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VIA E-MAIL

March 20, 2024

CITY OF NORWALK
12700 Norwalk Blvd
Norwalk, CA 90650
Jonathan Kwan
714-330-0176
JKwan@norwalkca.gov

RE: City of Norwalk’s Transit Village Project (SCH# 2022070103).

Dear Mr. Kwan,

On behalf of the **Western States Regional Council of Carpenters** (“**Western Carpenters**” or “**WSRCC**”), my Office is submitting these comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”) prepared for the Norwalk Transit Village Project.

The Western Carpenters is a labor union representing almost 90,000 union carpenters in 12 states, including California, and has a strong interest in well-ordered land use planning and in addressing the environmental impacts of development projects.

The proposed Norwalk Transit Village (project) site is an approximately 32.3-acre area located at 13200 Bloomfield Avenue (Assessor’s Parcel Number [APN] 8045-008-902), in the City of Norwalk, in the southeastern portion of Los Angeles County. The project proposes the Norwalk Transit Village Specific Plan (Specific Plan) and Tentative Tract Map to allow the demolition of the former California Youth Authority (CYA) facility on site, and construction of a mixed-use transit-oriented community featuring market rate and affordable high-density housing, both rental and for-sale, an approximately 150-key hotel, commercial uses (e.g., restaurants), and open spaces (e.g., parks, trails). The project would include landscape improvements and would install utility infrastructure and public services.

Individual members of WSRCC live, work, and recreate in the City and surrounding communities and would be directly affected by the Project’s environmental impacts.

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The Western States Regional Council of Carpenters expressly reserves the right to supplement these comments at or prior to hearings on the Project, and at any later hearing and proceeding related to this Project. Gov. Code, § 65009, subd. (b); Pub. Res. Code, § 21177, subd. (a); see *Bakersfield Citizens for Local Control v. Bakersfield* (2004) 124 Cal.App.4th 1184, 1199-1203; see also *Galante Vineyards v. Monterey Water Dist.* (1997) 60 Cal.App.4th 1109, 1121.

The Western Carpenters incorporates by reference all comments raising issues regarding the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) submitted prior to certification of the EIR for the Project. See *Citizens for Clean Energy v City of Woodland* (2014) 225 Cal.App.4th 173, 191 (finding that any party who has objected to the project’s environmental documentation may assert any issue timely raised by other parties).

Moreover, the Western Carpenters requests that the City provide notice for any and all notices referring or related to the Project issued under the California Environmental Quality Act (**CEQA**) (Pub. Res. Code, § 21000 *et seq.*), and the California Planning and Zoning Law (“**Planning and Zoning Law**”) (Gov. Code, §§ 65000–65010). California Public Resources Code Sections 21092.2, and 21167(f) and California Government Code Section 65092 require agencies to mail such notices to any person who has filed a written request for them with the clerk of the agency’s governing body.

I. THE CITY SHOULD REQUIRE THE USE OF A LOCAL WORKFORCE TO BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY’S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

The City should require the Project to be built using a local workers who have graduated from a Joint Labor-Management Apprenticeship Program approved by the State of California, have at least as many hours of on-the-job experience in the applicable craft which would be required to graduate from such a state-approved apprenticeship training program, or who are registered apprentices in a state-approved apprenticeship training program.

Community benefits such as local hire can also be helpful to reduce environmental impacts and improve the positive economic impact of the Project. Local hire provisions requiring that a certain percentage of workers reside within 10 miles or less of the Project site can reduce the length of vendor trips, reduce greenhouse gas

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emissions, and provide localized economic benefits. As environmental consultants Matt Hagemann and Paul E. Rosenfeld note:

[A]ny local hire requirement that results in a decreased worker trip length from the default value has the potential to result in a reduction of construction-related GHG emissions, though the significance of the reduction would vary based on the location and urbanization level of the project site.

March 8, 2021 SWAPE Letter to Mitchell M. Tsai re Local Hire Requirements and Considerations for Greenhouse Gas Modeling.

