

## **Justification/Reason for Appeal**

1666 North Vermont Avenue Project

(DIR-2019-6738-SPPA-SPPTOC-SPR-HCA-M1, ENV-2024-359-CE)

### **I. REASON FOR THE APPEAL**

The Categorical Exemption prepared for the 1666 North Vermont Avenue Project (DIR-2019-6738-SPPA-SPPTOC-SPR-HCA-M1, ENV-2024-359-CE) (“Project”) fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”). Furthermore, the approval of the Site Plan Review entitlements (DIR-2019-6738-SPPA-SPPTOC-SPR-HCA-M1) was in error because (1) the City of Los Angeles (“City”) must fully comply with CEQA prior to any approvals in furtherance of the Project and (2) the findings are not supported by substantial evidence. Therefore, the City of Los Angeles (“City”) must set aside the Site Plan Review entitlements and prepare and circulate an environmental impact report (“EIR”) prior to considering approvals for the Project.

### **II. SPECIFICALLY THE POINTS AT ISSUE**

For the specific reasons set forth below, the Project does not qualify for a categorical exemption pursuant to Section 15332 of the CEQA Guidelines (“Infill Exemption”). Furthermore, proper CEQA review must be complete *before* the City approves the Project’s entitlements. (*Orinda Ass’n. v. Bd. of Supervisors* (1986) 182 Cal.App.3d 1145, 1171 [“No agency may approve a project subject to CEQA until the entire CEQA process is completed and the overall project is lawfully approved.”].) As such, the approval of the Project’s Site Plan Review entitlements was in error. Additionally, by failing to properly conduct environmental review under CEQA, the City lacks substantial evidence to support its findings for the Site Plan Review entitlements.

### **III. HOW YOU ARE AGGRIEVED BY THE DECISION**

Members of appellant Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility (“SAFER”) live and/or work in the vicinity of the proposed Project. They breathe the air, suffer traffic congestion, and will suffer other environmental impacts of the Project unless it is properly mitigated.

### **IV. WHY YOU BELIEVE THE DECISION-MAKER ERRED OR ABUSED THEIR DISCRETION**

The Planning Director’s May 29, 2024 decision approved the Site Plan Review and approved a Categorical Exemption for the project pursuant to Section 15332 of the CEQA Guidelines, despite a lack of substantial evidence in the record that the Project met the requirements for the Infill Exemption. Rather than exempt the Project from CEQA, the City should have prepared an initial study followed by an EIR or negative declaration in accordance with CEQA prior to consideration of approvals for the Project. The City is not permitted to approve the Project’s entitlements until proper CEQA review has been completed.