

Communication from Public

Name: Casey Maddren

Date Submitted: 10/30/2021 04:01 PM

Council File No: 21-0627

Comments for Public Posting: I would like to submit the attached letter in support of the appeal of the project proposed for 6555 Franklin Ave., ENV-2020-7353-CE.

October 28, 2021

Planning & Land Use Management Committee
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Submitted through Public Comment Portal: www.LACouncilComment.com

Re: 6555 Franklin Ave., SUPPORT APPEAL
Council File No.: 21-0627
CEQA: ENV-2020-7353-CE
Case No.: DIR-2020-7352-TOC-HCA

Members of the Planning & Land Use Management Committee,

I'm writing in support of the appeal filed by Susan Guralnik & Franklin Corridor Communities. The project does not qualify for a Categorical Exemption (CE). The project also does not qualify for approval under the Housing Crisis Act, since it's located in a Very High Fire Severity Hazard Zone (VHFHSZ). Additionally, there are questions surrounding the original letter explaining the justification for the CE, and a subsequent version which has been modified.

My detailed comments are below.

Casey Maddren
2141 Cahuenga Blvd., Apt. 17
Los Angeles, CA 90068

6555 FRANKLIN AVE., ENV-2020-7353-CE

COMMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE APPEAL

Hearing Notice Cites Incorrect Case Number

The first paragraph of the Hearing Notice for the November 2 PLUM meeting states that the appeal has been filed to challenge the Categorical Exemption for the project. But in the heading for the hearing notice, instead of the environmental case number ENV-2020-7353-CE, we see ENV-2020-7353-EAF-1A. A look at ZIMAS confirms that environmental case number ENV-2020-7353-CE is not listed, and instead we see ENV-2020-7353-EAF. Clicking on the link for this second case number, the case summary that appears is nearly blank, with no project description and the notation "No Approved Documents Found".

The case number must be restored to ZIMAS, and when the PLUM Committee agenda is published, please make sure that it bears the correct case number.

Categorical Exemption

The appeal is correct in stating that the project does not qualify for a Categorical Exemption. There are puzzling statements and inconsistencies in both the March 17, 2020 letter explaining

the justification for the Categorical Exemption and in the August 26, 2021 CEQA Appeal Summary which contains staff responses to the appellant. In fact, there appear to be some serious problems with the way the CE justification has been prepared.

To start with, on page 7 of the original version of the March 17, 2020 CE justification we find the following paragraph:

Moreover, based on a review of the data reported on the Department of City Planning's ZIMAS for the subject property, the site is not located within an Airport Hazard Area, Coastal Zone, Farmland Area, Flood Area, High Wind Velocity Area, Oil Well Area, Landslide Zone, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or Preliminary Fault Rupture Study Area. According to ZIMAS, the project is located within a Methane Zone and a Special Grading Area which will require the project to undergo review and approval by the Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering-Grading. According to ZIMAS, the project site is not located within the Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone but indicates that the site is located within 1.40 km from the nearest known fault (Puente Hills Blind Thrust). As such, exception (a) does not apply. [Emphasis added.]

As the appellant has correctly pointed out, ZIMAS shows that the project site IS in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). Appellant also correctly states that, according to ZIMAS, the project site IS located in an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone and is subject to liquefaction. The original March 17 CE justification is clearly wrong on both points. But even worse, the letter goes on to say that, "[...] the site is located within 1.40 km from the nearest known fault (Puente Hills Blind Thrust)."

Why does the letter refer to the Puente Hills Blind Thrust, a fault zone miles away from the project site? In reality, the project is very close to the Hollywood Fault. And the distance given, 1.40 km, is far greater than the distance of the project site from the Hollywood Fault. According to ZIMAS, the project is only 0.169526712 km from the Hollywood Fault, or 556.19 feet.

The numerous incorrect statements in the original March 17, 2020 document, and especially the reference to the Puente Hills Blind Thrust, make it appear that, instead of making a good faith effort to provide information on the 6555 Franklin project, staff simply copied text from another document and pasted it into this one. It's hard to imagine any other explanation given the numerous glaring inaccuracies.

But it gets worse....

On page 5 of the Appeal Summary, staff acknowledges that the determination letter was incorrect in stating that the project was not in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and staff also acknowledges that the project is in an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone and that the site is subject to liquefaction. The Summary goes on to say, "Staff has revised the CE32 written justification in the project file."

Having found only the original CE justification posted on the Council File Management System, I e-mailed City Planning staff to inquire about it. City Planning staff sent me the revised CE justification, which is actually even more problematic than the original. While the staff response acknowledges the errors in the original version, staff has "revised" the document to eliminate any references to the Very High Fire Severity Hazard Zone, the Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone, and there is still no mention of liquefaction. While the document no longer refers to the Puente Hills Blind Thrust, it makes no mention of the Hollywood Fault, which according to ZIMAS, is only 0.169526712 km away from the project site, or 556 feet.

Even more troubling than these “revisions” is the fact that second version of the CE justification does not include any acknowledgement that the document has been revised. It still bears the same date, March 17, 2020. There are no strikeouts or footnotes to indicate that the document has been changed. In other words, in response to clear errors pointed out by the appellant, City Planning staff appears to have gone back and made revisions to the original document that was used to justify the CE without including any indication that revisions had been made. Furthermore, rather than revising the justification to insert the correct information, staff has simply eliminated all the problematic language.

