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Bel Air-Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council
Brentwood Community Council
Del Rey Neighborhood Council
Mar Vista Community Council
Neighborhood Council of Westchester-Playa
North Westwood Neighborhood Council
Pacific Palisades Community Council

Palms Neighborhood Council
South Robertson Neighborhoods Council
Venice Neighborhood Council
West LA-Sawtelle Neighborhood Council
Westside Neighborhood Council
Westwood Community Council
Westwood Neighborhood Council

August 15, 2023

Hon. Karen Bass, Mayor, City of Los Angeles
Hon. Katy Yaroslavsky, Councilwoman, CD 5
Hon. Traci Park, Councilwoman, CD 11
Hon. Nithya Raman, Councilmember, CD 4
Hon. Heather Hutt, Councilwoman, CD 10

Via email to all addressees

Re: **WRAC Policy – Notice and Ample Opportunity to Review and Comment on City Projects**

Dear Mayor Bass and Councilmembers Yaroslavsky, Park, Raman and Hutt:

As you know, the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) is a coalition of all fourteen neighborhood and community councils on the Westside of Los Angeles, located in CDs 5 and 11 and portions of CDs 4 and 10.

Since its founding in 2009, WRAC as an alliance has had a productive and respectful relationship with all Los Angeles Mayors and City Councilmembers representing the Westside / WRAC districts. We hope and expect that this positive relationship will continue in the months and years ahead.

With this goal in mind, we bring to your attention WRAC's Statement of Principles (Standing Rule 4 to the WRAC Bylaws), which provide in pertinent part:

“WRAC expects governing bodies to notify all relevant parties -- including relevant WRAC Member Organizations – of all proposed residential, commercial or infrastructure developments requiring discretionary approvals, and of public property developments, whether or not discretionary, having a broad impact on WRAC neighborhoods or on the region as a whole. . . . Such notice should be provided sufficiently in advance of the governing body's determination to allow ample time for WRAC Member Organizations to consider, review and comment on the proposal.” (<https://westsidecouncils.com/bylaws/>)

We have learned that a recent controversial proposal by Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky to convert a City parking lot in CD 5 for use as interim homeless housing (the Parking Lot Project) was effectively announced as a decision that had already been made, *without giving any prior notice to the community or to the relevant Neighborhood Council* (Westside Neighborhood Council, a founding member of WRAC), and *without giving the Neighborhood Council “ample time,” or any time, to consider, review and offer meaningful comment* on the proposal before the determination.

As the City itself acknowledges, certified Neighborhood Councils are “part of the Los Angeles City government” and were established “as a way of ensuring that the City government remains responsive to the different needs and lifestyles of Los Angeles’ rich variety of communities” (www.lacity.gov). It is fundamental to a respectful and responsive relationship between the City, local councils and the communities they represent, that before any decision is reached on proposed projects, governing officials provide each WRAC Member Council in the area of the project with adequate notice and sufficient opportunity to meaningfully comment – including WRAC’s certified Neighborhood Councils as well as its respected and established Community Councils (which, as the City Council officially recognized in 2014 in Council File No. 13-1625, serve

Westside Regional Alliance of Councils
Mayor Bass and CMs Park, Yaroslavsky, Raman and Hutt
August 15, 2023
Page Two

the same function in their communities).

Although WRAC has not taken a specific position on the Parking Lot Project, nor on whether any particular parcel of City property should be used for interim homeless housing or other purposes, we emphasize our serious concern with the process followed by CD 5 in this instance which contravened WRAC's Statement of Principles.

In light of the failure to notify Westside Neighborhood Council (WNC) in the first instance and to provide any opportunity to comment before a decision had been reached on the Parking Lot Project, in accordance with WRAC's Statement of Principles we must insist that further action on the Project be paused, that no final determination be made unless and until sufficient outreach is conducted and WNC is provided ample time for meaningful review and comment on the Parking Lot Project, and that WNC receives adequate advance notice of any further actions to be taken in the future with respect to this Project.

Moreover, going forward we respectfully urge and expect each of our elected City officials to work cooperatively with WRAC Member Councils in light of WRAC's Statement of Principles, so that the relevant Neighborhood and/or Community Council is (1) notified sufficiently in advance of any decision involving the use of City property and (2) is provided ample time for meaningful review and comment on all proposals to convert and use City property *for any purpose* (whether as an interim homeless housing project, or otherwise) by the City.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation and consideration.

Sincerely,

Robin Greenberg and Christina Spitz

Robin Greenberg, Chair
Christina Spitz, Vice-Chair
Westside Regional Alliance of Councils

cc (via email):

Jared Rivera, Deputy Mayor of Community Engagement, Mayor's Office; Fernando Morales, Deputy Chief of Staff, CD 5; George Hakopiants, District Director, CD 5; Dylan Sittig, Sr. Planning Deputy, CD 5; Star Parsamyan, Chief of Staff, CD 11; Gabriela Medina, District Director, CD 11; Jeff Khau, Planning Deputy, CD 11
Geoff Thompson, Deputy Chief of Staff, CD 4; Emma Taylor, District Director, CD 4
Meg Healy, Sr. Deputy for Housing & Planning, CD 4; Kimani Black, Chief of Staff, CD 10; Hakeem Parke-Davis, Deputy for Planning, CD

10