needed uses (such as Full-Service Grocery Stores and Banks), as well as incentivize 100 percent affordable housing and mixed-income housing projects to be built near transit.”

The proposed use of the publicly owned land is for the development of a new seven-story, 75-foot tall, 168-room hotel building, totaling 102,069 square feet including 4,067 square feet of ground floor retail, and 5,708 square feet of open space. The South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay, Subarea G: TOD high limits the FAR to 4:1 and 8 stories.

While the proposed project complies with the CPIO development regulations, it does not fit within the scale and context of the community commercial district that serves the nearby neighborhood. Vermont Avenue functions as a boundary that demarcates the local community and its commercial serving uses, and those uses or attractions that serve the broader Los Angeles region. The local community serving uses such as the Los Angeles County Family Services Center, Los Angeles County Re-Entry Opportunity Center and a local prep high school are situated along the west side of Vermont Avenue. Additionally, religious institutions, senior housing, and moderate-income housing and community serving non-profit organizations are also situated along the west side of Vermont Avenue. The building heights range from 1 to 3 stories, while the proposed project is seven stories high in the community commercial district.

Mobility Plan 2035

The proposed project DOES NOT also conform with the following policies of the Mobility Plan, including:

*3.1 – Access for All: Recognize all modes of travel, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular modes - including goods movement – as integral components of the City’s transportation system.*

*3.3 – Land Use Access and Mix: Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations, and other neighborhood services.*

The proposed project is the redevelopment of a publicly own 33,400 square-foot parcel into a 168-room hotel intended to meet the needs and demands of the uses fronting along Figueroa Street, which are generally destination or regional attractions. The redevelopment of the publicly own land for said purpose forecloses

any opportunity for the site to be used for any community serving commercial uses to meet the needs of the adjacent residential neighborhood.

The loss of the nearby publicly own land for the private use for destination or regional serving purposes results in greater vehicular trips for the residents that live immediately nearby. Therefore, it can be said the proposed project is not consistent with the above goals of the Mobility Plan.

#### Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project Area

The project site is located within the Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project Area. The project is a new seven-story, 75-foot tall, 168-room hotel building, totaling 102,069 square foot including 4,067 square foot of ground floor retail, and 5,708 square feet of open space

Per the introduction of the Hoover Redevelopment Plan 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment adopted May 9, 1989, "Section 200, Sections 400-1000 and Part III – Property Acquisitions Map shall continue in full force and effect and shall govern only the Original Project Area. Sections 1100-1900 have been incorporated in the Fourth and Fifth Amendments to the Redevelopment Plan to govern only the Expanded Area." Per Ordinance 181,682, the Original Hoover Redevelopment Plan expires January 1, 2013. Therefore, the 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Hoover Redevelopment Plan does not apply to the proposed project and the Original Hoover Redevelopment Plan approved and adopted January 27, 1966 by the City Council of the City of Los Angeles has expired on January 1, 2013, thus, not applicable. The proposed project shall conform to the LAMC because restrictions set forth in Section 200 and Sections 400-1000 of the Original Hoover Redevelopment Plan does not apply due to the expiration of the plan.

#### SITE PLAN REVIEW FINDINGS

4. **That the project is in NOT substantial conformance with the purposes, intent and provisions of the General Plan, applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan.**

There are eleven elements of the General Plan. Each of these Elements establishes policies that provide for the regulatory environment in managing the City and for addressing environmental concerns and problems. Most of the policies derived from these Elements are in the form of Code Requirements of Los Angeles Municipal Code. Except for those entitlements described herein, the project does not propose to deviate from any of the requirements of the Los Angeles Municipal Code. The Land Use Element of the City's General Plan divides the city into 35 Community Plans and the South Los Angeles Community Plan's goals, objectives and policies apply to the 33,400 square-foot publicly own parcel.

The South Los Angeles Community Plan Map designates the property for Community Commercial land use with corresponding zone of C2 and Height

District 2D-CPIO. The Community Commercial Land Use Section of the Community Plan states its goals and policies seek to revitalize the Community Commercial corridors through the implementation of design standards and guidelines, as well as by limiting the proliferation of undesirable uses and encouraging an equitable and diverse mix of quality uses along the corridors. The plan also establishes guidelines that improve the transition between new development along the corridors and adjacent lower-scale, single-family and multi-family homes. The intent of the Community Commercial land use designation is to provide a variety of retail establishments, services, and amenities for residents, employees, and visitors of the surrounding area.