Workforce requirements promote the development of skilled trades that yield sustainable economic development. As the California Workforce Development Board and the University of California, Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education concluded:

[L]abor should be considered an investment rather than a cost—and investments in growing, diversifying, and upskilling California’s workforce can positively affect returns on climate mitigation efforts. In other words, well-trained workers are key to delivering emissions reductions and moving California closer to its climate targets.¹

Furthermore, workforce policies have significant environmental benefits given that they improve an area’s jobs-housing balance, decreasing the amount and length of job commutes and the associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In fact, on May 7, 2021, the South Coast Air Quality Management District found that that the “[u]se of a local state-certified apprenticeship program” can result in air pollutant reductions.²

Locating jobs closer to residential areas can have significant environmental benefits. As the California Planning Roundtable noted in 2008:

¹ California Workforce Development Board (2020) Putting California on the High Road: A Jobs and Climate Action Plan for 2030 at p. ii, *available at* <https://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Putting-California-on-the-High-Road.pdf>.

² South Coast Air Quality Management District (May 7, 2021) Certify Final Environmental Assessment and Adopt Proposed Rule 2305 – Warehouse Indirect Source Rule – Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions Program, and Proposed Rule 316 – Fees for Rule 2305, Submit Rule 2305 for Inclusion Into the SIP, and Approve Supporting Budget Actions, *available at* <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/Agendas/Governing-Board/2021/2021-May7-027.pdf?sfvrsn=10>.

People who live and work in the same jurisdiction would be more likely to take transit, walk, or bicycle to work than residents of less balanced communities and their vehicle trips would be shorter. Benefits would include potential reductions in both vehicle miles traveled and vehicle hours traveled.³

Moreover, local hire mandates and skill-training are critical facets of a strategy to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As planning experts Robert Cervero and Michael Duncan have noted, simply placing jobs near housing stock is insufficient to achieve VMT reductions given that the skill requirements of available local jobs must match those held by local residents.⁴ Some municipalities have even tied local hire and other workforce policies to local development permits to address transportation issues. Cervero and Duncan note that:

In nearly built-out Berkeley, CA, the approach to balancing jobs and housing is to create local jobs rather than to develop new housing. The city's First Source program encourages businesses to hire local residents, especially for entry- and intermediate-level jobs, and sponsors vocational training to ensure residents are employment-ready. While the program is voluntary, some 300 businesses have used it to date, placing more than 3,000 city residents in local jobs since it was launched in 1986. When needed, these carrots are matched by sticks, since the city is not shy about negotiating corporate participation in First Source as a condition of approval for development permits.

Recently, the State of California verified its commitment towards workforce development through the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022, otherwise known as Assembly Bill No. 2011 (“**AB2011**”). AB2011 amended the Planning and Zoning Law to allow ministerial, by-right approval for projects being built alongside commercial corridors that meet affordability and labor requirements.

³ California Planning Roundtable (2008) Deconstructing Jobs-Housing Balance at p. 6, available at <https://cproundtable.org/static/media/uploads/publications/cpr-jobs-housing.pdf>

⁴ Cervero, Robert and Duncan, Michael (2006) Which Reduces Vehicle Travel More: Jobs-Housing Balance or Retail-Housing Mixing? Journal of the American Planning Association 72 (4), 475-490, 482, available at <http://reconnectingamerica.org/assets/Uploads/UTCT-825.pdf>.

The City should consider utilizing local workforce policies and requirements to benefit the local area economically and to mitigate greenhouse gas, improve air quality, and reduce transportation impacts.

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II. **THE CITY SHOULD IMPOSE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROJECT’S CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES TO PREVENT COMMUNITY SPREAD OF COVID-19 AND OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

Construction work has been defined as a Lower to High-risk activity for COVID-19 spread by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Recently, several construction sites have been identified as sources of community spread of COVID-19.⁵

Western Carpenters recommend that the Lead Agency adopt additional requirements to mitigate public health risks from the Project’s construction activities. WSRCC requests that the Lead Agency require safe on-site construction work practices as well as training and certification for any construction workers on the Project Site.

