

March 1, 2021

**Re: Case No. CPC-2020-4095-ZV-CU- SPR - Appeal for Non-Approval of Elementary Schools at 1608-1636 West Pico Blvd., 1321 – 1331 South Union Avenue**

Honorable PLUM Committee,

I signed a petition along with over 150 other residents which detailed specific reasons why we, as a community, were against this project. The traffic plan poses a serious imposition to businesses and residents by blocking alleys, and allowing traffic down our residential streets. It was submitted to the Commission and filed in this case. I do not understand how the City Planning Commission could ignore so many residents especially since all of the individuals who signed live within area that will be most impacted. Is it possible that they did not even look this evidence? I asked that you take a careful look at the addresses on the petitions and listen to your constituents. We know the area, and we know there will be problems with 1500 students from three Equitas schools right next to each other.

Therefore, if you decide to reject our appeals, it is extremely vital that you impose the same or similar Conditional Use Permit on Equitas 5 and 6 that is currently in place at Equitas 1 located at 1700 W. Pico Blvd. Currently, no Equitas traffic is allowed southbound on Constance Street during drop offs and pickup times along with no parking on any neighboring streets.

Allowing traffic down Constance Street and neighboring streets will in effect ruin our small niche community which houses many historical homes. As it is, we already have significant traffic and parking problems with Equitas. There is little to no parking in our community. Yet Equitas' parents disobey the Conditional Use Permit constantly. We see parents parking, double parking, parking in the red to avoid the long queues on Pico Boulevard. This situation will only worsen as the staggering reaching the 1000 student body capacity,

Going and coming home from work, I, and other residents, are often blocked by Equitas 1's queues from turning onto or into Pico Blvd. These car lines stretch for 3-5 blocks westbound. This is a great inconvenience since I am forced to change my route during morning rush hour. This traffic problem on Pico Blvd and Union Ave will double in size with Equitas' 5 and 6, and cause additional traffic difficulties to the residents.

Another problem I see is that traffic consultants and planning so-called experts, who do not know our area, are designing plans that impact us greatly. They make things look good on paper, adjust data to fit meet the requirements, and they pitch a pretty picture to the City. This is why the residents are upset. Their plans are causing conflicts with residents and businesses because of their lack of knowledge of our area. A prime example, the Transportation Assessment (CPC-2020-4095, Pg. 132) states "This location is already considered a "Walker's Paradise", scoring 92 of 100 points for

walkability.” It is obvious that whoever wrote this has never walked in our neighborhood. We have a problem with gangs, drugs, illegal dumping, homelessness and drunks.

**Traffic and Construction concerns after reading the case file are stated below:**

**Installing a traffic signal on Constance Street and Pico Blvd** was suggested by the Transportation Engineer (See CPC-2020-495, pg.345) as a possible solution to Equitas’ circulation and access deficiencies. This is not acceptable:

- It ignores our Conditional Use Permit from Equitas 1.
- It will divert overflow traffic wishing to avoid Union Ave southbound to our residential streets; Constance St, 14<sup>th</sup> Street.
- It will turn Constance Street into a throughfare, and we will lose our residential ambiance, and bring ruin to our historical zone.

**There will be approximately 112 Equitas employees** (40 teachers, 30 administrators, and 30 corporate staff) with 12 parent volunteers. In sum, there will be 112 Equitas’ personnel arriving to the area every day.

- Equitas has only 54 parking spaces.
- Therefore, the others will be forced to seek parking in and around the school.
  - Transportation Engineer stated the Project **did** exceed the 250 daily vehicle screening threshold (by more than double), and it would impact the traffic significantly (CPC-2020-495, Pg.345).
    - Solution was to implement Transport Demand Management Strategies to mitigate traffic volume:
      - Charge all employees \$1.00 for parking fee, offer daily transit subsidy of \$2.98, and use promotional and marketing as educational tools to encourage alternative mode of travel.

**How do they know this will work? This is speculation and merely a way to work the system to allow the project to go forward.**

**Unsafe Intersection:** The Pico-Union intersection is very dangerous. There have been numerous serious accidents. LADOT’S MOU (CPC 2095-495, Pg. 262-253) acknowledges this fact by listing it as a High Injury Network. Again, to call this location “a walker’s paradise” is definitely a contradiction.

**Construction Concerns:** Health, safety and quality of life during construction should be top priority. It seems all the studies show no one will be affected in the short-term. However, this again is only speculation.

- Residents will definitely be exposed to at least 13 months of noise, building contaminants, pollution from diesel trucks, traffic caused by hauling in and out of area.

- Based on the age of the existing buildings, it is possible that asbestos-containing material (ACM) and lead based paint (LBP) are potentially present in building materials within the structure.
- Individual cancer risk is a likelihood over a 30-year exposure period to Toxic Air Contaminants, but short-term effects are not known.

**Construction Noise:**

- Noise from construction for 13 months will add a burden to Pico-Union residents who work at night. Sleeping during the day will be difficult. Those residents working from home will also be affected.

I opposed the location of the school, and the aftermath it will cause to my family and the nearby residents. I have no opposition to education, nor to Equitas as a school. My suggestion is that Equitas find a new location for its two schools since they already have one on Pico Blvd. Adding two more with 1000 students next to one of the busiest and most dangerous intersections is not a good idea. Increase in traffic and pedestrian flow will lead to more injuries and accidents.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to attend any meetings or hearings due to my work schedule which is why I am submitting this supplementary letter to my appeal. I ask you to please take into consideration my concerns, and all the constituents' legitimate issues raised with Equitas' expansion, and disapprove this project.

Thank you for your time.

Michael Rivera