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*Via Email*

**Comment Letter #1**

February 10, 2022

Chair Ryan Baldino and  
Honorable Members of the Planning  
Commission  
City of El Segundo  
Development Services Department  
350 Main Street  
El Segundo, CA 90245

Paul Samaras, AICP  
City of El Segundo  
Development Services Department  
350 Main Street  
El Segundo, CA 90245  
[psamaras@elsegundo.org](mailto:psamaras@elsegundo.org)

**Re: Supplemental Comment on Final Environmental Impact Report, Pacific Coast Commons Specific Plan (SCH# 2020050508)**

Dear Chair Baldino, Honorable Members of the Planning Commission, and Mr. Samaras:

I am writing on behalf of **Supporters Alliance For Environmental Responsibility ("SAFER")** regarding the Final Environmental Impact Report ("FEIR") prepared for the Project known as Pacific Coast Commons Specific Plan, aka SCH# 2020050508, including all actions related or referring to the proposed demolition of existing surface parking lots and construction of a new mixed use development located at 401-575 N. Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) and the parking lot on 600-block of PCH in the City of El Segundo ("Project").

We previously commented on this project ahead of the December 9, 2021 Planning Commission hearing, which was continued. Earlier this month, the City of El Segundo ("City") released the agenda for the February 10, 2022 Planning Commission hearing, in which included an FEIR dated February 2022, and the City's responses to comments from SAFER and the Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters ("SWRCC") which had not previously been responded to. We are submitting these comments as a supplement to our December 9th comment for the Planning Commission's consideration.

After reviewing the February 2022 FEIR, we conclude that changes made to the DEIR require recirculation. Further, the issues raised in our December 9th comment letter remain. SAFER requests that the Development Services Department address these shortcomings in a revised environmental impact report ("REIR") and recirculate the REIR prior to considering approvals for the Project.

## I. DISCUSSION

### A. The City Has Added Significant New Information to its EIR and is Therefore Required to Recirculate the FEIR.

CEQA requires re-circulation of an EIR when significant new information is added to the EIR following public review but before certification. (PRC § 21092.1). The CEQA Guidelines clarify that new information is significant if “the EIR is changed in a way that deprives the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment upon a substantial adverse environmental effect of the project” including, for example, “a disclosure showing that ... [a] new significant environmental impact would result from the project.” (14 CCR § 15088.5).

The City added three additional related projects to its cumulative impacts analysis in the FEIR. These projects are all located just blocks from the proposed Project site and have the potential to add a substantial increase in severity to numerous environmental impacts, such as air quality and noise. The public must be given the opportunity to review and comment on the substantial new information which includes additional pages of tables, charts, maps and new analysis that resulted from the inclusion of the new projects in the FEIR’s cumulative impacts analyses. The public has a right for their comments, and the comments of their experts, to be responded to in the FEIR, as required by CEQA.

The DEIR should be recirculated for full public review to address the impacts identified above and to propose feasible mitigation measures.

### B. Substantial Evidence Remains that the Project Will Have a Significant Health Risk Impact from its Indoor Air Quality Impacts.

In its December 9th letter, SAFER included the comments of Certified Industrial Hygienist Bud Offermann, who found that the Project would likely expose residents and commercial employees of the Project to significant indoor air quality impacts. (SAFER letter, Dec. 9, 2021, Exhibit A). In its response to comments, the City states that building materials for the project would be required to comply with applicable state and federal standards, including California Air Resource Board (“CARB”) regulations. However, Mr. Offermann’s analysis specifically assumes compliance with CARB’s formaldehyde airborne toxics control measures. (SAFER letter, Dec. 9, 2021, Ex. A, p. 4). Despite use of these measures, Mr. Offermann found cancer risks for residents and commercial employees that exceeded applicable South Coast Air Quality Management District (“SCAQMD”) standards.

Additionally, contrary to the City’s assertion in its response to comments, it is required under CEQA to address the carcinogenic formaldehyde emissions identified by Mr. Offermann in his comment. As noted in the December 9th letter, the court in *California Building Industry Ass’n v. Bay Area Air Quality Mgmt. Dist.* (“*CBLA*”) held that CEQA’s statutory language requires lead agencies to disclose and analyze “impacts on a project’s

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*users or residents that arise from the project's effects* on the environment.” ((2015) 62 Cal.4th 369, 800). The emissions identified by Mr. Offermann will stem from the Project and therefore must be addressed in a Revised Environmental Impact Report.

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**C. The FEIR Fails to Properly Account for the Project's Growth-Inducing Impacts.**

CEQA standards require EIRs to assess growth-inducing impacts of a proposed project. (PRC § 21100(b)(5)). As explained in CCR Tit. 14 § 15126.2(e), this analysis is important because “[i]ncreases in the population may tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects.” This includes potential impacts on public services, transportation, and greenhouse gases, among others.

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Here, the DEIR has relied upon 2010 Census Results to conclude that anticipated growth is not considered substantial. (DEIR, p. 4.11-15). However, 2020 Census Data for the City of El Segundo is now available,<sup>1</sup> and it indicates a population of 17,272, which exceeds Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) projections for 2020 (16,777) and 2045 (17,200). (DEIR, p. 4.11-13). This Project alone will add an additional 618 people, and does not analyze additional population expected from any other cumulative project planned or proposed at any time between now and 2045, each of which would further exceed projections. This constitutes unplanned growth that must be disclosed and its impacts analyzed in a Revised EIR.

**II. CONCLUSION**

For the foregoing reasons, SAFER believes that the EIR is wholly inadequate. SAFER urges the Planning Commission to refrain from recommending certification of the FEIR or recommending approval of the Project in order to allow staff additional time to address the concerns raised herein. Thank you for considering our comments and please include this letter in the record of proceedings for this project.

Sincerely,



Amalia Bowley Fuentes  
Lozeau Drury LLP

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/elsegundocitycalifornia?>