In particular, based upon Western Carpenters’ experience with safe construction site work practices, WSRCC recommends that the Lead Agency require that while construction activities are being conducted at the Project Site:

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Construction Site Design:

- The Project Site will be limited to two controlled entry points.
- Entry points will have temperature screening technicians taking temperature readings when the entry point is open.
- The Temperature Screening Site Plan shows details regarding access to the Project Site and Project Site logistics for conducting temperature screening.
- A 48-hour advance notice will be provided to all trades prior to the first day of temperature screening.

⁵ Santa Clara County Public Health (June 12, 2020) COVID-19 CASES AT CONSTRUCTION SITES HIGHLIGHT NEED FOR CONTINUED VIGILANCE IN SECTORS THAT HAVE REOPENED, available at <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/covid19/Pages/press-release-06-12-2020-cases-at-construction-sites.aspx>.

- The perimeter fence directly adjacent to the entry points will be clearly marked indicating the appropriate 6-foot social distancing position for when you approach the screening area. Please reference the Apex temperature screening site map for additional details.
- There will be clear signage posted at the project site directing you through temperature screening.
- Provide hand washing stations throughout the construction site.

Testing Procedures:

- The temperature screening being used are non-contact devices.
- Temperature readings will not be recorded.
- Personnel will be screened upon entering the testing center and should only take 1-2 seconds per individual.
- Hard hats, head coverings, sweat, dirt, sunscreen or any other cosmetics must be removed on the forehead before temperature screening.
- Anyone who refuses to submit to a temperature screening or does not answer the health screening questions will be refused access to the Project Site.
- Screening will be performed at both entrances from 5:30 am to 7:30 am.; main gate [ZONE 1] and personnel gate [ZONE 2]
- After 7:30 am only the main gate entrance [ZONE 1] will continue to be used for temperature testing for anybody gaining entry to the project site such as returning personnel, deliveries, and visitors.
- If the digital thermometer displays a temperature reading above 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit, a second reading will be taken to verify an accurate reading.

- If the second reading confirms an elevated temperature, DHS will instruct the individual that he/she will not be allowed to enter the Project Site. DHS will also instruct the individual to promptly notify his/her supervisor and his/her human resources (HR) representative and provide them with a copy of Annex A.

Planning

- Require the development of an Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan that will include basic infection prevention measures (requiring the use of personal protection equipment), policies and procedures for prompt identification and isolation of sick individuals, social distancing (prohibiting gatherings of no more than 10 people including all-hands meetings and all-hands lunches) communication and training and workplace controls that meet standards that may be promulgated by the Center for Disease Control, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Cal/OSHA, California Department of Public Health or applicable local public health agencies.⁶

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Carpenters International Training Fund has developed COVID-19 Training and Certification to ensure that Carpenter union members and apprentices conduct safe work practices. The Agency should require that all construction workers undergo COVID-19 Training and Certification before being allowed to conduct construction activities at the Project Site.

Western Carpenters has also developed a rigorous Infection Control Risk Assessment (“**ICRA**”) training program to ensure it delivers a workforce that understands how to identify and control infection risks by implementing protocols to protect themselves

⁶ See also The Center for Construction Research and Training, North America’s Building Trades Unions (April 27 2020) NABTU and CPWR COVID-19 Standards for U.S. Construction Sites, available at https://www.cpwr.com/sites/default/files/NABTU_CPWR_Standards_COVID-19.pdf; Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (2020) Guidelines for Construction Sites During COVID-19 Pandemic, available at https://dpw.lacounty.gov/building-and-safety/docs/pw_guidelines-construction-sites.pdf.

and all others during renovation and construction projects in healthcare environments.⁷

ICRA protocols are intended to contain pathogens, control airflow, and protect patients during the construction, maintenance and renovation of healthcare facilities. ICRA protocols prevent cross contamination, minimizing the risk of secondary infections in patients at hospital facilities.

The City should require the Project to be built using a workforce trained in ICRA protocols.