The best one could say is that the result is grossly inaccurate. The worst one could say is that, to a suspicious person, this might appear to be a deliberate attempt to alter a published document in order to mislead the public.

Staff Response Does Not Respond to Point Actually Raised by Appellant

In response to appeal point 5, the staff response says:

Regarding the discussion of Exception (a) set forth in CEQA Guidelines, section 15300.2, this exception does not apply to the Class 32 exemption.

Staff should have read the appeal more carefully. The appellant does not cite Exception (a), but instead cites Exception (b):

Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

Appellant lists: 1824 Highland, 118 residential units, recently completed; 6650 Franklin (The Montecito), 68 residential units, approved; 1920 Whitley, 24 residential units, approved; and 1719 Whitley, 156 hotel rooms, approved. I would also add 1723 Wilcox, 88 hotel rooms, approval pending.

Staff goes on to say:

Regarding the discussion of Exception (c), the fact that the project is located within the boundaries of a Severe Fire Hazard Zone and within the boundaries of a fault zone does not create an unusual circumstance because large portions of the City are located within these zones and there is no evidence in the record that indicates that this particular project is more susceptible to fire risks than any other building in its vicinity or has any unique circumstances or site or project characteristics that would exacerbate or otherwise cause wildfire risk different than any other existing development in these areas.

Staff is correct in saying that large portions of the City are located within these zones, and the City has already seen several structures lost to fire in recent years. The October 11, 2019 edition of the LA Times reported that the Saddleridge fire had destroyed 31 structures, including homes, and forced thousands to flee. [See Exhibit A.] That same year the Getty fire destroyed at least eight homes. [See Exhibit B.] Staff says there is no evidence that this project is more susceptible to fire risks than other buildings in the vicinity, but seems oblivious to the fact that ALL structures within the VHFSHZ are at risk from fire.

Just this month, the LAFD has responded to four brush fires, two of which were in the Hollywood Hills/Cahuenga Pass area. [See Exhibit C.] Thankfully, the LAFD was able to put

these blazes out quickly, but if any of them had happened on a windy day, the results might have been very different. The threat to homes in areas designated VHFHSZ is very real.

And the threat continues to grow, as climate change causes LA to become hotter and drier. Please see the environmental research letter Climate Change Is Increasing the Likelihood of Extreme Autumn Wildfire Conditions across California (Goss, et. al., August 2020)

[<https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ab83a7>]. In their conclusion, the authors state:

We report a substantial and statistically significant historical trend toward autumns which are increasingly conducive to enhanced wildfire risk across most of California.

They further state:

Absent a strong decrease in autumn wind patterns, observed and projected temperature and precipitation trends portend increasing risk that autumn offshore wind events will coincide with critically dry fuels—increasing the potential for wildfire catastrophes when fires affect populated areas.

Has the City considered potential liability here? It's not just that the City is approving a project in a VHFHSZ. In the original version of the Class 32 Justification, staff falsely stated that the project was not in a VHFHSZ and was not in an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone. When appellant pointed out that these statements were incorrect, staff's remedy was to eliminate any reference to VHFHSZs and Alquist-Priolo. If a fire should occur after completion of the project, and the fire resulted in property damage and/or loss of life, it's certainly possible that lawsuits would follow. Has the City considered what kind of liability it would face if plaintiffs discovered that, not only had the City failed to assess fire and earthquake risks, but had actually deleted references to the VHFHSZ and Alquist-Priolo?

Has the City Complied with the Requirements of Alquist-Priolo?

CA PRC Sec. 2623. (a) states that, for any project within a delineated Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone....

Cities and counties shall require, prior to the approval of a project, a geologic report defining and delineating any hazard of surface fault rupture. If the city or county finds that no undue hazard of that kind exists, the geologic report on the hazard may be waived, with the approval of the State Geologist.

I have not yet been able to find the required geologic report for this project. Has one been prepared?

Congestion on Franklin Could Impede Evacuations and/or Emergency Vehicle Access

Fire and earthquake safety are of special importance in this case because the frequent heavy traffic in the area could impede evacuations and/or emergency vehicle access in case of a disaster. This stretch of Franklin Avenue between Cahuenga and Highland dates back to Hollywood's beginnings as a suburb. Its outlines have not changed substantially since the first tract maps were drawn around 1900. There is one lane of traffic in each direction and two parking lanes. The street's boundaries were drawn when Hollywood was sparsely populated and most households didn't own cars.