Land Use Element – South Los Angeles Community Plan

In part, the proposed hotel project aligns with the intent of the South Los Angeles Community Plan including the following:

*Goal LU6: A commercial sector that is strong and competitive, that serves the needs of individual neighborhoods and the broader community, and that provides local residents with access to high quality jobs providing a pathway out of poverty.*

*Policy LU6.3: Attract a diversity of uses that strengthen the economic base and expand market opportunities for existing and new businesses and provide a distribution of desirable amenities throughout the community, including full-service grocery stores, sit-down restaurants, and entertainment venues.*

*Policy LU6.5: Make it a priority to provide a range of health services (e.g. primary, preventative, dental care, prenatal, counseling) in locations that are accessible to the community, particularly Federally Qualified Health Centers.*

*Policy LU6.11 Prioritize the creation of affordable housing by facilitating below-market sale or lease of surplus land and other underutilized property to affordable housing developers or for the creation of new parks space, where there is a demonstrated need for one or the other, consistent with state law.*

*Goal LU8: High quality, context-sensitive design that is reflective of the desired community character, and preserves the historic and cultural character of the district.*

*Policy LU8.1: Create adequate transitions between commercial uses along the corridors and adjacent residential neighborhoods through elements such as transitional height requirements and landscape buffers.*

*Policy LU8.2: Support efforts to enhance community character, scale and*

*architectural diversity, by promoting quality site and landscape design for new commercial uses.*

*Policy LU8.3: Enhance the public realm in commercial areas by promoting quality site, architectural and landscape design, as well as vibrant streetscapes.*

*Policy LU8.6: Encourage the redevelopment of existing vacant lots throughout the community that create unsightly and blighting conditions along the corridors,*

*Goal LU12: Strong and competitive community commercial area that serve the needs of the surrounding community while preserving historic commercial and cultural character.*

*Policy LU12.1: Locate higher densities and a mix of uses in areas designated community commercial, as appropriate, unless identified as commercial-only.*

*Policy LU12.2: The scale and massing of new development along corridors should provide appropriate transitions in building height and bulk that are sensitive to the physical and visual character of adjoining neighborhoods with lower development intensities and building heights.*

*Policy LU12.3: Recommend that new development projects conform to design standards and guidelines that promote high-quality and attractive buildings, as well as an active pedestrian-oriented environment.*

The project is the construction of a seven-story, 75-foot tall, 168-room hotel building with a proposed Floor Area ("FAR") of approximately 3::1 and 102,069 square feet of floor area. The project will provide 5,359 square feet lobby/lounge space, 4,067 square feet of ground floor retail space, 2,453 square feet of meeting space, and 1,473 square feet of recreation areas. The proposed redevelopment of the publicly owned land is intended to meet the demands of the users, patrons and visitors to the destination attractions and regional uses situated along Figueroa Street; however, the proposed project fails to meet the demands of the community in which the publicly own land is situated, as repeatedly stated in the public testimony and in written correspondence.

While the project substantially complies with the Community Plan Design Guidelines by providing a pedestrian-oriented environment and promoting a high quality and attractive building through a covered pedestrian entrance along Vermont Avenue with transparent glazing, articulating the street facade with design treatments, incorporating landscaping along setbacks to serve as a "green screen", providing one vehicular access from the Vermont Avenue, and breaking up the building mass that faces the lower-density residential neighborhood.

The project fails in that its frontage is oriented to the rear-end of the destination attractions it intends to serve. University of Southern California, the Los Angeles Coliseum, the Banc of California Stadium, the California Science Center and the California African American Museum are regional and national serving uses which have their frontages along Figueroa Street. Also, the rear of the proposed 7-story hotel building faces the adjacent residential neighborhood, that consists predominantly of one-story residential buildings and 2-3 story multi-family buildings. The proposed vehicular ramps, the loading/trash/storage area, and mechanical equipment are situated in close proximity to these adjacent residential uses, which adversely affects their quiet enjoyment.

#### South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay District

The proposed project is in the subarea G: TOD High of the South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO). “The intent of the supplemental development regulations in [the TOD Subareas] is to provide for well designed, pedestrian-oriented projects that are appropriate to the scale and context of each specific transit neighborhood. Use regulations promote the establishment of much needed uses (such as Full-Service Grocery Stores and Banks), as well as incentivize 100 percent affordable housing and mixed-income housing projects to be built near transit.”