III. THE CITY MUST REVISE AND RECIRCULATE THE PROJECT'S DEIR

CEQA is a California statute designed to inform decision makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of a project. 14 California Code of Regulations (“**CEQA Guidelines**”) § 15002(a)(1).⁸ At its core, “[i]ts purpose is to inform the public and its responsible officials of the environmental consequences of their decisions *before* they are made.” *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* (1990) 52 Cal. 3d 553, 564.

To achieve this purpose, CEQA mandates preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (“**EIR**”) for projects so that the foreseeable impacts of pursuing the project can be understood and weighed. *Communities for a Better Environment v. Richmond* (2010) 184 Cal. App. 4th 70, 80. The EIR requirement “is the heart of CEQA.” CEQA Guidelines, § 15003(a).

The preparation and circulation of an EIR is more than a set of technical hurdles for agencies and developers to overcome. The EIR’s function is to ensure that government officials who decide to build or approve a project do so with a full understanding of the environmental consequences and, equally important, that the

⁷ For details concerning Western Carpenters’s ICRA training program, *see* <https://icrahealthcare.com/>.

⁸ The CEQA Guidelines, codified in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15000 *et seq.*, are regulatory guidelines promulgated by the state Natural Resources Agency for the implementation of CEQA. (Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21083.) The CEQA Guidelines are given “great weight in interpreting CEQA except when . . . clearly unauthorized or erroneous.” *Center for Biological Diversity v. Department of Fish & Wildlife* (2015) 62 Cal. 4th 204, 217.

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public is assured those consequences have been considered. For the EIR to serve these goals it must present information so that the foreseeable impacts of pursuing the project can be understood and weighed, and the public must be given an adequate opportunity to comment on that presentation before the decision to go forward is made. *Communities for a Better Environment v. Richmond* (2010) 184 Cal. App. 4th 70, 80 (quoting *Vineyard Area Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. City of Rancho Cordova* (2007) 40 Cal. 4th 412, 449–450).

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Section 15088.5(a) of the CEQA Guidelines provides that an EIR must be recirculated whenever there is disclosure of significant new information. Significant new information includes: (1) disclosure of a new significant environmental impact resulting from the project or from a new proposed mitigation measure; (2) disclosure of a substantial increase in the severity of an environmental impact unless mitigation measures are adopted that reduce the impact to a level of insignificance; and (3) disclosure of a feasible project alternative or mitigation measure considerably different from others previously analyzed which would clearly lessen the significant environmental impacts of the project which the project proponents decline to adopt. *Id.*

Additionally, an EIR must be recirculated when it is so fundamentally inadequate and conclusory in nature that meaningful public review and comment is precluded. *Id.* [citing *Mountain Lion Coalition v. Fish & Game Com.* (1989) 214 Cal.App.3d 1043].

Here, as discussed both previously and as reiterated below, the DEIR is legally flawed in various parts because it fails to substantiate all of its conclusions to allow meaningful public review and comment, fails to provide adequate mitigation measures, and fails to fully assess all pertinent environmental factors. Accordingly, this comment letter discloses significant new information, necessitating revision and recirculation of the DEIR.

A. The DEIR Must Describe All Feasible Mitigation Measures That Can Minimize the Project’s Significant and Unavoidable Environmental Impacts

A fundamental purpose of an EIR is to identify ways in which a proposed project's significant environmental impacts can be mitigated or avoided. Pub. Res. Code §§ 21002.1(a), 21061. To implement this statutory purpose, an EIR must describe any feasible mitigation measures that can minimize the project's significant environmental effects. PRC §§ 21002.1(a), 21100(b)(3); CEQA Guidelines §§ 15121(a), 15126.4(a).

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If the project has a significant effect on the environment, the agency may approve the project only upon finding that it has “eliminated or substantially lessened all significant effects on the environment where feasible”⁹ and find that “specific overriding economic, legal, social, technology or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant effects on the environment.”¹⁰ “A gloomy forecast of environmental degradation is of little or no value without pragmatic, concrete means to minimize the impacts and restore ecological equilibrium.” *Environmental Council of Sacramento v. City of Sacramento* (2006) 142 Cal.App.4th 1018, 1039.

