

LETTER NO. 1 – UNITE HERE LOCAL 11 (DECEMBER 3, 2024)

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Comment No. 1-1

On behalf of UNITE HERE Local 11 (“Local 11”), this office respectfully submits these comments¹ to the City of Inglewood (“City”) regarding the above-referenced proposal to develop a 333,500 square-foot, 13-story mixed-use building that will include 11 condos, a 175-room hotel, 118 extended stay serviced apartments, and retail uses (“Project”) on an approximately 1.98-acre property located at 4200 West Century Boulevard currently developed with a 137-room hotel and associated surface parking lot (proposed for demolition) (“Site”).

In furtherance of the Project, 4200 QOF LLC (“Applicant”) seeks various land use approvals from the City under the Inglewood Municipal Code (“IMC” or “Code”), including: a General Plan Amendment to change the Project Site’s land use designation from Industrial to Commercial / Residential; a Zoning Code Amendment regarding extended-stay hotel use; Approval of a Planned Assembly Development and Special Use Permit for the Project Site to allow certain deviations from various IMC provisions; a Tract Map and Condominium Plan; Site Plan Review; a Sign Agreement to allow the Project’s proposed digital signage; and a Tree Removal Permit (collectively “Entitlements”).² Additionally, for environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”),³ the Applicant seeks approval of an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (“IS/MND”).^{4, 5}

Upon review of the relevant documents, Local 11 has concerns with the Project and the requested Entitlements and IS/MND (collectively “Project Approvals”). Local 11 has a significant interest in the Project given it represents more than 25,000 workers employed in hotels, restaurants, airports, sports arenas, and convention centers throughout Southern California and Phoenix, Arizona.

Response to Comment No. 1-0

This comment introduces the commenter and expresses general concern about the Project. The commenter is referred to Responses to Comments No. 1-2 through No. 1-11.

Comment No. 1-2

As discussed further below, the Project’s IS/MND seems to contain various flaws. First, the IS/MND’s air quality analysis relies on an outdated construction timeline, the land use discussion does not address the Project’s seemingly unprecedented height under the Code, nor does the energy impact analysis provide any specific details about the use of solar panels onsite.

Additionally, the Project's greenhouse gas ("GHG") emissions seem to exceed widely used thresholds, and the IS/MND's consistency evaluation of applicable GHG plans is too cursory. Furthermore, the IS/MND's impact analysis of vehicle miles traveled ("VMT") seems to rely on several unsupported assumptions. Collectively, these flaws may mask impacts that warrant further mitigation—particularly those measures intended to reduce GHGs and VMTs, including but not limited to the following:

1. Including restricted affordable and/or workforce housing to ensure reduced VMTs and mobile emissions,
2. Maximizing onsite solar panel use,
3. Achieving LEED Platinum, and/or achieving Tier 1 or Tier 2 CalGreen status, and
4. Applying a hotel/entertainment-specific mandatory commuter reduction program, with robust transportation demand management ("TDM") strategies, such as:

A specific performance level to be reached (e.g., specific VMT or average daily trip reduction or both);

- A specified participation level (e.g., 100 % employees);
- Participation in guaranteed ride programs;
- Incentives such as employee carpool/vanpool access to preferential parking spaces or hotel valet service or both;
- Full subsidized transit passes for all hotel/entertainment workers and patrons; and
- A dedicated shuttle service for hotel patrons to nearby destinations.

For these reasons, Local 11 respectfully asks the City to stay its action on Project Approvals until the issues discussed below are cured in a CEQA-compliant review.