The proposed use of the publicly owned land is for the development of a new seven-story, 75-foot tall, 168-room hotel building, totaling 102,069 square feet including 4,067 square feet of ground floor retail, and 5,708 square feet of open space. The South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay, Subarea G: TOD high limits the FAR to 4:1 and 8 stories.

While the proposed project complies with the CPIO development regulations, it does not fit within the scale and context of the community commercial district that serves the nearby neighborhood. Vermont Avenue functions as a boundary that demarcates the local community and its commercial serving uses, and those destination uses or attractions that serve the broader Los Angeles region. The local community serving uses such as the Los Angeles County Family Services Center, Los Angeles County Re-Entry Opportunity Center and a local prep high school are situated along the west side of Vermont Avenue. Additionally, religious institutions, senior housing, and moderate-income housing and community serving non-profit organizations are also situated along the west side of Vermont Avenue. The building heights range from 1 to 3 stories, while the proposed project is seven stories high in the community commercial district.

#### Mobility Plan 2035

The proposed project ***DOES NOT*** also ***conform*** with the following policies of the Mobility Plan, including:

*3.1 – Access for All: Recognize all modes of travel, including pedestrian,*



*bicycle, transit, and vehicular modes - including goods movement – as integral components of the City’s transportation system.*

*3.3 – Land Use Access and Mix: Promote equitable land use decisions that result in fewer vehicle trips by providing greater proximity and access to jobs, destinations, and other neighborhood services.*

The proposed project is the redevelopment of a publicly own 33,400 square-foot parcel into a 168-room hotel intended to meet the needs and demands of the uses fronting along Figueroa Street, which are generally destination or regional attractions. The redevelopment of the publicly own land for said purpose forecloses any opportunity for the city own site to be used for any community serving commercial uses to meet the needs of the adjacent residential neighborhood.

The loss of the nearby publicly own land for the private use for destination or regional serving purposes results in greater vehicular trips for the residents that live immediately nearby. Therefore, it can be said the proposed project is not consistent with the above goals of the Mobility Plan.

#### Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project Area

The project site is located within the Exposition/University Park Redevelopment Project Area. The project is a new seven-story, 75-foot tall, 168-room hotel building, totaling 102,069 square foot including 4,067 square foot of ground floor retail, and 5,708 square feet of open space

Per the introduction of the Hoover Redevelopment Plan 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment adopted May 9, 1989, “Section 200, Sections 400-1000 and Part III – Property Acquisitions Map shall continue in full force and effect and shall govern only the Original Project Area. Sections 1100-1900 have been incorporated in the Fourth and Fifth Amendments to the Redevelopment Plan to govern only the Expanded Area.” Per Ordinance 181,682, the Original Hoover Redevelopment Plan expires January 1, 2013. Therefore, the 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Hoover Redevelopment Plan does not apply to the proposed project and the Original Hoover Redevelopment Plan approved and adopted January 27, 1966 by the City Council of the City of Los Angeles has expired on January 1, 2013, thus, not applicable. The proposed project shall conform to the LAMC because restrictions set forth in Section 200 and Sections 400-1000 of the Original Hoover Redevelopment Plan does not apply due to the expiration of the plan.

5. **That the project DOES NOT consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements, that is or will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent properties and neighboring properties.**

The project site is located in the South Los Angeles Community Plan, on a site

generally bounded by Vermont Avenue on the east, 37th Street on the south, Multi-family residential building on the west and church use on the north. The subject property is a vacant lot with a total lot area of approximately 102,069 square feet (2.34 acres). The proposed project is for a development project 168-room hotel building with frontage of approximately 185 feet on the westerly side of South Vermont Avenue and frontage of approximately 183 feet along the northerly side of 37th Street.

The proposed project is for the development of a new 7-story, 75-foot tall, 168-room hotel building with a proposed Floor Area ("FAR") of approximately 3:1 and 102,069 square feet of floor area including 4,067 square feet of ground floor retail, and 5,708 square feet of open space. The primary pedestrian entrance to the project is located along Vermont Avenue, the primary frontage. The project will provide a total of 84 vehicular parking spaces in an enclosed grade-level parking (22 parking spaces) and a subterranean level parking (62 parking spaces) that is accessed from the South Vermont Avenue at the northeast of the project. The project provides 40 bicycle parking spaces including 20 short-term and 20 long-term spaces.

The project includes a gradual stepped profile along the west property, which fronts a residential neighborhood. All exterior open spaces and terraces with activity only front active street areas directing noise away from the residential neighborhood.

