



PICO UNION / WESTLAKE CLUSTER NETWORK, INC.

1401 So. Grand Avenue • Leavey Hall • Los Angeles, CA 90015
(213) 742-6010
Fax (213) 742-5649

February 22, 2001

RECEIVED
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

FEB 23 2001

ENVIRONMENTAL
UNIT

Lateef Sholebo, Project Coordinator
Environmental Review Section
Los Angeles City Planning Department
221 N. Figueroa, Room 1540
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Fax: (213) 580-5542

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

Dear Mr. Sholebo:

We are a community based organization (501c3) working with over 50 agencies serving the immediate area adjacent to the sports arena. We are personally in touch with over 300 residents that live on Hope Street between Venice and Pico Blvd. and on numerous occasions have heard the residents personal outrage regarding the 20% increase crime and traffic congestion since October 16, 1999.

Our main concern is the neighborhood's public safety and well being, with specific regard, to insure a safety standard that will enhance a livable community and not detract from it. In October, 1999 we began an open line of communication with the Staple's Center, specific to their Responsible Alcohol Beverage Policy, and will continue to keep that dialog open. We anticipate an increase in the sale of alcoholic beverages in the new complex, which will demand further monitoring, to insure the public safety of our predominately pedestrian community.

Businesses large and small, are affected by the increase in traffic. A personal example, of a common occurrence in my building, located at Grand and Venice is anytime an early event is scheduled at the sports arena, we are e-mailed and ask to make personal arrangements, with our work schedule, which means we either come in earlier or stay later so we will not get stuck in traffic.

Additionally, we are writing to support the comments of (FCCEJ) with regard to the draft EIR for the proposed Sports and Entertainment District. We are most concerned about how the proposed project will affect community residents in the area, who are predominantly low-income people of color. As stated previously, 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 and businesses 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 Figueroa 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;
- 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; and
- 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 DEIR.

On behalf of our community I respectfully ask for your support in our requests.

Sincerely,



Bert Saavedra, Program Director
Family Support Services Program

Cc: Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice (FCCEJ)