Response to Comment No. 1-2

This comment asserts that the IS/MND contains flaws related to the air quality, land use and planning, energy, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) analyses, and mitigating impacts. The commenter is referred to Response to Comment No. 1-3 regarding the air quality analysis in the IS/MND; Response to Comment No. 1-4 regarding the zoning code consistency analysis for building height; Response to Comment No. 1-5 regarding the energy analysis and use of solar panels; Response No. 1-6 regarding the GHG analysis; Responses to Comments No. 1-7, No. 1-8, and No. 1-9 regarding the GHG emissions analysis; and Response to Comment No. 1-10 regarding the VMT analysis. Also, regarding mitigating impacts, the commenter is referred to Response to Comment No. 1-11.

Comment No. 1-3

A. AIR QUALITY ANALYSIS MAY BE UTILIZING OUTDATED CONSTRUCTION ASSUMPTIONS

Under CEQA, air quality impacts and their concomitant impacts on human health must be studied in CEQA documents. (See *Bakersfield Citizens for Local Control v. City of Bakersfield* (2004) 124 Cal.App.4th 1184, 1220 [quoting CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2(a)].) Here, the IS/MND states that the Project's construction is anticipated over 26 months. (IS/MND, PDF p. 11, 41, 93.) However, the air quality modeling under CalEEMod appears outdated and shorter, with assumptions of a 21-month construction schedule from November 2022 through August 2024. (APP, PDF pp. 161, 304.) This discrepancy may impact the IS/MND's air quality analysis, which may impact sensitive residential receptors immediately south of the Project Site. (IS/MND, PDF p. 59, 97, 202; APP, PDF p. 60 [SR #1]; PDF p. 803 [Receptor 7].) This assumption may result in an underestimation of air impacts that may warrant further mitigation. It may also infect the IS/MND's other analysis as it relates to GHG impacts (discussed further below).

Response to Comment No. 1-3

This comment asserts that the discrepancy in the Project's construction schedule (i.e., 26 months stated in the text of the IS/MND vs. 21 months assumed in the technical air quality modeling) and the estimated start/finish construction dates could result in an underestimation of the Project's construction air quality impacts and construction-related air quality impacts on sensitive receptors near the Project Site. The technical air quality modeling prepared for the Project estimated the Project's construction emissions based on 29-month construction schedule. The impact analyses and conclusions in the IS/MND are based on the 29-month construction schedule. The 26-month construction schedule noted on page 3-27 in Section 3 (Project Description) is a typo. Additionally, the technical air quality modeling's estimation that the Project's construction schedule would begin in 2022 and end in 2025 (dates that have already passed at the time of this writing), is more conservative for impact determination than if the construction schedule timeframe had been shifted to a future date of 2026-2028 (for example), since the air quality modeling program (CalEEMod) assumes continued improvements in combustion efficiencies over time, leading to the generation of less pollutant emissions. Thus, for all these reasons, the Project's construction pollutant emissions, air quality impacts, including related impacts to sensitive receptors outlined in the IS/MND, are not underestimated, and no additional Project impacts not already identified in the IS/MND would occur.

Comment No. 1-4

B. THE PROJECT'S EXCESSIVE HEIGHT SEEMS INCONSISTENT WITH ZONING CODE

Under CEQA, any inconsistencies between the proposed development and applicable land use plans should be addressed. (CEQA Guidelines § 15125(d); *Pfeiffer v. City of Sunnyvale City Council* (2011) 200 Cal.App.4th 1552, 1566; *Friends of the Eel River v. Sonoma County Water Agency* (2003) 108 Cal.App.4th 859, 881.) Here, the Site is zoned C-2A (Airport Commercial),

and the Project is proposing 13 stories reaching heights up to 150 feet. (IS/MND, PDF p. 18, 44, 191.) This seems inconsistent with the City's zoning code., which limits hotel structures (with a minimum of 50 units) to seven stories or 75 feet. (IMC § 12-24-12.1.) So too, this seems incompatible with the single-story, single-family homes immediately south of the Project Site. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 59, 97, 202; APP, PDF p. 60 [SR #1], p. 803 [Receptor 7].) Thus, a revised CEQA-compliant review should address this potential inconsistency.

Response to Comment No. 1-4

This comment asserts that the Project's proposed height is inconsistent with the City's Zoning Code, is not compatible with the single-story single-family homes south of the Project Site, and that the alleged inconsistency was not addressed in the IS/MND. Under the proposed Commercial/Residential land use designation, there is no maximum building height regulation, and the proposed Project's building height would be authorized pursuant to the requested Planned Assembly Development (PAD) approval. Additionally, as discussed on pages 4-135 and 4-136 of the IS/MND, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has concluded that by following FAA requirements (outlined in Mitigation Measure HAZARDS-1), the height of the Project's building would not have a substantial adverse effect on the safe and efficient utilization of the navigable airspace by aircraft or on the operation of air navigation facilities and as such, the Project would not be a hazard to air navigation.

"Compatibility" of a project with surrounding land uses is not in and of itself an issue required to be addressed under CEQA. To the degree that the Project's height could result in environmental impacts is discussed in detail under the Aesthetics topic in the IS/MND on pages 4-1 through 4-26. As discussed therein, the Project's height would not result in any impacts related to scenic resources and scenic vistas. Under CEQA, potential impacts related visual character/ quality for project's located in urban areas (such as the Project) are based on the project's consistency with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. As stated on page 4-2 of the IS/MND, "The proposed mixed-use building would include residential, hotel, and event space uses within 13 stories, reaching a maximum height of 150 feet, reflecting contemporary architecture and consistent with the use and development standards established by the Project's proposed Commercial Residential land use designation and Planned Assembly Development (PAD) zoning regulations." Table I-1 on pages 4-3 through 4-13 includes all of the applicable guidelines and standards from the City's *Design and Development Standards and Guidelines*. As discussed therein, the Project would be substantially consistent with all of the City's applicable design guidelines and standards. Additionally, the Project would be required to undergo Site Plan Review by the City to ensure the Project complies with the City's design standards and achieves compatibility with the existing built environment. Thus, the Project would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, Project impacts related to scenic quality would be less than significant.

Comment No. 1-5

C. THERE ARE NO SPECIFIC DETAILS ABOUT THE PROJECT'S USE OF SOLAR PANELS THAT MAY INDICATE ENERGY IMPACTS

CEQA requires an EIR to analyze a project's energy consumption. (Pub. Res. Code § 21100(b)(3).) In addition to examining whether there is a "wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources," lead agencies must investigate whether any renewable energy features could be incorporated into the project. (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2(b); *League to Save Lake Tahoe v. County of Placer* (2022) 75 Cal.App.5th 63, 167-168 [duty to investigate renewable energy option is required as part of determining whether project impacts on energy resources are significant].) A project's compliance with building codes may not be enough where they do not address many considerations under Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, like "whether a building should be constructed at all, how large it should be, where it should be located, whether it should incorporate renewable energy resources, or anything else external to the building's envelope." (*California Clean Energy Committee v. City of Woodland* (2014) 225 Cal.App.4th 173, 211.)

Here, the IS/MND states that the Project would not have an energy impact and would be consistent with the City's 2013 Energy and Climate Action Plan ("ECAP"). However, there is no in-depth discussion of whether solar panels will be incorporated. (See e.g., IS/MND, PDF p. 113 [including solar panels in a laundry list of other measures that "may" be incorporated], p. 158 [only stipulating "reservation of solar-ready areas"].) This may indicate that the energy impacts are underestimated and warrant mitigation, which is also relevant to the Project's GHG analysis (discussed below).

Response to Comment No. 1-5

This comment asserts that the IS/MND does not specifically state whether the Project will include the use of solar panels and that this omission may indicate that the Project's energy (and GHG emissions) impacts have been underestimated. The commenter is referred to pages 4-66 through 4-72 of the IS/MND that include a detailed discussion of the Project's consistency with applicable "considerations" outlined in Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines. An "in-depth discussion of whether solar panels will be incorporated" into the Project is not a discussion that is necessary to assess whether the Project would result in "wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources." The estimation of the Project's energy consumption in the IS/MND is conservative and does not reflect the effectiveness of energy conservation measures such as those listed on pages 4-71 and 4-72 of the IS/MND, including the potential use of solar panels, that would reduce the Project's energy consumption. (As of the date of this writing, inclusion of solar panels in nonresidential construction is not mandatory under CALGreen or by the City.) Thus, the energy impacts of the Project have not been underestimated, and because the Project would not result in the "wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources," no mitigation measures are warranted.

Comment No. 1-6

D. MORE ROBUST GHG ANALYSIS IS NEEDED

The California Supreme Court demands a robust GHG analysis to assess a project's impact on climate change. Lead agencies must provide "the contours of their logical argument," leaving no "analytical gaps" in the analysis, and supporting determinations "through substantial evidence and reasoned explanation." (*Center for Biological Diversity v. Cal. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife* ("Newhall Ranch") (2015) 62 Cal.4th 204, 227; see also *Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Assn. of Governments* ("Cleveland II") (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497, 504, 519 [analysis must be "based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data ... stay[ing] in step with evolving scientific knowledge and state regulatory schemes." (Quoting CEQA Guidelines § 15064(b))].) This analysis must include good faith efforts to disclose a project's anticipated emissions and consider consistency with the State's GHG reduction requirements, such as: reducing to 1990 GHG emission levels by 2020 (i.e., AB 32); 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 (i.e., SB 32); and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 (i.e., Executive Order S-3-05). (See CEQA Guidelines § 15064.4.)

Response to Comment No. 1-6

This comment summarizes CEQA requirements for a GHG emissions analysis but is not a comment on the IS/MND. No further response is required.

Comment No. 1-7

1. FAILURE TO APPLY OBJECTIVE BRIGHT LINE AND EFFICIENCY THRESHOLDS

Here, while the IS/MND claims there is "no 'bright line' threshold of significance for GHG emissions" (IS/MND, PDF p. 145), the City has previously used thresholds proposed by South Coast Air Quality Management District ("SCAQMD")—including SCAQMD's Tier 3 bright-line threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr for mixed-use developments and SCAQMD's Tier 4 efficiency standard for year 2035 of 3.0 MTCO₂e/yr per service population (i.e., residents + workers) ("sp") for project-level and 4.1 MTCO₂e/yr/sp for plans.^{6, 7} Also noteworthy, the City has previously used a "net-zero threshold" for other redevelopment projects.⁸

According to the IS/MND's GHG modeling (i.e., CalEEMod), the Site's existing uses generate 2,019 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent per year ("MTCO₂e/yr"), with the proposed Project anticipated to generate 5,662 MTCO₂e/yr, for a net total increase of 3,643 MTCO₂e/yr. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 156-157 [Tbl. VIII-7].) The IS/MND also estimates that the Project will serve 383 residents and 380 jobs for a total service population of 763. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 219 [Tbl. XIV-2].) Accordingly, the Project's net increase in GHG emissions (i.e., 3,643 MTCO₂e/yr) exceeds SCAQMD's Tier 3 bright line threshold for mixed-use projects (i.e., 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr). Additionally, the Project's annual emissions (i.e., 5,662 MTCO₂e/yr) divided by its service population (i.e., 763 residents + employees) results in 7.42 MTCO₂e/yr/sp efficiency level, which exceeds SCAQMD's Tier 4 project-level efficiency standard (i.e., 3.0 MTCO₂e/yr/sp for year 2035). So too, this exceeds the City's prior net zero threshold.