Los Angeles-Pacific Boulevard and Development Company

H.J. Whitley, President

M.H. Sherman, Vice President

F.H. Rindge, Vice President

Clem. S. Glass, Secretary

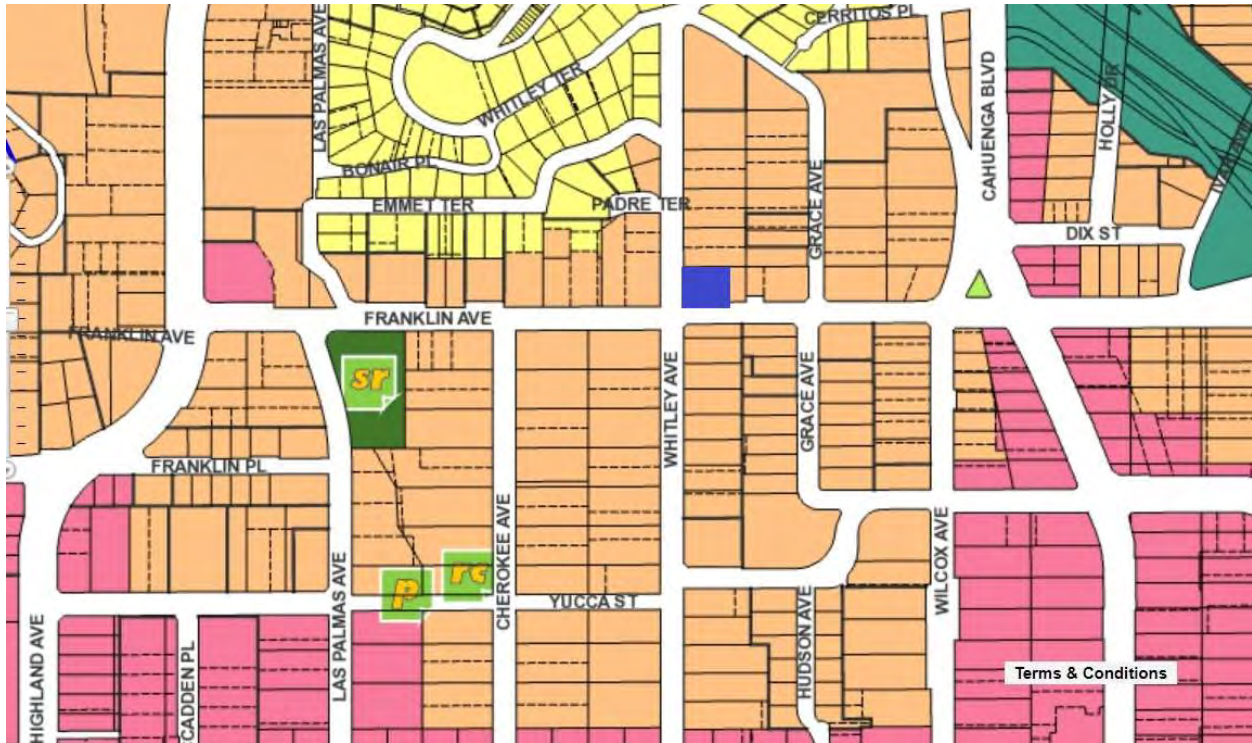
Thos. Keith, Asst. Secretary



Tract Map, 1899, Los Angeles-Pacific Boulevard and Development Company, H.J. Whitley, President

Today Hollywood is home to around 200,000 people. According to a 2010 report by UCLA Professors Michael Manville and Donald Shoup, there are 0.54 vehicles per person in LA County. Unfortunately, while LA has changed, Franklin Avenue has not. Franklin Avenue is often very congested at rush hour, and evening traffic gets worse during Hollywood Bowl season. Photos of congestion on Franklin are included as an attachment to this letter. [See Exhibit D.]

Ingress to and egress from the area can be difficult. In addition to heavy traffic on Franklin itself, the two main streets that bookend this segment of Franklin, Highland and Cahuenga, are often heavily congested at rush hour. South of Franklin, even some of the smaller cross streets, such as Wilcox and Las Palmas can be crowded with cars at peak times. And north of Franklin some cross streets become narrow, twisting pathways through the hills, in some places so narrow that cars must pull over to let opposing traffic to pass.



Map of area from ZIMAS. Project site indicated by blue rectangle.

This is why the appellant argues that the project does not qualify for a categorical exemption. CEQA Guidelines Section 15332, requires that:

(d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.

Traffic on Franklin is already extremely heavy at times, as the attached exhibits show, sometimes backing up for blocks. The 28 units contained in this project must be considered alongside the 210 residential units and the 244 hotel rooms mentioned above, which are either recently completed, recently approved or are awaiting pending approval. The cumulative impacts on this already crowded corridor will be considerable. Again, the issue here is not just the increase in traffic, but the potential that increased congestion could inhibit both emergency vehicle access and the ability of residents to evacuate in case of emergency. To repeat, the project site is in a VHFHSZ and an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone.

The Site Cannot Be Adequately Served by Required Utilities and Public Services

An exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 requires that:

(e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

In the response to appeal point 5, staff states:

The project is located in an urbanized and long-developed area, and thus will be adequately served by all required public utilities and services.

Staff simply assumes that because the site is in an urban area it must be adequately served by required utilities and services, and apparently made no effort to ascertain whether this is actually true. In fact, the site is not adequately served by law enforcement and solid waste collection/disposal.

There has been a substantial increase in crime in the Hollywood area in recent years. LAPD COMPSTAT statistics for the Hollywood Area show that the number of violent crimes has increased from 918 in 2014 to 1,468 in 2019. (I don't cite statistics for 2020, since many businesses were closed due to the pandemic and tourism was way down.) Total Part I crimes have also risen during the same period, from 4,619 in 2014 to 6,305 in 2019.

