



July 12, 2021

Carrie Sutkin, President
Elysian Valley Riverside Neighborhood Council Members
1811 Ripple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90039

RE: Request Support for Granting Appeal of Master Plan Approvals at Hyatt House and USC Conference Center (1550 North San Pablo Street)

Esteemed Elysian Valley Riverside Neighborhood Council Members,

My name is Pamela Agustin-Anguiano and I am the Coalition Manager for the **Eastside Leadership for Equitable and Accountable Development Strategies (LEADS)**. We are a coalition of youth, parents, and community organizations from Boyle Heights and unincorporated East LA that organize and advocate for policies that uplift the values of social housing: preserve and expand deeply affordable housing, promote social equity, and give residents control over decision making and governance.

I write to you on behalf of our coalition members to *ask for a letter of support of our environmental appeal* (tentatively scheduled for consideration by the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee on August 3, 2021) involving two, inter-related alcohol master plan approvals at the Hyatt House Hotel¹ and USC Conference Center² at the above referenced location. In short, our appeal seeks 10 reasonable conditions and mitigation measures that will lessen the impacts of alcohol-related nuisance on the surrounding graduate students and neighborhoods.³ These measures are reasonable, supported by a noise expert, and were narrowly defeated earlier this year by a 3-2 vote at the East Los Angeles Area Planning Commission (APC). While our full appeal is available online,^{1,2} below are the ten reasonable conditions our coalition is seeking:

1. **Restrict Outdoor Music:** Prohibit amplified sounds or music, including even unamplified instrumental music, in all outdoor spaces within at least 100 feet of grad housing or limit noise to not exceed 60 dbA at 25-foot distance.
2. **Prohibit the Restaurant Nearest the Service Drive and Adjacent Housing from Serving Alcohol:** Designate the fast-food restaurant nearest the Service Drive and

¹ DCP Case Nos. ZA-2020-1128-MPA, ENV-2020-1129-CE; Council File No. 21-0371, <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=21-0371>.

² DCP Case No. ZA-2020-1097-MPA, ENV-2020-1091-CE; Council File No. 21-0371-S1, <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=21-0371-S1>.



adjacent housing for non-alcohol service and prohibit outdoor seating at this easternmost fast-food restaurant to reduce noise impacts from loud voices.

3. **Time of Day Limitation Pool Deck Use:** Limit the hours of use of outdoor pool deck to 8:00 p.m. (Sunday through Thursday) and 9:00 p.m. (Friday and Saturday) and no earlier than 8:00 a.m. (all days).
4. **Doors and Windows Closed During Live Entertainment and Music:** The doors to the lobby area or corridors near the Service Drive area should be closed whenever live entertainment, and/or amplified music is played in the hotel's indoor areas including the integrated ground-floor lobby area, dining area (restaurant and bar), and conference rooms.
5. **Equipment Noise Protection Measures:** All outdoor-mounted mechanical equipment should be enclosed and shielded from noise-sensitive receptors, use quieter equipment types, and tested by a licensed acoustical sound engineer before issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy to ensure excessive sound levels do not impact noise-sensitive receptors
6. **Monitoring Equipment Requirement:** Additional cameras should be added to monitor the entirety of the parking areas, Service Drive, Loading Zone, and on the interior and exterior of the building to be monitored in real time.
7. **Increased Height Noise Barrier Wall:** Require that a solid noise barrier wall to be higher than the existing 8'-8" high wall between the pool deck and the loading zone and service driveway to the east. These barriers shall have sufficient noise rating to reduce noise, that shall be tested and confirmed by a qualified acoustical engineer.
8. **Reduce Loading Area Noise from Delivery Trucks:** The Project shall not allow delivery truck idling of main engines in the loading area pursuant to applicable City and State standards. Signs should be posted prohibiting idling; and deliveries, trash removal, and other use of this Loading Area should not be allowed between 10 pm to 8 am.
9. **Ambient Music:** Amplification of recorded music/sounds (i.e., ambient music) should be prohibited on the outdoor pool deck, ambient music should be limited in outdoor commons to a maximum of 60 dBA at approximately 25 feet and all speakers should be directed away from the student housing and other noise-sensitive receptors.
10. **Monitoring Requirements for LAMC § 116.01 for other Noise Sources:** To ensure compliance with the City's Noise Ordinance, the City should add conditions requiring routine monitoring, reporting, and publication of noise testing, complaints, and other findings. This can be on a weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis and should give particular attention during large conference events and high occupancy of the hotel and restaurants.

For background, Since 2017 our members have been advocating for a transparent, open, and ongoing conversation with the University of Southern California (USC) regarding their development plans for the USC Health Science Campus. We have consistently expressed our concerns to the USC's government relations team over the impacts to affordable housing, increased policing, and discrimination that the USC developments have in the surrounding



neighborhoods including Ramona Gardens and Hazard Park. In 2018, Eastside LEADS won a local hire and local procurement community benefit agreement with the developer of USC's new graduate student housing - American Campus Communities. At the time, our youth and organizational members also requested that all USC amenities like parking and school shuttles be available for community use, a request that to date has been denied.