1. *The DEIR Does Not Mitigate the Project’s Significant and Unavoidable Greenhouse Gas Emissions*

The DEIR concludes that the Project will have significant Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions impacts since the estimated total emissions from the Project will exceed the interim threshold established by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (“SCAQMD”). (DEIR, pp. 5.9-13–5.9-17.) Importantly, the Project’s emissions far exceed the SCAQMD 3,000 MTCO₂e/year threshold. Indeed, the Project’s emissions are assumed to be **nearly triple** (11,500.67 MTCO₂e/year) than allowed under the SCAQMD threshold. (DEIR, p. 5.9-14.) Mobile Source emissions are the largest contributor with an assumed emissions rate of 8,726.58 MTCO₂e/year. The Project’s energy demands are the second largest source with an emissions rate of 2,537.21 MTCO₂e/year.

The Project proposes to follow certain regulatory requirements to reduce operational emissions and proposes GHG mitigation measures GHG-1 and GHG-2 to further reduce operational emissions, however, these are not the only feasible means of mitigating GHG emissions. (See DEIR, pp. 5.9-17–5.9-18.) Rather, the Project should implement **all feasible mitigation measures**.

The Southern California Association of Government’s (“SCAG”) 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (“2020 RTP/SCS”) and related Program EIR outlines numerous measures for reducing Project GHG emissions which the DEIR fails to consider.

The section below outlines applicable project-level GHG measures identified in the

⁹ PRC §§ 21002; 21002.1, 21081; CEQA Guidelines §§ 15091, 15092(b)(2)(A).

¹⁰ PRC §§ 21002; 21002.1, 21081; CEQA Guidelines §§ 15091, 15092(b)(2)(B).

2020 RTP/SCS PEIR Mitigation Measure PMM GHG-1. In accordance with provisions of sections 15091(a)(2) and 15126.4(a)(1)(B) of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Lead Agency for a project can and should consider mitigation measures to reduce substantial adverse effects related to greenhouse gas emissions, as applicable and feasible. Such measures may include the following or other comparable measures identified by the Lead Agency:

- a. Integrate green building measures consistent with CALGreen (California Building Code Title 24), local building codes and other applicable laws, into project design including:
 - i. Use energy efficient materials in building design, construction, rehabilitation, and retrofit.
 - ii. Install energy-efficient lighting, heating, and cooling systems (cogeneration); water heaters; appliances; equipment; and control systems.
 - iii. Reduce lighting, heating, and cooling needs by taking advantage of light-colored roofs, trees for shade, and sunlight.
 - iv. Incorporate passive environmental control systems that account for the characteristics of the natural environment.
 - v. Use high-efficiency lighting and cooking devices.
 - vi. Incorporate passive solar design.
 - vii. Use high-reflectivity building materials and multiple glazing.
 - viii. Prohibit gas-powered landscape maintenance equipment.
 - ix. Install electric vehicle charging stations.
 - x. Reduce wood burning stoves or fireplaces.
 - xi. Provide bike lanes accessibility and parking at residential developments.
- b. Reduce emissions resulting from projects through implementation of project features, project design, or other measures, such as those described in Appendix F of the State CEQA Guidelines.
- c. Include off-site measures to mitigate a project's emissions.

d. Measures that consider incorporation of Best Available Control Technology (BACT) during design, construction and operation of projects to minimize GHG emissions, including but not limited to:

- i. Use energy and fuel-efficient vehicles and equipment;
- ii. Deployment of zero- and/or near zero emission technologies;
- iii. Use lighting systems that are energy efficient, such as LED technology;
- iv. Use the minimum feasible amount of GHG-emitting construction materials;
- v. Use cement blended with the maximum feasible amount of flash or other materials that reduce GHG emissions from cement production;
- vi. Incorporate design measures to reduce GHG emissions from solid waste management through encouraging solid waste recycling and reuse;
- vii. Incorporate design measures to reduce energy consumption and increase use of renewable energy;
- viii. Incorporate design measures to reduce water consumption;
- ix. Use lighter-colored pavement where feasible;
- x. Recycle construction debris to maximum extent feasible;
- xi. Plant shade trees in or near construction projects where feasible; and
- xii. Solicit bids that include concepts listed above.

