

# California ACORN

Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now

3655 S Grand Ave. #250 LA, CA 90007 Ph (213) 747-4211 Fax (213) 747-4221 E-Mail caacorn@acorn.org

February 23, 2001

Lateef S. Sobe, Project Coordinator  
Environmental Review Section  
Los Angeles City Planning Department  
221 N. Los Angeles, Room 1540  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Fax: (213) 580-5542

RECEIVED  
CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
FEB 26 2001  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
UNIT

RE: Draft EIR 2000-3577, Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District

We, the members of the community organization ACORN, are writing to provide our comments to the draft EIR for the proposed Sports and Entertainment District. Our organization already submitted a written request that the deadline for comments be extended, but this request was denied. A number of ACORN members who are community leaders in the area of the Staples Center read only snippets and have not been allowed sufficient time to understand the content of these plans.

ACORN is a membership organization of low and moderate income families, with over 2,500 members in central and south Los Angeles. We have neighborhood chapters in Pico Union, and in a number of neighborhoods in the 9th City Council District. Many of our members will be directly impacted by the proposed development -- traffic and congestion is already a problem, schools are over-crowded, and there is a dire need for housing affordable to low income families.

We believe the people living in the neighborhoods surrounding the existing Staples Center already suffer negative impacts from current operations, including the ongoing elimination of affordable housing; dramatically increased traffic and associated air and noise pollution; a marked rise in crime and vandalism; and decreased pedestrian and public safety. While the rest of the region benefits from the Staples Center operations, the residents who live and work closest to Staples bear the heaviest environmental and economic burdens.

However, with the proposed 3.75 million square foot project expansion, we believe these residents will be even more negatively impacted by both the proposed 7-year construction plan and ongoing operations of the project. We are most concerned about the failure of the draft EIR to adequately address the imminent gentrification of the surrounding community, including physical deterioration of buildings due to neglect and the loss of affordable housing in the area; the complete lack of an environmental energy analysis in the draft EIR; the identified negative air and noise quality impacts of the construction and operations; and the possible violation of water quality regulations.

Specifically, we request the following:

- 1) The City properly and thoroughly address the significant environmental impacts identified in the draft EIR through mitigation measures that are community developed and community based;
- 2) The City review and implement the requests for additional analysis and mitigation measures developed by Figueros Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice in their comments to the draft EIR;
- 3) The City request that a full energy analysis be completed in the final EIR, including appropriate mitigation and conservation measures as required by CEQA; and
- 4) The City provide all of the final EIR materials translated into Spanish so that community residents can take an active part in this important decision-making process. To refuse to translate the materials would be a violation of civil rights law, and bad public policy.
- 5) The City request that the Developer incorporate into the Project proposal community benefits such as affordable housing, quality jobs and community services that will help mitigate negative Project impacts. These benefits are outlined in the FCCEJ's comments to the EIR.

Our organization feels very strongly that this large development project can either be very positive or very negative for the surrounding community. It is up to us and you --- the community and the City --- to ensure that developers are held accountable to the needs of the community. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the community is heard and respected in this process.

Sincerely,



Amy S. ..., Director  
California ACORN

Cc: Figueros Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice