



Pacific Palisades Community Council

October 13, 2023

VIA EMAIL

Honorable Ben Allen, State Senator, SD24

Honorable Traci Park, City Councilwoman, CD11

Re: George Wolfberg Park at Potrero Canyon bridge project in Pacific Palisades

Dear Senator Allen and Councilwoman Park,

Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) has been the voice of the community for more than fifty years, representing residents, organizations and business stakeholders, both through elected and appointed representatives. We have the good fortune of remaining a Community Council and as such, advocating effectively with our City agencies, as well as county, state and federal agencies and elected officials. On October 12, 2023, in our advisory role to both your offices, we addressed the matter of the bridge that would connect The George Wolfberg Park at Potrero Canyon to Will Rogers beach, at a Special Meeting of the Community Council called for this purpose.

The meeting was called because the office of the City Councilwoman had informed our Potrero Canyon Oversight Committee on Wednesday the 11th of October that a Board of Public Works Agenda item scheduled to be heard on Friday the 13th of October would place the bridge project, if affirmed, squarely on the path to a predesign phase and eventual completion. Since PPCC had not yet given the community an opportunity to be informed that this juncture was upon us, and had heretofore failed to present to your offices a statement of community support for the bridge, begotten through our normal methodology of a noticed and open forum for the discussion of community issues, the Executive Committee agreed to call a Special Meeting to allow the community to consider and discuss the bridge project, as currently contemplated, and resolve to move ahead, or call for a pause.

With a strong majority, the PPCC moved to advance to the next phase of the project, passing a motion to allow the contractor hired by BOE to conduct meaningful outreach in order to garner the community's feedback through the process of the predesign phase, and implement the results of the feedback in a substantive way that will address the items of common concern and incorporate community sentiment into the final bridge design, including its public safety elements. These may include, but will not be limited to, hours of operation/open to the public, fences, gates, lock mechanisms, monitoring, law enforcement resources, patrolling, cameras etc...

This position was taken after two hours of debate and discussion that revealed a focused concern around public safety issues, which were articulated unmistakably by speaker after speaker, who pointed out various elements of the public's safety which are priorities for the community. Some are currently at risk with unreliable functioning gates and locking mechanisms at the newly opened Potrero Canyon Park (opened on December 10, 2022 under the administration of the previous city Councilmember), some are enduring concerns surrounding law enforcement and the lack of resources that remains a challenge for the Palisades, and some are expected to become priorities as foot traffic increases with the opening of the bridge and new challenges emerge as an attendant circumstance.

Representatives from both your honorable offices were present, as was our Senior Lead Officer from LAPD, who affirmed that he would like to see increased law enforcement resources dedicated to Pacific Palisades when the bridge becomes operational. Others insisted on the support of Rangers, and yet other community members spoke about the need to be mindful of safety and security surrounding the bridge and its intended use.

We share this with you as a statement of congratulations for the long-awaited progress of this project and your hard work in bringing us to this point, but also as a caveat that the outreach phase of the pre-design process must entail robust and purposeful outreach to the community for substantive feedback that is meaningfully considered and reflected in the final project.

On behalf of the community, I thank you for your close attention to these matters as this project unfolds.

Best,
Maryam Zar
PPCC President