

ARLETA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

City of Los Angeles Department of City
Planning
Attention: Sarah Hounsell
6262 Van Nuys Blvd
Van Nuys, CA 91401

North Valley Area Planning Commission
Attention: Etta Armstrong, CEA I
apcnorthvalley@lacity.org

April 19, 2022

RE: DIR-2021-10765-TOC-HCA / ENV-2021-10766-EAF
ADDRESS: 13906/13920 W Van Nuys Blvd, Arleta, CA 91331

The Arleta Neighborhood Council has concerns regarding this proposed 24-unit apartment complex when it does not provide *parking for all of the new project's residential units*.

First of all, the existing businesses will be displaced so where will these businesses relocate to as the City is increasingly converting some of its industrial-related land uses into residential land use? This is a loss (theft) of tax-generating revenue for the community of Arleta.

Secondly, while it is understandable that this particular project has applied for development using the Transit-Oriented-Communities (TOC) program only **two** units (of the 24) will be deemed as "affordable housing." At a time when rents are exorbitantly high there are no mechanisms in place to keep rents from being astronomical. So a question has to be made... Are the majority of the *newly* built housing units in the City of Los Angeles *rentals or condominiums*? Condominiums would encourage more stability and neighborhood cohesiveness in contrast to the transient nature that rental units provide. Furthermore, home mortgages go down over time but rents go up. Angelenos and the community of Arleta would love to know what *affordable housing* translates into in dollar amounts in a given month with other TOC projects that have already come online elsewhere.

Thirdly, The TOC program purports that "the construction of affordable housing near bus and train stations" will "promote alternatives to car travel."¹ The reality is that neither the TOC program nor any law of the land prohibits anyone from actually *owning a car*; hence, **it is very likely that even the new tenants of this proposed project (that wouldn't have parking spaces in the complex) would also already have or acquire automobiles and introduce them into the surrounding neighborhoods** when only 12 of the proposed 24 units would have only 12 on-site parking spaces; **this defeats the purpose of the TOC program**. Additionally, it is not uncommon for some families to have more than two automobiles per household and there is no doubt that the immediate surrounding neighborhoods'

¹ <https://planning.lacity.org/plans-policies/transit-oriented-communities-incentive-program>

parking spaces will be used as this project's parking overflow. Permit Parking Districts must be installed in **half-mile distance** from any mass transit station should this project continue.

Fourthly, this project is a public safety hazard since it is immediately adjacent to a freeway onramp and it raises the likelihood that collisions between pedestrians/tenants and speeding automobiles will take place. Both the automobile ingress and egress for the property will take place at Van Nuys Blvd and that is problematic (see Fig 1). This is not to proclaim that the existing automotive service facilities' entrance and exit into the project lots are any safer either for the incoming freeway traffic into the adjacent southbound Interstate 5 freeway onramp off of Van Nuys Blvd (see Figure 4).



Figure 1. Rendering of main elevation of proposed project site at 13906 W Van Nuys Blvd. Entrance to parking spaces facing Van Nuys Blvd on first floor highlighted in red outline. Source: G.A. Engineering.

Fifthly, there is a great **assumption** that some of the tenants of this project will solely use public transit. This is derisive as current law enforcement levels are insufficient to ensure the safety of transit riders. In the absence of a dedicated police force posted at each major transit station (and in between stations and/or at bus stops) in order to maintain the peace and a sought after high ridership—public safety in these spaces have been rendered non-existent. All public transit riders, regardless of income

status, are vulnerable to assaults, harassment, provocation for defense/violence, and robberies or lethal altercations in the present circumstances.

Sixthly, a 4-story project (40 feet tall) is completely out of character with the immediate adjacent single-family homes (which are on average 13 feet tall) and homeowners' privacy will be eviscerated (see Fig 2). Trees with a minimum height of 40 feet must be planted along the project's perimeter to mitigate homeowners' privacy.



Figure 2. Proposed project site at 13906 W Van Nuys Blvd, Arleta in relation to surrounding homes with lines of sight shown in red arrows.

Parking and traffic

Some tenants may remain static in their earnings but others (or children who will eventually become adults) will be able to acquire automobiles in the future; but if there are only 12 parking spaces in a project as this one **where will the same upward mobile tenants park should they acquire automobiles?**

Section VI: Automobile Parking, of the TOC guidelines' Base Incentives, indicates that "an Eligible Housing Development, required parking for all residential units—shall not exceed 0.5 spaces per

bedroom."² The surrounding neighborhood blocks⁷ to the rear of the commercial properties⁸ and on the other side of Vena Avenue⁹ have zoning of R1-1-O and are already saturated with automobiles. There will be more motorists from this project that will compete with existing homeowners and their families, and visitors alike, for coveted parking spaces and it is possible that this kind of competition will lead to altercations in the future.

Moreover, with the absence of a park-and-ride lot, it is likely that motorists will use these neighborhoods to also park their vehicles in order to take advantage of Metro's at grade East San Fernando Valley Light-Rail Train (LRT) at Van Nuys Blvd/Arleta Av Station.³ As the LRT materializes in Van Nuys Blvd's median there will be considerable bottlenecks from both entrances and exits into and from the Interstate 5 freeway, aside from the usual motorist traffic, once Van Nuys Blvd becomes single lane traffic in both directions. Emergency vehicles will be completely blocked along the corridor in gridlock or in traffic collisions; see for yourself at Central Av/Washington Blvd in South Central during rush hours where Metro's A line (formerly Blue Line) runs. The traffic will be chaotic at best. (Figure⁵ forthcoming?).

