SANTA MONICA CANYON CIVIC ASSOCIATION

October 25, 2011

Mark Cuneo. P.E.
City of Santa Monica, Civil Engineering
1437 4th Street – Suite 300
Santa Monica, CA 90401

California Incline Reconstruction EIR/EA ("Project") Public Comment

Dear Mr. Cuneo,

The Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association is one of the oldest community-based organizations in the state. We were incorporated in 1946 and succeeded the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce. Part of our mission is to represent our community's interests before government agencies.

We have been following the progress of the Project for over five years. The Project has been a matter of great interest to our community. Of course, we are dismayed that throughout this time city representatives have advocated using Santa Monica Canyon streets for "alternate routes" during the construction period. Our canyon should be the "last resort," for rerouted traffic.

The Traffic Management Plan (TMP) is either complete or a work in progress according to conflicting statements in the EIR/EA. We believe it is the latter and urge the city to revise and complete the TMP with robust community participation before the EIR/EA is certified. Traffic counts must be current and the Plan/study area expanded to include Santa Monica Canyon and the coastline areas up to Sunset Blvd. as we requested over four years ago.

Our detailed comments are attached. We look forward to working with the city to facilitate completion of this important infrastructure project as rapidly as possible.

Sincerely yours,

George Wolfberg, President

c- Hon. Bill Rosendahl
Norman Kulla

Attach

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California Incline Bullet Points

1. ACTION ITEMS.

- **Work around-the-clock**. Pursue construction on a 24/7 basis to get the project completed ASAP. The EIR/ES only hints at this. A commitment is needed now.
- **Signage on Highway 101**. Reduce incoming traffic, especially "Z" traffic, by posting signs on Highway 101 to discourage cross-mountain trips to Hwy 1. Since the first day of closure will set the tone for motorists, these signs should be up and working at least one-week prior to closure. This procedure was highly effective during the recent closure of one lane of PCH for the Coastal Interceptor Relief Sewer project between Temescal Canyon Road and Chautauqua Blvd.
- **Moomat Ahiko / Ocean Ave. intersection reconfiguration.** The consultants have done an outstanding job redesigning the configuration of this key intersection. However, the bus stop blocking the right turn to Colorado needs to be moved out of the intersection.
- **Open Appian Way to Pico** for duration of project to siphon traffic away from Moomat Ahiko and McClure tunnel. This was requested in 2007 at the workshop and is totally ignored in the EIR/EA.
- **Gridlock near pier.** Temporarily seal off and relocate the 1550 Pier parking lot exit to PCH. This will eliminate highway turbulence and gridlock from exiting vehicles. Existing traffic diverting cones should be removed.
- **Expanded Traffic Surveillance**. Traffic impacts on Santa Monica Canyon are identified. Unfortunately, there are no mitigation measures for the Canyon. Despite our specific request, the Canyon was not included in the Traffic Management Plan (TMP) area. This must be corrected. We believe the TMP should include partnering with and linking to Caltrans highway video monitoring system to maintain 24-hour traffic surveillance and post messages on routes 101 and 10. These measures must be expanded to include 7th and San Vicente, Ocean Ave and Entrada, Mesa and West Channel Road. The revised TMP must be developed with robust community participation and include specific measures for the Canyon. We are

fearful of the current "trust us," approach. Possible impact on Sunset Blvd. also should be evaluated. The EIR/EA should not move forward without this commitment.

- **On-site traffic assistance**. Assign traffic officers as needed to ease Canyon congestion. Contract/partner with LADOT as necessary to facilitate traffic in Santa Monica Canyon.
- **Redirect traffic flow away from Santa Monica Canyon.** Discourage Westerly traffic on Ocean Ave. between California and San Vicente. Metro is doing an outstanding job with rapid response detour signs for the 405 project and Santa Monica should follow this precedent. Encourage use of 7th Street / Lincoln Blvd. ramp to PCH through all possible means including signage and temporarily converting 7th Street from Wilshire to the Westbound on-ramp to one way. Aggressive measures are needed to encourage motorists going to Malibu to use the I-10 on-ramp to PCH.
- **Provide opportunity for SM Canyon residents to exit their neighborhoods.** Stencil "*KEEP CLEAR*," on Entrada Drive at Kingman Ave., San Lorenzo St., Stassi Lane, and Amalfi Drive. Also, for the duration, install a "*No Left Turn 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM; Mon.-Fri.*" sign at Ocean Ave. Ext. and Mabery Road.

2. EIR/EA ISSUES.

- **Missing, out-of-date, traffic counts.** As mentioned above, the EIR/EA failed to respond to our suggestion that the traffic study area be expanded to include Santa Monica Canyon, which obviously will be negatively impacted by Incline closure. In addition there are no traffic counts for important Santa Monica Canyon intersections—this is EIR-malpractice. Other counts are years out of date. All need to be brought up to current and measured against the "tentative" conclusions.
- **Bicycle Facility on Incline.** The document includes a diagram of the finished roadway. The widened roadway includes a bicycle/pedestrian facility that extends from about 50-feet below Ocean Ave. to the pedestrian bridges that cross above the Incline and PCH. We have shared this design with knowledgeable bicycle advocates who have expressed serious concern about the ability of this plan to function in the real world. Prior to moving forward with the environmental document, it is strongly recommended that the

city convene a workshop/study session to review this plan in detail with members of the bicycling community and experts from Caltrans.

- **Parking Restrictions on Adelaide Drive/4th Street.** Santa Monica Canyon residents could use stairways to walk home instead of fighting gridlock. We have experienced on several occasions Canyon traffic queuing to 14th and San Vicente and 7th to South of Montana during fires and accidents on the 405 freeway. Canyon residents should be permitted to apply for parking permits for the duration of the project to make this option feasible.
- **Population vs. Employment disconnect.** The document's 25-year population/jobs projections fail to recognize the impact of current significant housing efforts. This does not bode well for solving the "reverse" commute which has severely degraded the quality of life of the entire West side. *e.g.,* the Purple Line stops at the VA and cannot be expected to reduce automobile trips to Santa Monica. Even more discouraging, this failure and the lack of current traffic counts reduce public confidence in the entire document.