



PACIFIC PALISADES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

July 30, 2021

Los Angeles City Council: Hon. Nury Martinez, President; Members: Hon. Gil Cedillo, CD 1; Hon. Paul Krekorian, CD 2; Hon. Bob Blumenfield, CD 3; Hon. Nithya Raman, CD 4; Hon. Paul Koretz, CD 5; Hon. Monica Rodriguez, CD 7; Hon. Marqueece Harris-Dawson, CD 8; Hon. Curren D. Price, Jr., CD 9; Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas, CD 10; Hon. Mike Bonin, CD 11; Hon. John Lee, CD 12; Hon. Mitch O’Farrell, CD 13; Hon. Kevin de León, CD 14; Hon. Joe Buscaino, CD 15

City Administrative Officer: Matt Szabo, CAO; Yolanda Chavez, Assistant CAO

Via email to all addressees and submission to City Clerk filing portal

Re: Council File 21-0350; CAO Feasibility Study – Use of Will Rogers State Beach (WRSB) Parking Lot for Homeless Housing / Factors Demonstrating Infeasibility

Dear President Martinez, City Councilmembers, Mr. Szabo and Ms. Chavez:

Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) has provided City officials with myriad reasons why the use of the WRSB parking lot to house the unhoused is infeasible. Here are additional reasons why this proposal should be rejected, even if the CAO makes a narrow finding of “feasibility.”¹

Beach visitors, from throughout the region and beyond, DO NOT SUPPORT this use

The WRSB General Plan expressly provides that the beach should be available to “**all visitors – for their benefit and enjoyment.**” PPCC recently surveyed visitors to WRSB. Here is a video recording of what we found:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9N3eTyd8Uw>.

As the video shows, WRSB is regularly visited and enjoyed by persons of **all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds from throughout the City, the County, the State – and even Las Vegas, Nevada.** Beach users made clear that they do not support the use of the beach parking lot for homeless housing. They gave common sense reasons why this is a bad idea. One beachgoer from Hollywood stated: “There really needs to be some good thought behind where they are going to plan these encampments. The government . . . really need[s] to think the whole thing through. If they don’t want it in their front yard or back yard, then **they really need to consider the rest of us** [*emphasis added*].”

Respected leaders, commentators and experts DO NOT SUPPORT this use

California’s only four-term Governor, **Jerry Brown**, in an interview with Conan Nolan of KNBC, recently characterized the proposal to move homeless encampments to Los Angeles beach parking lots as “**crazy.**” The

¹ As explained in our letter of July 12, 2021, we firmly believe, based on documents received in response to our PRA request, that the feasibility study had been substantially completed months before this motion was even made in Council, *i.e.*, the outcome was already pre-determined. <http://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PPCC-Supp-Letter-to-CAO.pdf>.

LA Times opined in a recent editorial: “What is certain is that no one should be camping in city parks, **including the beaches** [emphasis added].”² And U.S. District Court Judge **David O. Carter** made clear in his preliminary injunction ruling in the *Alliance* case that it is “pivotal” that access to public spaces such as beaches and parks, which enhance the quality of life for all citizens, be maintained for the public.³

Moreover, **John Maceri**, CEO of the respected service provider **The People Concern**,⁴ has stated publicly that in his opinion, placing housing for the unhoused at WRSB is “**not a good idea.**” Mr. Maceri was guest speaker at the July 26, 2021, online community meeting of the Pacific Palisades Task Force on Homelessness (PPTFH).⁵ Explaining his position, he noted that the beach is a “really valuable asset” to the County, and further, that “access to public space has been constrained for so long,” people have been “cooped up for 15 months,” the temperature in the San Fernando Valley has been in “triple digits for several weeks,” and many Angelenos want to get “relief from the heat” by enjoying the beach. He asked: “Why would you take a County-wide asset and limit its use for something that is going to have a pretty **significant impact on thousands and thousands of other people in the County?** It just doesn’t make any sense for me. There are alternative locations that can be looked at [emphasis added].”

Mr. Maceri also commented: “There absolutely has to be **transparency with the community** when there’s anything being contemplated to be sited . . . it’s on the government, the electeds and their staff, to work with the community to help them understand what the proposals are [emphasis added].” Sadly, what transpired in this case was the *exact opposite* of what Mr. Maceri sensibly recommends.

State park land was rejected from the Governor’s EO 23-20 inventory

Governor Newsom issued Executive Order 23-20 in January 2020, declaring a homeless emergency and directing an assessment of state-owned surplus property for use by local governments for homeless shelter purposes. The State Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) administered the inventory of state-owned properties that were determined to be suitable for this use. The Deputy Director of BCSH (Real Estate division) has advised PPCC that during inventory development, *Cal Parks rejected the inclusion of any state parks, beaches or other Cal Parks properties* in the inventory. The final EO 23-20 inventory as a result included no Cal Parks properties.

Conclusion:

We agree with **actual beach users**, with **Gov. Jerry Brown**, and with the **LA Times**, **Judge Carter**, **John Maceri** and **Cal Parks** – WRSB is no place for homeless habitation. The use is **not allowed** by the General Plan and applicable laws; it will **constrict public access** and is **dangerous** for the unhoused as well as for the entire Santa Monica Mountains/Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone region. According to City Controller Ron Galperin, there

² <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/former-governor-jerry-brown-opens-up-on-the-state-he-governed-for-16-years/2635885/>;
<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-06-28/editorial-if-we-want-venice-beach-to-stop-being-a-campground-for-homeless-people-then-house-every-person-camping-there>

³ <http://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Letter-re-CF-21-0350-beach-parks-homeless-housing.pdf>.