Please also note the following statements made by LAPD Senior Lead Officer Heather Mata, as reported in the October 2021 newsletter of the Whitley Heights Civic Association:

Heather Mata, our Senior Lead Officer with the Los Angeles Police Department, said it has been a tough year for police enforcement, especially in the Hollywood area.

Police officers in the Hollywood division have been cut 80 percent, from about 65 officers to just 12 now, Mata said.

Violent crime in the Hollywood division is through the roof. "Three and a half weeks ago, we led the city in violent crime. Traditionally, violent crime has been the highest in South-Central Los Angeles. A lot of resources have been taken away from the Hollywood division," she explained.

[See Exhibit E for further comments by Office Mata.]

In light of the increase in crime between 2014 and 2019, and the statements made by Officer Mata, it seems clear that the area is currently not adequately served by law enforcement.

As for solid waste collection and disposal, the project will be served by RecycLA, a program overseen by LASAN (LA Bureau of Sanitation). AB 939 requires California cities to divert 50% of their solid waste to recycling. While it's difficult to get reliable statistics from LASAN on solid waste collection and disposal, recently I received some data from the agency as the result of a Public Records Act request. Here are the statistics I received:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Disposed	2,774,346	2,743,673
Incinerated	1,795	3,222
Recycled (green + blue)	590,292	539,235
TOTALS:	3,366,433	3,286,130

Based on these figures, it appears that the rate of diversion to recycling in 2019 was about 17%, and the rate of diversion to recycling in 2020 was about 16%. This appears to show that the City is nowhere near achieving AB 939's requirement for 50% diversion to recycling.

The City will claim, as it has in the past, that it plans to achieve a rate of 90% diversion to recycling by 2025. Unfortunately, since China closed its doors to imports of recyclable materials, the recycling market has largely collapsed in California. The City has produced no plan to increase its rate of diversion to recycling in this extremely challenging environment. The

City will also claim that there is ample landfill space to dispose of solid waste, but landfills are a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). Depositing over 80% of our solid waste has a significant impact on the environment with regard to GHGs.

The project will be served by RecycLA. Given the statistics cited above, it's clear the project will not comply with AB 939, and will add to the cumulative impact of projects throughout the City which are also served by RecycLA and also do not comply with AB 939. Therefore, it is clear that the project can not be adequately served by public utilities with regard to solid waste, both with regard to its individual impact and with regard to cumulative impacts.

ADVERTISEMENT

EXHIBIT A

CALIFORNIA

City and state declare emergencies as Saddleridge fire burns homes in the Valley





By HANNAH FRY, MARISA GERBER, LEILA MILLER, MATTHEW ORMSETH, RICHARD WINTON

OCT. 11, 2019
6:57 PM



A wind-driven brush fire carved a devastating path in the northern foothills of the San Fernando Valley on Friday, chewing through 7,500 acres, burning at least 31 structures, including homes, and forcing thousands to flee.

The Saddleridge fire, which broke out about 9 p.m. Thursday on the north side of the 210 Freeway in Sylmar amid strong Santa Ana winds, spread rapidly westward into Porter Ranch and other communities. At its peak, the blaze was moving at a rate of roughly 800 acres an hour. The fire is 13% contained.

Mandatory evacuations were issued overnight to roughly 23,000 homes encompassing a large swath of neighborhoods north of the 118 Freeway from Tampa Avenue all the way to the Ventura County line — an area covering 100,000 residents. Officials warned that other communities near the fire need to be ready to leave at a moment's notice if the winds shift.

“The fact that community members heeded evacuation warnings early made a huge difference, allowing firefighters to enter those communities and protect properties,” said Los Angeles County Fire Chief Deputy Dave Richardson.

ADVERTISEMENT

EXHIBIT B

CALIFORNIA

Getty fire off 405 Freeway in L.A. destroys several homes; thousands flee

Getty fire erupts overnight



Get Unlimited Digital Access

\$1 for 4 weeks | \$98 for 1 year

SUBSCRIBE

OCT. 28, 2019 | 6:25 PM



A wind-driven brush fire chewed through hillside communities on the west side of Los Angeles on Monday, burning homes and prompting widespread evacuations.

The Getty fire broke out shortly after 1:30 a.m. along the 405 Freeway near the Getty Center and spread to the south and west, rapidly burning more than 600 acres and sending people fleeing from their homes in the dark. About 10,000 structures have been placed under mandatory evacuation orders.

Los Angeles Fire Department Chief Ralph Terrazas said that, despite firefighters' efforts, at least eight homes, including some on Tigertail Road, had been destroyed in the blaze. Five others were damaged. Some homes that were destroyed were adjacent to properties that didn't sustain any damage, he said.

"They were literally overwhelmed," Terrazas said of crews fighting the fire within neighborhoods. "They had to make some tough decisions on which houses they were able to protect. Many times, it depends upon where the ember lands."

Get Unlimited Digital Access
\$1 for 4 weeks | \$98 for 1 year

SUBSCRIBE



THE LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

CONTAINED BRUSH FIRE 10/02/2021 INC#1732

CONTAINED Brush Fire; INC#1732; 02:17AM; 10652 Glenoaks Blvd;
<https://bit.ly/3mn2Zmb>; Hansen Dam; Seventy firefighters have contained the Hansen Dam brush fire, neutralizing the threat. Crews will remain on scene for an extended time to mop up any remaining hot spots or smoldering material.; FS 98; Batt 12; Valley Bureau; Council District 7; AO1 BC12 DZ12 E239 E287 E290 E298 E60 E7 E75 E77 E8140 E90 E91 E93 H2 H4 HA2 HA4 HE1 RA98 T39 T87 T90 T98 WT77 WT88; CH8; 17; Nicholas Prange



THE LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

CONTAINED BRUSH FIRE 10/02/2021 INC#0672

CONTAINED Brush Fire; INC#0672; 11:20AM; 2580 E Cahuenga Bl; <https://bit.ly/39ZYj08>; Hollywood Hills; Fifty-five firefighters stopped the progress of a fire in light-to-medium brush at less than one-half acre in 27 minutes. The fire began at or near a homeless encampment. There have been no reported injuries. Cause under investigation. Nothing further.; FS 27; Batt 5; West Bureau; Council District 4; AO2 BC11 BC5 E227 E235 E27 E290 E35 E41 E52 E76 E82 EM11 H1 H2 H4 HA1 HA2 HA4 RA82 T27 T35 T90; CH5; 12; Nicholas Prange



THE LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

CONTAINED BRUSH FIRE 10/03/2021 INC#1129

CONTAINED Brush Fire; INC#1129; 05:08PM; WB 210 Fwy x Hubbard St;

<https://bit.ly/3B9e1Sv>; Sylmar; Thirty-six firefighters extinguished the original grass fire in 64 minutes, holding it at approximately one-half acre. A second fire started nearby and was quickly handled by crews on scene. Fire Investigators are responding to investigate the cause. Nothing further.; FS 91; Batt 12; Valley Bureau; Council District 7; AR1 BC10 BC12 E18 E24 E275 E290 E298 E7 E75 E8140 E91 EM15 H2 H3 H4 HA2 HA3 HA4 RA91 T75 T90 T98 WT77 WT88; CH5; 18; Nicholas Prange



THE LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

BRUSH FIRE 10/14/2021 INC#1509

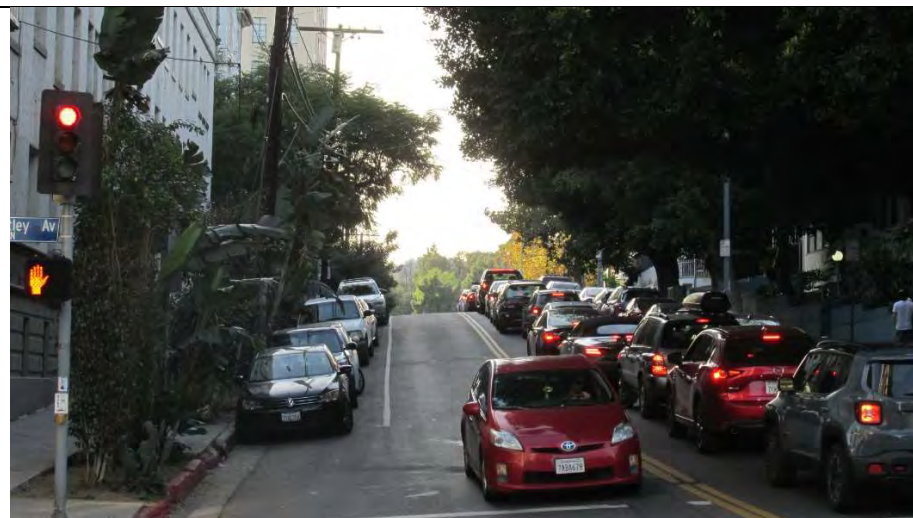
Brush Fire; INC#1509; 07:48PM; 3064 E Cahuenga Bl; <https://bit.ly/3DHF5ZY>; Hollywood Hills; One-acre fire in medium brush with structures threatened. MOTORISTS: E Cahuenga to be closed from Pilgrimage bridge to Barham.; FS 76; Batt 5; West Bureau; Council District 4; AO1 AO2 BC14 BC18 BC5 E227 E41 E60 E76 E82 E86 E90 E97 EM14 H1 H3 HA1 HA3 RA76 T27; CH5; 12; Nicholas Prange