#### Height

The proposed project is for development of a new seven-story, 75-foot tall, 168-room hotel building, totaling 102,069 square feet including 4,067 square feet of ground floor retail, and 5,708 square feet of open space. The project site is zoned C2-2D-CPIO and is located in the South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO), Subarea G: TOD High that limits the height to 8-stories for hotel uses. The properties to the south across 37<sup>th</sup> Street, are zoned C2-2D-CPIO and developed with a four-story multi-family residential building. The properties to the east of the site across Vermont Avenue are zoned USC-1A and developed with three-story USC educational and research building. The property to the west of the site, is zoned RD1.5-1 and developed with a two-story duplex residential building, and the project is designed in a gradual stepped profile to be compatible with the lower height of the residential neighborhood. Therefore, the project is designed and oriented to be compatible with surrounding properties. In addition, the project complies with the Ground Floor height and transitional height requirements of the CPIO and has not requested any deviations from height restrictions from the code or the South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO).

#### Bulk/Massing

The proposed project is development of a new seven-story, 75-foot tall, 168-room hotel building, totaling 102,069 square feet including 4,067 square feet of ground floor retail, and 5,708 square feet of open space. The project site is zoned C2-2D-CPIO and is located in the South Los Angeles Community Plan Implementation

Overlay District (CPIO), Subarea G: TOD High that limits the FAR to 4:1 for the hotel uses. The building design incorporates changes in building plane, varied rooflines, recesses, open-air-walkways, and balconies, patio, deck and canopy to add architectural interest to the building and creates distinct breaks in the building plane. Together, these elements are applied to create sufficient breaks in plane and articulation. Therefore, the project is designed and oriented to be compatible with surrounding properties.

#### Building Materials

The building design incorporates changes in building plane, varied rooflines, recesses, open-air-walkways, and balconies, patio, deck and canopy to add architectural interest to the building and creates distinct breaks in the building plane. These breaks are further differentiated with a variety of building materials that include GFRC panels, phenolic panels, integrated color stuccos, storefront glazing system, woodwall soffit, and wood screen. Together, these elements are applied to create sufficient breaks in plane and articulation. In accordance with the Community Plan Design Guidelines, changes in building materials are applied purposefully to modulate the building façade.

#### Entrances

The project site has frontages along South Vermont Avenue and West 37th Street. The hotel building has a street-oriented entrance along South Vermont Avenue (the Primary Lot Line) and is augmented with design features that establishes a strong visual connection to Vermont Avenue. Vehicular access to Project Site, including loading and unloading of trucks, is provided via one driveway on South Vermont Avenue that was reviewed and approved by LADOT. Access from Vermont Avenue would be a right turn-in only.

#### Setbacks

The project site has frontages along South Vermont Avenue and 37th Street. The project provides a strong street wall with 11-foot setbacks along South Vermont Avenue and 37<sup>th</sup> Street as allowed by code. The project will provide substantial landscaping along the setbacks to enhance the streetscape and create a pedestrian friendly environment. The project provides a 5-foot landscape buffer between the project site and the westerly abutting residential used to the rear.

#### Parking/Loading

The project will provide a total of 84 vehicular parking spaces in an enclosed grade-level parking (22 parking spaces) and a subterranean level parking (62 parking spaces) that is accessed via one driveway on the South Vermont Avenue and will accommodate right-turn only ingress and egress movements. The driveway is beneath the larger building mass at the northeast of the project, and it is integrated into the architecture and massing of the building and appears as a defined and articulated opening at grade. All on-grade parking is hidden behind the building mass, as well as screening elements along the north property line. The loading dock will be located in the parking garage on the ground floor. The driveway will comply with LADOT standards ensuring that adequate area would be provided

within the parking garage to accommodate the vehicle and truck turning maneuvers.

#### Lighting

The project will provide lighting fixtures that are harmonious with the building design. As conditioned, all pedestrian walkways and vehicle access points will be well-lit and all outdoor lighting provided on-site will be shielded to prevent excessive illumination and spillage onto adjacent public rights-of-way, adjacent properties, and the night sky.