e. Measures that encourage transit use, carpooling, bike-share and car-share programs, active transportation, and parking strategies, including, but not limited to the following:

- i. Promote transit-active transportation coordinated strategies;
- ii. Increase bicycle carrying capacity on transit and rail vehicles;
- iii. Improve or increase access to transit;
- iv. Increase access to common goods and services, such as groceries, schools, and day care;
- v. Incorporate affordable housing into the project;

- vi. Incorporate the neighborhood electric vehicle network;
 - vii. Orient the project toward transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
 - viii. Improve pedestrian or bicycle networks, or transit service;
 - ix. Provide traffic calming measures;
 - x. Provide bicycle parking;
 - xi. Limit or eliminate park supply through:
 - i. Elimination (or reduction) of minimum parking requirements
 - ii. Creation of maximum parking requirements
 - iii. Provision of shared parking.
 - xii. Unbundle parking costs;
 - xiii. Provide parking cash-out programs;
 - xiv. Implement or provide access to commute reduction program;
- f. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian facilities into project designs, maintaining these facilities, and providing amenities incentivizing their use; and planning for and building local bicycle projects that connect with the regional network;
- g. Improving transit access to rail and bus routes by incentives for construction of transit facilities within developments, and/or providing dedicated shuttle service to transit stations; and
- h. Adopting employer trip reduction measures to reduce employee trips such as vanpool and carpool programs, providing end-of-trip facilities, and telecommuting programs including but not limited to measures that:
- i. Provide car-sharing, bike sharing, and ride-sharing programs;
 - ii. Provide transit passes;
 - iii. Shift single occupancy vehicle trips to carpooling or vanpooling, for example providing ride-matching services;
 - iv. Provide incentives or subsidies that increase that use of modes other than single-occupancy vehicle;
 - v. Provide on-site amenities at places of work, such as priority parking for carpools and vanpools, secure bike parking, and showers and locker

- rooms;
- vi. Provide employee transportation coordinators at employment sites;
- vii. Provide a guaranteed ride home service to users of non-auto modes.
- i. Designate a percentage of parking spaces for ride-sharing vehicles or high-occupancy vehicles, and provide adequate passenger loading and unloading for those vehicles;
- j. Land use siting and design measures that reduce GHG emissions, including:
 - i. Developing on infill and brownfields sites;
 - ii. Building compact and mixed-use developments near transit;
 - iii. Retaining on-site mature trees and vegetation, and planting new canopy trees;
 - iv. Measures that increase vehicle efficiency, encourage use of zero and low emissions vehicles, or reduce the carbon content of fuels, including constructing or encouraging construction of electric vehicle charging stations or neighborhood electric vehicle networks, or charging for electric bicycles; and
 - v. Measures to reduce GHG emissions from solid waste management through encouraging solid waste recycling, composting, and reuse.
- k. Consult the SCAG Environmental Justice Toolbox for potential measures to address impacts to low-income and/or minority communities. The measures provided above are also intended to be applied in low income and minority communities as applicable and feasible.
- l. Require at least five percent of all vehicle parking spaces include electric vehicle charging stations, or at a minimum, require the appropriate infrastructure to facilitate sufficient electric charging for passenger vehicles and trucks to plug-in.
- m. Encourage telecommuting and alternative work schedules, such as:
 - i. Staggered starting times
 - ii. Flexible schedules
 - iii. Compressed work weeks

- n. Implement commute trip reduction marketing, such as:
 - i. New employee orientation of trip reduction and alternative mode options
 - ii. Event promotions
 - iii. Publications
- o. Implement preferential parking permit program
- p. Implement school pool and bus programs
- q. Price workplace parking, such as:
 - i. Explicitly charging for parking for its employees;
 - ii. Implementing above market rate pricing;
 - iii. Validating parking only for invited guests;
 - iv. Not providing employee parking and transportation allowances; and
 - v. Educating employees about available alternatives.