EXHIBIT D

Franklin Avenue Traffic: January 26, 2019, between 3:15 and 3:30 pm



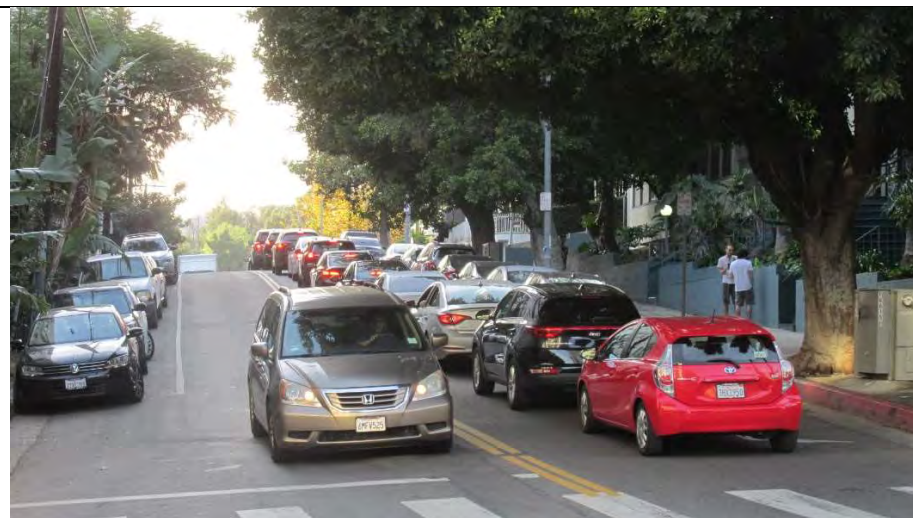
6555 Franklin, Westbound



Franklin/Whitley, Westbound

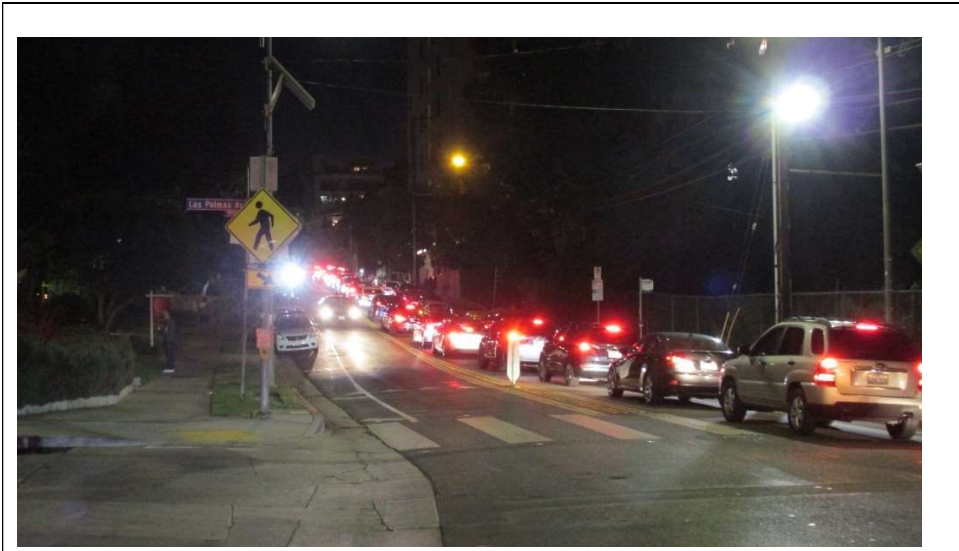


6555 Franklin, Westbound

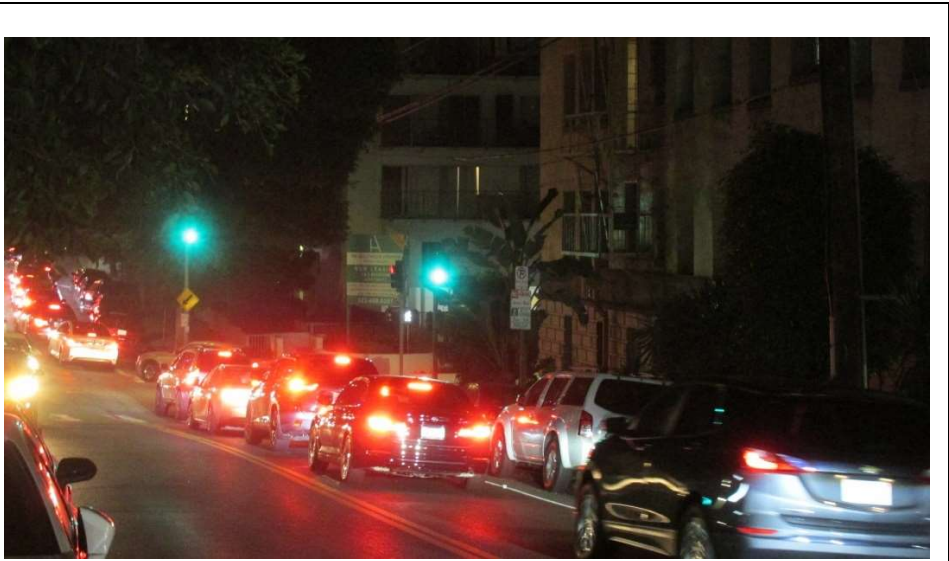


Franklin/Whitley, Westbound

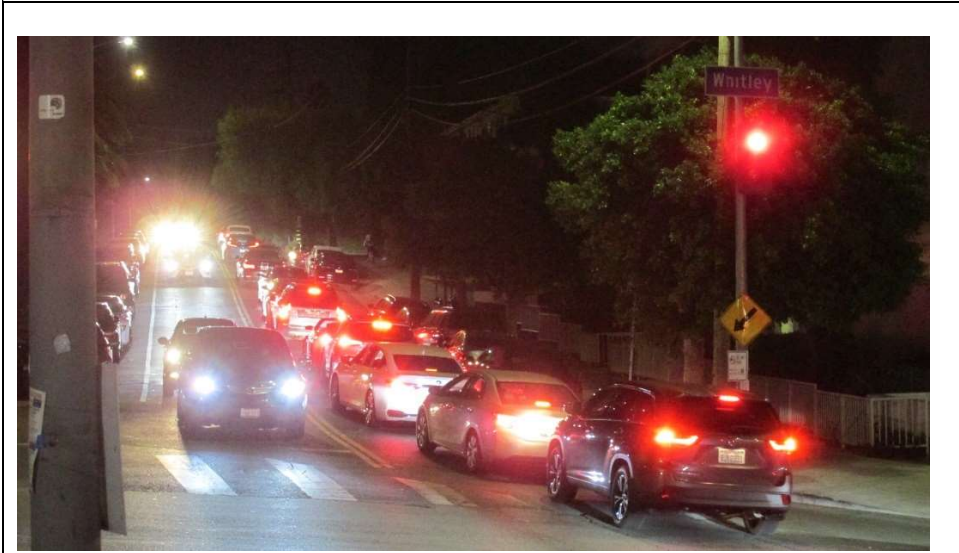
Franklin Avenue Traffic, September 11, 2021, between 11:00 and 11:30 pm



Franklin/Las Palmas, Eastbound



Franklin/Whitley Eastbound



Franklin/Whitley, Eastbound



Franklin/Whitley, Eastbound

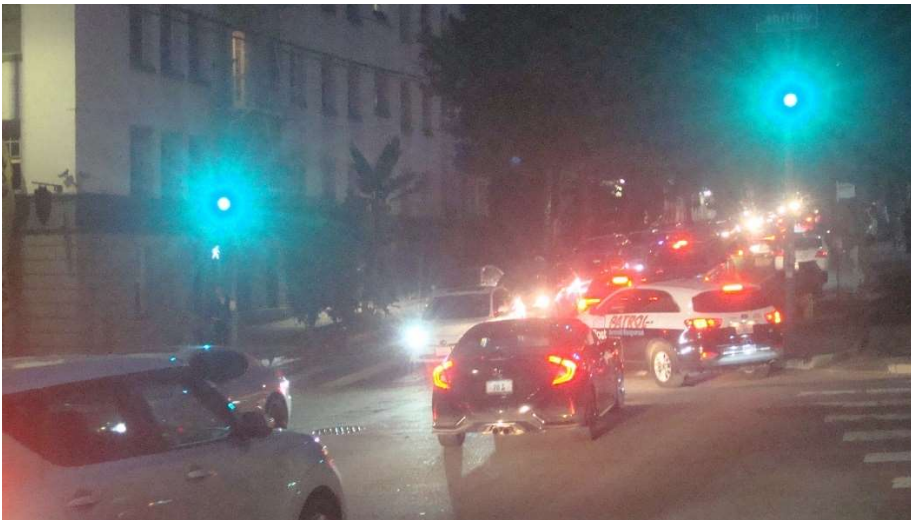
Franklin Avenue Traffic, October 7, 2021, between 6:30 and 7:00 pm



Franklin/Cahuenga, Westbound



Franklin/Whitley, Westbound



Franklin/Whitley, Westbound



Franklin/Whitley, Westbound

Franklin Avenue Traffic, October 9, 2021, between 5:45 and 6:00 pm



Franklin/Cahuenga, Westbound



Franklin/Whitley, Westbound



6555 Franklin, Westbound



Franklin/Whitley, Westbound

9:30 AM to 2:00 PM

Meet at the chess table by
sound wall **2040 Whitley Avenue.**
We'll rollup our sleeves and
beautify the neighborhood.



Councilmember Nithya Raman
and Field Deputy Jorge
Plascencia will attend to do a
Neighboprhood Walk with
Whitley Heights Civic
Association board members in
assessment of Safety and
Quality of Life issues.

In 2005 Tim Swan organized
residents to join forces on a
given weekend morning and
spruce up Whitley Heights. He
called it Clean Sweep. Neighbors
came out: armed with gloves,
sheers, saws, sunblock,
gardening shoes, and elbow
grease. It became a tradition.
With last year's **Sweep** cancelled
due to the pandemic, our
beloved hill needs some lovin'.

Again



After a two-year hiatus, Whitley Heights residents
gathered in person for the neighborhood's annual meeting
on Sept. 12 in the garden of Theo and Bob Primes on
Watsonia Terrace.

About 60 people attended to get an update from city
officials and neighborhood representatives about issues
facing the community. A number of new members were
elected to the Whitley Heights Civic Association, which
meets once a month to discuss issues and problems
needed to be addressed to make our historic
neighborhood a better place to live.

Lynn Grijalva, the outgoing president of the Whitley
Heights Civic Association, noted that the nearly 2-year-old
Covid-19 pandemic has made it hard for people to meet in
person, which is why there was a virtual annual meeting
last year. "But we should be grateful for each other and for
living in an historic neighborhood that is truly unique," she
said.

This year residents' two main concerns have been theft
and homelessness, which were addressed by the three
guest speakers at the event. Here is a summary of what
was discussed.