Here, the alcohol Master Plan Approvals—as currently proposed—will further negatively impact the community. East LA APC narrowly denied our prior appeal despite the noise and safety issues that could arise from excessive alcohol uses so close to sensitive uses like Bravo Magnet High School and Legacy LA (two sites where youth congregate and which are within close proximity to the project sites). So too, noise impact can be significant to youth and local residents that live along Playground Street (just 0.2 miles away from the project site). In addition, the testimony from youth during the East LA APC stressed the fears over police harassment that youth already experience and which they fear could increase because of the proximity of alcohol fueled guests in the community.

In closing, the above-listed mitigation measures are reasonable and provides the developer ample alcohol-related uses while also protecting the surrounding community from legitimate quality of life and safety issues. Eastside LEADS, alongside SEIU-721, appreciate your consideration of this matter.

In Community,

Pamela Agustin-Anguiano
Coalition Manager
Eastside LEADS
(323) 366-5378



/// background & concerns of USC expansion

version 5.0

USC campus expansion

The USC Biotech Corridor rebranded the USC Life Science Campus Expansion has been an evolving project that USC hopes to bring \$8 billion of investment to East LA and NELA. Original plans extended all the way to CSULA and up the mission street spur. USC could not secure land from LA County to expand because they could not mitigate the indirect displacement that the USC would create and is currently creating. Regardless, USC continued expansion on USC owned land which is the subject of this action.

NO CEQA exemption!

The attached form letter is where we are in the appeal timeline. We are asking for support with this letter to stop USC from obtaining the CEQA, California Environmental Quality Act exemption. Their assertion for an exemption is improperly based on the assumption that the master plan completed in 2014 and revised in 2017 includes a completed alcohol plan. The coalition's appeal stands on the incomplete alcohol plan and is demanding a review through the MND (mitigated negative declaration) process. The appeal makes an eleven-point mitigation plan that includes limited hours of operation, sound barriers and sound monitoring equipment among others to protect the community.

> Alcohol fueled Hotel and USC guest represent a danger to local community. USC Mitigation relies heavily on the USC police. USC police have shown a record harassing local youth and POC, while at the same time they hire and promote dubious ex LAPD with records of violence.

> USC destabilizes communities with their investments to create "indirect displacement". It is this forced economic migration of both residents and businesses by raising the land value that lead to rent increases that banishes families permanently from affordable housing and communities.

> The community health effects of USC displacement will include higher mortality rates for the elderly and poor (*Causa Justa*). Displacing residents will also lead to, "root shock" (Fullilove) community and family networks suffer from the physical and mental after effects.

> Approximately 11% of the homeless population (LAHSA) was created by the housing inequities of displacement. A 5% rent increase translates to 2000 more people falling into homelessness (Zwillow).

> Amplifying the effects on local business displacement are the proposed shuttles from USC's campus to the Lincoln Heights



business district. This type of “diverse” economics hastens the death of legacy businesses when they find they cannot compete with well-financed new businesses.

> USC counter argument offers student scholarships and business assistance. It only highlights that they have not addressed the community's destabilization. The decades long program is sending forty-one high school students from the Eastside this year to USC. That represents less than .01% of USC enrollment. While these families displacement still remain at risk.

USC trust & leadership failures

USC has failed in its capacity as a partner and leader with communities around Los Angeles from South Central to Lincoln Heights. These issues in the public record hinder USC from playing a positive role in the community:

> USC's role in partnership with LA County of the sterilization of women of color during the 60s-70s still refuses to pay reparations to the surviving women.

> Multiple sexual scandals and sports enrollment “pay-to-play” scandal over the decades by an indifferent leadership and predatory USC culture is not what we need in our communities.

:: :: ::

the community impact and appeal hearing

At the hearing on January 27, 2021 the coalition was represented by community members and youth from nearby Ramona Gardens Housing project. Community spoke of the need for housing and affordability. The threat of displacement is a very real issue as USC students and investors are purchasing homes and converting them to co-living housing adjacent to multiple campus sites. The most powerful stories came from students that gave testimony on their experience and fears of the increased police presence the Hyatt Hotel, USC expansion and the liquor licenses would bring. The original 2015 environmental study for the Health Science master plan failed to consider the impacts that the hotel and its liquor license would have on sensitive sites like Legacy LA and Bravo High School.

The ELAPC, East LA Area Planning Commission voted in a close 3-2 vote in favor of the license. Despite overwhelming opposition, the LACPD continues to allow developers to do as they please in Northeast LA with no benefits to the community, no mitigation to the harm these investments create.