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The DEIR fails to establish whether any of the 2020 RTP/SCS mitigation measures will be implemented or if they have been included in the Project plan itself. Any references to the 2020 RTP/SCS mitigation measures are in passing and lack a compliance or monitoring component, which would be critical to the success of these measures. Further, there is no meaningful analysis as to the cumulative reduction the various mitigation measures would have on GHG emissions. As such, monitoring and compliance efforts are hindered as the only baseline is for the unmitigated project. The GHG impacts of the project must be fully evaluated in a revised and recirculated DEIR.

B. The Project is Inconsistent with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

In determining consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, the DEIR should analyze the Project's consistency with the 10 goals outlined by SCAG in the RTP/SCS (**Exhibit D**, pg. 9 [The 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy of The Southern California Association of Governments].) Specifically, the RTP/SCS looks to achieve the following goals:

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SCAG CONNECT SOCIAL GOALS	
Goal #1:	<i>Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness</i>
Goal #2:	<i>Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability and travel safety for people and goods</i>
Goal #3:	<i>Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system</i>
Goal #4:	<i>Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system</i>
Goal #5:	<i>Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality</i>
Goal #6:	<i>Support healthy and equitable communities</i>
Goal #7:	<i>Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network</i>
Goal #8:	<i>Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel</i>
Goal #9:	<i>Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options</i>
Goal #10:	<i>Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats</i>

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Instead of using these specific goals, the Project’s consistency was analyzed in the DEIR using broad strategies identified in the RTP/SCS “intended to be supportive of implementing the regional Sustainable Communities Strategy” (**Exhibit D** at 49.) The broad strategies, while important, were not intended to be used in a consistency analysis. Indeed, the SCAG submitted a comment letter regarding the Notice of Preparation issued by the City specifically outlining the RTP/SCS goals as the proper basis for which to analyze the Project’s consistency. (**Exhibit E** [SCAG Comments on the Notice of Preparation].)

By using the specific goals identified in the RTP/SCS to analyze the Project’s consistency, it is apparent that the Project does not conform to the goals of the RTP/SCS. Specifically, this Project fails to meet Goal #5 and instead would result in increased greenhouse gas emissions and reduced air quality.

C. Further VMT Analysis is Required

The DEIR states that the Project was screened out from further VMT analysis under the Los Angeles County’s Proximity to Transit screening criteria. (DEIR, 5.7-11). The screening criteria requires the consideration of multiple questions, including the Project’s consistency with the SCAG RTP/SCS. As identified above, the Project is

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inconsistent with the RTP/SCS, which would result in requiring further VMT Analysis.

Even if the Project were to be found consistent with the RTP/SCS, the Project's significant GHG emissions create the need for further analysis, especially considering mobile sources make up the greatest portion of the estimated emissions. Without a more detailed VMT analysis, it is impossible to confirm all possible mitigation measures are being taken.

Further need for a VMT analysis is evidenced by the recent comment letter from the California Highway Patrol, Santa Fe Springs Area, identifying the cumulative impacts on traffic flow due to the proposed Project and the approved Metropolitan State Hospital Facility. The cumulative impacts of these projects are likely to impact response times and public safety.

The DEIR must be revised and recirculated to include a detailed VMT analysis addressing the numerous concerns surrounding the Project's traffic impacts.

IV. CONCLUSION

The WSRCC request that the City require a local workforce, that the City impose training requirements for the Project's construction activities to prevent community spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. WSRCC further requests that the City revise and recirculate the DEIR to address the significant concerns about the Project's insufficiently-mitigated GHG emissions and the clear need for a detailed VMT analysis. If the City has any questions, feel free to contact my Office.

Sincerely,



Grace Holbrook

Attorneys for Western States Regional Council of Carpenters

Attached:

March 8, 2021 SWAPE Letter to Mitchell M. Tsai re Local Hire Requirements and Considerations for Greenhouse Gas Modeling (Exhibit A);

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Air Quality and GHG Expert Paul Rosenfeld CV (Exhibit B);

Air Quality and GHG Expert Matt Hagemann CV (Exhibit C);

The 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy of
The Southern California Association of Governments (Exhibit D); and

SCAG Comments on the Notice of Preparation (Exhibit E)

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