On the Police Beat

Crime is up and police staff down in Hollywood

The Office of Community Beautification and LACC Clean & Green will provide a support team and truck to haul away debris. They will bring rakes, tools, and large trash cans.

Justice Served



Richard Hong

It has been five years since 41-year-old Richard Hong, who was housesitting at a residence in the 6700 block of Milner Avenue, was bludgeoned to death by a transient. Police said it looked like a burglary gone awry.

Weeks later, Los Angeles police officers arrested Kennon Jamal Buchanan, 27, who fled to Phoenix and was extradited from Arizona.

On Aug. 18, Buchanan was found guilty of first-degree murder in a jury trial in Los Angeles County



Heather Mata

Heather Mata, our Senior Lead Officer with the Los Angeles Police Department, said it has been a tough year for police enforcement, especially in the Hollywood area.

Police officers in the Hollywood division have been cut 80 percent, from about 65 officers to just 12 now, Mata said.

Violent crime in the Hollywood division is through the roof. "Three and a half weeks ago, we led the city in violent crime. Traditionally, violent crime has been the highest in South-Central Los Angeles. A lot of resources have been taken away from the Hollywood division," she explained.

Last year, the city reduced the LAPD budget by \$150 million, promising to put it into social services. At the same time, several Hollywood division police officers were transferred to other areas. "Crime is up in every category except homicide," Mata said.

Mail theft has increased dramatically in the Hollywood Hills area. Because mail theft is a federal crime, the police department formed a task force with federal prosecutors to apprehend mail thieves. So far, three people have been detained. Mata encouraged people to continue sending videos and photos of any crimes occurring, such as mail theft or burglary, because they are evaluated by the police.

Mata said there was a major problem with an

Superior Court. He is scheduled to be sentenced on Oct. 12. He could face life in prison if a special circumstance charge is upheld for committing a murder during a burglary, or he can be sentenced to 25 years to life if that special-circumstance charge is dropped.

The murder on Sept. 23, 2016, sent shock waves through Whitley Heights. A burglary call was made to Los Angeles police at 2 a.m. with officers discovering Hong's body.

He had been housesitting for Canadian TV and radio entertainer George Stroumboulopoulos, who was renting the house but was out of town.

Our community still grieves the tragic loss of kind Richard Hong.

Membership Dues Contributor's List

[Click here.](#)

WHCA reached its goal of \$11,000.

Thank you

apartment complex at 1813-1821 Grace Ave., just south of Franklin Avenue. Even though it is not technically in Whitley Heights, many neighbors were concerned about rowdy behavior going on there.

"In August, police were made aware that there was a violent crime happening in front of the complex (of 16 units)," she said. "People were fighting each other in front of the building and it was moving on to other property."

It turned out there were 30 people living illegally in the complex. On Sept. 4, eight people there were arrested. Mata contacted the property owners, who have evicted the residents and hired a company to secure the property.

Mata has also been made aware of problems with an {unconfirmed} Sober-Living house at 6609 Whitley Terrace and is meeting with the property owners.

Catalytic converter thefts have been rampant throughout the city due to their high resale values. Whitley Heights has not been immune with at least five catalytic converters stolen in the last year.

To deter criminals, Mata said mechanics at Cesar's Auto Body at 6201 Franklin Ave., inscribed motorists' license plates on catalytic converters on Oct. 9.

To report non-emergency crimes or concerns to the police, the best way is to email the front desk at the Hollywood police station where two officers work round the clock. That email is Hollywood@lapd.online.

To file a police report, you can go to www.lapdonline.org, but you cannot attach videos or photos to the reports. Mata said to send her the videos and photos to go with the reports.

New Guy in Town

Communication from Public

Name: Casey Maddren

Date Submitted: 10/30/2021 03:47 PM

Council File No: 21-0627

Comments for Public Posting: I am writing in support of the appeal of the project proposed for 6555 Franklin Ave., ENV-2020-7353-CE. On page 5 of the Appeal Summary, staff acknowledges that the determination letter was incorrect in stating that the project was not in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and staff also acknowledges that the project is in an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone and that the site is subject to liquefaction. The Summary goes on to say, "Staff has revised the CE32 written justification in the project file." Having found only the original CE justification posted on the Council File Management System, I e-mailed City Planning staff to inquire about it. City Planning staff sent me the revised CE justification, which is actually even more problematic than the original. While the Appeal Summary acknowledges the errors in the original version of the CE 32 justification, staff has "revised" the document to eliminate any references to the Very High Fire Severity Hazard Zone, the Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone, and there is still no mention of liquefaction. While the document no longer refers to the Puente Hills Blind Thrust, it makes no mention of the Hollywood Fault, which according to ZIMAS, is only 0.169526712 km away from the project site, or 556 feet. Even more troubling than these "revisions" is the fact that second version of the CE justification does not include any acknowledgement that the document has been revised. It still bears the same date, March 17, 2020. There are no strikeouts or footnotes to indicate that the document has been changed. In other words, in response to clear errors pointed out by the appellant, City Planning staff appears to have gone back and made revisions to the original document that was used to justify the CE without including any indication that revisions had been made. Furthermore, rather than revising the justification to insert the correct information, staff has simply eliminated all the problematic language.