⁴ <https://www.thepeopleconcern.org/>. Outreach workers from The People Concern have been engaged by PPTFH for the past several years in working with community volunteers to assist the many unhoused individuals who come to WRSB and adjacent bluff and canyon areas and provide them with offers of housing and services. Despite The People Concern’s extensive knowledge of the conditions at this location, Mr. Maceri stated at the PPTFH meeting that **no one from government had reached out to him or his organization for their input on this proposal.**

⁵ A video recording of Mr. Maceri’s remarks at the meeting may be accessed at <https://www.pptfh.org/>.

are “nearly **14,000** properties in the City owned by six major public entities, with **7,508** owned by the City itself [original emphasis].”⁶ We respectfully urge you to focus on the *thousands of other sites that are potentially feasible to house the unhoused in Los Angeles* and reject further consideration of WRSB for this purpose. Thank you.

Executive Committee, Pacific Palisades Community Council

David Card, Chair	Christina Spitz, Secretary
David Kaplan, Vice-Chair	John Padden, Organization Representative (P.R.I.D.E.)
Richard G. Cohen, Treasurer	Joanna Spak, Elected Representative (Area 1; Castellammare, Paseo Miramar)

cc (via email):

City: **Hon. Eric Garcetti**, Mayor, City of Los Angeles; **Hon. Mike Feuer**, City Attorney; **Hon. Ron Galperin**, City Controller; **Ralph M. Terrazas**, Chief, and **Armando Hogan**, Deputy Chief & West Bureau Commander, LAFD; **Michel R. Moore**, Chief, and **Jonathan Tom**, Captain III & West Division Commanding Officer, LAPD; **Patricia J. Huber**, Asst. CAO and Executive Officer; **Ben Ceja**, Asst. CAO; **Meg Barclay**, CAO’s office/Homeless Strategy

County: **Hon. Hilda Solis**, Chair, County Board of Supervisors; **Hon. Sheila Kuehl**, County Supervisor, CSD 3; **Hon. Janice Hahn**, County Supervisor, CSD 4; **Hon. Kathryn Barger**, County Supervisor, CSD 5; **Hon. Holly J. Mitchell**, County Supervisor, CSD 2; **Daryl L. Osby**, Chief, County Fire Dept.; **Gary Jones**, Director, and **Kerry Silverstrom**, Chief Deputy Director, County Beaches & Harbors Dept.; **Cris Liban**, Chair, Beach Commission; **Clark Stevens**, Executive Officer, and **R.C. Brody**, President, Board of Directors, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains

Joint City/County: **Heidi Marston**, Executive Director, LAHSA; **Wendy Greuel**, Chair, LAHSA Commission

State: **Hon. Gavin Newsom**, Governor, State of California (via Jason Elliott, Senior Counselor for Housing & Homelessness); **Hon. Ben Allen**, State Senator, SD 26; **Hon. Henry Stern**, State Senator, SD 27; **Hon. Richard Bloom**, State Assemblyman, AD 50; **Jack Ainsworth**, Executive Director, and **Steve Hudson**, District Director, California Coastal Commission; **Sam Schuchat**, Executive Director, and **Megan Cooper**, Regional Manager, California State Coastal Conservancy; **Guangyu Wang**, Chief Administrative Director, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission; **Wade Crowfoot**, Secretary for Natural Resources, and **Angela Barranco**, Undersecretary for Natural Resources, California Natural Resources Agency; **Armando Quintero**, Director, and **Jerry West**, Angeles District (acting) Superintendent, California State Parks; **Rue Mapp**, Chair, State Park and Recreation Commission; **Jennifer Lucchesi**, Executive Officer, State Lands Commission; **Joseph T. Edmiston**, Executive Director, MRCA and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy; **Tony Tavares**, Director, Caltrans District 7

Federal: **Hon. Diane Feinstein**, U.S. Senator (via Peter Muller, Deputy State Director); **Hon. Alex Padilla**, U.S. Representative (via Lauren Gallant, Sr. Field Representative); **Hon. Ted Lieu**, U.S. Representative, 33rd District (via Janet Turner, Field Supervisor); **Judge David O. Carter**, U.S. District Court Judge, Central District of California; **Cindy Orlando**, (Acting) Regional Director, Interior Region 8, National Park Service; **David Szymanski**, Superintendent, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area; **Tom Ford**, Director, Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program

Other: **Hon. Paul Grisanti**, Mayor, City of Malibu; **Hon. James Bozajian**, Mayor, City of Calabasas; **Hon. Denis Weber**, Mayor, City of Agoura Hills; **Carrie Carrier**, President, Topanga Town Council; **Kim Lamorie**, President, Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation; **Rachel Norton**, Executive Director, California State Parks Foundation; **Guillermo Rodriguez**, State Director, The Trust for Public Land; **Morgan Goodwin**, Sr. Chapter Director, Sierra Club/Angeles Chapter; **Shelley Luce**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Heal the Bay; **Tom Ford**, Executive Director, The Bay Foundation; **Bruce Reznik**, Executive Director, LA Waterkeeper; **Graham Hamilton**, LA Chapter Coordinator, Surfrider Foundation

⁶ <https://lacontroller.org/data-stories-and-maps/propertypanel/> (the Controller has publicly stated that he will not include beaches in his evaluation of public land in Los Angeles available for homeless housing, to be submitted to Judge Carter in the *Alliance* case).