Health Impacts

Health studies have shown that residents living in closer proximity to high traffic roadways are more prone to having adverse health effects due to ambient air pollution. Some of the key health findings have been: reduced lung function in children, increased asthma hospitalizations, and "premature death in elderly individuals with heart disease."⁴ In an article written in the Los Angeles Times in 2017⁵ it was advised that it was particularly:

unhealthful to live near freeways and roads frequented by diesel trucks, which spew many times more harmful gases and particles than cars. Diesel particulate matter, carcinogen-laden soot that deposits deep in the lungs, is responsible for the bulk of the cancer risk from air pollution and more than 1,000 early deaths in California.

Figure⁵ illustrates the number of trucks traveled per day in Southern California freeways. The project site is immediately adjacent to heavily used roadways—that being the Golden State 5 freeway (I-5) where somewhere between 10,000 to 20,000 diesel trucks make use of the freeway in this geography.

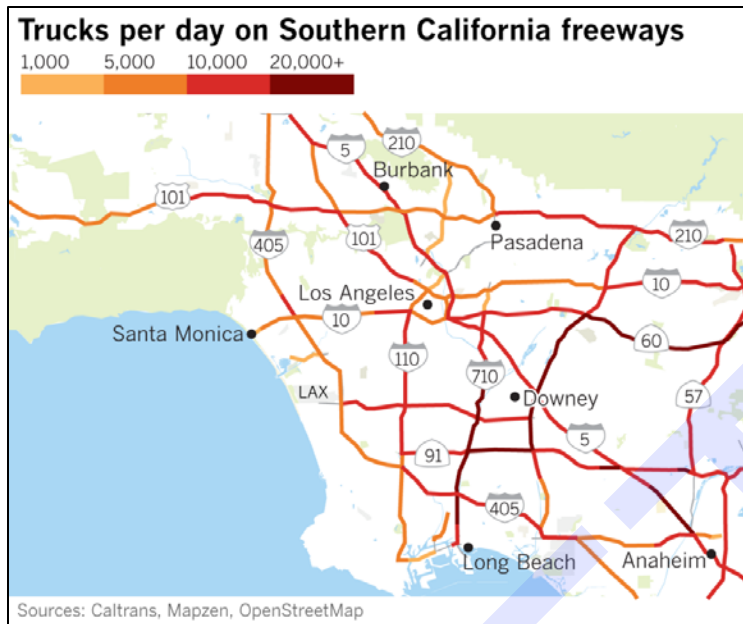


² <https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/39fae0ef-f41d-49cc-9bd2-4e7a2eb528dd/TOCGuidelines.pdf>

³ <https://www.metro.net/projects/east-sfv/>

⁴ <https://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-freeway-pollution-what-you-can-do-20171230-htmllstory.html>



⁹⁵
Figure 3. Trucks per day on Southern California freeways. Date: December 30, 2017. Source: Los Angeles Times.

Existing Businesses



⁶⁸
Figure 4. Northeast corner of Van Nuys Blvd and Vena Av at 13920 W Van Nuys Blvd, Arleta, CA 91331. Date: March 4, 2022. Source: Arleta Neighborhood Council.



Figure 5. Automotive repair tenant at 13906 Van Nuys Blvd, Arleta, CA 91331. Project site adjacent to southbound Interstate 5 freeway. Date: March 3, 2022. Source: Arleta Neighborhood Council.



Figure 6. Commercial tenants at 13920 Van Nuys Blvd, Arleta, CA 91331. Date: March 3, 2022. Source: Arleta Neighborhood Council.

To illustrate that the City of Los Angeles *will steamroll over homeowners' rights and compromise their privacy* and impact people's properties negatively without compensation just look at the massive 6-story residential tower in Figure 7 of the property at **8820 S Sepulveda Eastway** at La Tijera Blvd by Los Angeles International Airport or LAX in Westchester-Playa del Rey. The photograph is not Photoshopped—it is real.



Figure 7. 8820 S. Sepulveda Eastway at La Tijera Blvd in the community of Westchester-Playa del Rey. View from viewer's position looking in a northwest direction towards the single-family homes and at the 6-story structure behind them.

Conclusion

residential

Given:

- the lack of *automatic* assignment of permit parking districts by the City of Los Angeles within a half-mile distance from the incoming Metro Stations to protect homeowners' lifetime investments—double negative if the residents within these areas have to lead this charge all alone to make the parking districts materialize
- only 12 parking spaces for the 24 units. It should be 24 parking spaces for all of the 24 units.
- the displacement of existing businesses
- absence of 40 foot high trees in the proposed project's perimeter that face existing homes
- the cancellation of homeowners' expected aerial privacy in the immediate vicinity due to the proposed residential tower's height

- all levels of government disregard for taxpaying citizens' health impacts when it allows for developments adjacent to heavily used roadways
- and the likelihood of bottleneck traffic along the LRT's vicinity as it comes online caused by entrance and exit into the I-5 freeway and the usual traffic on Van Nuys Blvd once the boulevard becomes single lane traffic in both directions to accommodate the LRT's median.

The Arleta Neighborhood Council cannot support this project.

A constituent mentioned that the state is in a water drought and that that is also a concern as developments are proposed given the critical nature of potable water for all

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