#### Landscaping/Open Space

The project provides 5,631 square feet landscape area. On-site landscaping is provided in the form of a 5-foot landscape buffer along the abutting residential property to the west, 3-foot landscape buffer along the abutting church property to the north, 11-foot setback along South Vermont Avenue to the east and 11-foot setback along 37<sup>th</sup> Street, a dog park at the ground floor and landscape planters at the third and seventh floor exterior terraces facing the southern property line in order to reduce the urban heat island effect. The project will remove fifteen (15) existing on-site trees with more than 8" Diameter trunk and will maintain the seven (7) existing non-protected street trees along the public right-of-way. The project is proposing twenty-one (21) new trees (140% of required). The project will provide substantial landscaping along the setbacks to enhance the site and help buffer from surrounding uses.

#### Trash Collection

The project will provide trash storage and collection to be enclosed in the ground floor parking garage, where it will not be visible from public view from the street. Trash collection can only be accessed from the driveway on the South Vermont Avenue. The trash storage and collection shall not interfere with traffic on any public street, as conditioned.

Therefore, as proposed and conditioned, the project consists of an arrangement of buildings and structures (including height, bulk and setbacks), off-street parking facilities, loading areas, lighting, landscaping, trash collection, and other such pertinent improvements that is or will be compatible with existing and future development on adjacent properties and neighboring properties.

While the proposed project complies with the CPIO development regulations, it does not fit within the scale and context of the community commercial district that serves the nearby neighborhood. Vermont Avenue functions as a boundary that demarcates the local community and its commercial serving uses, from those destination and regional uses or attractions that serve the broader Los Angeles County. The local community serving uses such as the Los Angeles County Family Services Center, Los Angeles County Re-Entry Opportunity Center and a local prep high school are situated along the west side of Vermont Avenue. Additionally, religious institutions, senior housing, and moderate-income housing and community serving non-profit organizations are also situated along the west side

of Vermont Avenue. The building heights range from 1 to 3 stories, while the proposed project is seven stories high in the community commercial district.

6. **That any residential project provides recreational and service amenities to improve habitability for its residents and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.**

The proposed project is not a residential development therefore this finding is not applicable. However, the proposed hotel includes two outdoor terraces and a fitness center for use of hotel guests that will improve the hotel experience and minimize impacts on neighboring properties.

**ADDITIONAL MANDATORY FINDINGS**

7. The National Flood Insurance Program rate maps, which are a part of the Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan adopted by the City Council by Ordinance No. 172,081, have been reviewed and it has been determined that this project is located in Zone X, areas determined to be outside the 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain.

**APPEAL PERIOD - EFFECTIVE DATE**

The applicant's attention is called to the fact that this grant is not a permit or license and that any permits and licenses required by law must be obtained from the proper public agency. Furthermore, if any condition of this grant is violated or if the same be not complied with, then the applicant or his successor in interest may be prosecuted for violating these conditions the same as for any violation of the requirements contained in the Municipal Code. The Zoning Administrator's determination in this matter will become effective after **April 11, 2022**, unless an appeal therefrom is filed with the Department of City Planning. It is strongly advised that appeals be filed early during the appeal period and in person so that imperfections/incompleteness may be corrected before the appeal period expires. Any appeal must be filed on the prescribed forms, accompanied by the required fee, a copy of the Zoning Administrator's action, and received and receipted at a public office of the Department of City Planning on or before the above date or the appeal will not be accepted. Forms are available on-line at <http://planning.lacity.org>. Public offices are located at:

Downtown  
Figueroa Plaza  
201 North Figueroa Street,  
4th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 482-7077

San Fernando Valley  
Marvin Braude San Fernando Valley  
Constituent Service Center  
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Room 251  
Van Nuys, CA 91401  
(818) 374-5050

West Los Angeles  
West Los Angeles Development  
Services Center  
1828 Sawtelle Boulevard, 2nd Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
(310) 231-2912

If you seek judicial review of any decision of the City pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.5, the petition for writ of mandate pursuant to that section must be filed no later than the 90th day following the date on which the City's decision became



final pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6. There may be other time limits which also affect your ability to seek judicial review.

**NOTICE**

The applicant is further advised that subsequent contact regarding this determination must be with the Development Services Center. This would include clarification, verification of condition compliance and plans or building permit applications, etc., and shall be accomplished BY APPOINTMENT ONLY, in order to assure that you receive service with a minimum amount of waiting. You should advise any consultant representing you of this requirement as well.

Inquiries regarding this matter shall be directed to Helen Jadali, Planning Assistant for the Department of City Planning at [helen.jadali@lacity.org](mailto:helen.jadali@lacity.org).

  
THEODORE L. IRVING, AICP  
Associate Zoning Administrator

TLI:HJ:eg:kf:ds

cc: Council District 8  
Eight District  
Adjoining Property Owners