Courts recognize exceeding SCAQMD's unadopted thresholds as substantial evidence that a development will have a significant GHG impact.⁹ Furthermore, SCAQMD's thresholds are similar to other thresholds adopted by other air districts, including Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD,¹⁰ Bay Area AQMD¹¹ Placer County APCD,¹² and San Luis Obispo County APCD¹³—which is further evidence that bright line and efficiency thresholds are “in step with evolving scientific knowledge and state regulatory schemes.” (*Cleveland II*, supra, 3 Cal.5th at 519 [Quoting CEQA Guidelines § 15064(b)].)

Response to Comment No. 1-7

This comment asserts that the IS/MND should have used “SCAQMD's Tier 3 bright line threshold for mixed-use projects (i.e., 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr),” which SCAQMD has not adopted and does not recommend use of, for determining the Project's GHG emissions impact. “There is no iron-clad definition of “significance,” for greenhouse gas emissions. ([Center for Biological Diversity v. Department of Fish & Wildlife, supra, 62 Cal.4th at p. 221.](#)) “[E]ach lead agency [has] broad discretion to determine significance thresholds,” and the CEQA Guidelines do “not mandate any one particular method to address greenhouse gas emissions.” ([McCann v. City of San Diego \(2021\) 70 Cal.App.5th 51, 91 \[285 Cal.Rptr.3d 175\].](#)) For the Project, the City (as lead agency)

As stated on page 4-103 of the IS/MND, because there is no “bright line” threshold of significance for GHG emissions adopted by the City or SCAQMD, the basis for determining the significance of the Project's GHG emissions impacts in the IS/MND as determined by the City (as the lead agency) for evaluating the Project's impacts related to GHG emissions focuses on consistency of the Project with statewide, regional, and local plans adopted for the purpose of reducing and/or mitigating GHG emissions. As discussed in detail on pages 4-78 through 4-132 in the IS/MND, the Project would be substantially consistency with all applicable statewide, regional, and local plans adopted for the purpose of reducing and/or mitigating GHG emissions, and impacts related to GHG emissions would be less than significant.

Comment No. 1-8

2. CONSISTENCY EVALUATION SEEMS ABBREVIATED

Here, the IS/MND provides a brief evaluation of the Project's consistency with the City's 2013 ECAP citing four generic strategies. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 157-158.) However, there is no discussion of specific “local actions” or “state policies & regulations” or “implementation action[s]” listed in the ECAP for each of the strategies.¹⁴ Nor is there any discussion of the points achieved by the Project for a “fully compliant” ECAP project,¹⁵ as the City has done for another development project.¹⁶

Response to Comment No. 1-8

This comment expresses an opinion that the evaluation of the Project's consistency with the City's 2013 ECAP in the IS/MND is brief. The City's ECAP does not meet the statutory criteria to be considered a qualified CAP, but nonetheless, the consistency of the Project with the applicable strategies outlined in the City's ECAP is discussed in the IS/MND, as the City has

done with other recent CEQA documents. Furthermore, as discussed in Response to Comment No. 1-7, due to the absence of a “bright line” threshold of significance for GHG emissions adopted by the City or SCAQMD, the City as lead agency has determined that the basis for determining the significance of the Project’s GHG emissions impacts focuses on the Project’s consistency with applicable plans, policies, regulations, and requirements related to reducing GHG emissions, of which the ECAP is one such plan.

Comment No. 1-9

Additionally, the IS/MND claims the Project is consistent with SCAG’s adoption of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, primarily relying on the generic description that the Project is a mixed-use development designed to reduce VMTs. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 171-173 [Tbl. VIII-9].) However, the IS/MND CalEEMod estimates the Project would collectively generate 11,536,920 VMTs annually. (APP, PDF p. 170.) Even assuming the 763 service population (discussed supra), the Project would generate 41.42 VMT/sp, which exceeds the 2020 RTP/SCS assumed daily VMT per capita for Los Angeles County (22.2 VMTs in base year 2016 to 19.2 VMTs in 2045 under plan).¹⁷ This may indicate the Project is inconsistent with the RTP/SCS.

In sum, exceedances of SCAQMD’s thresholds and potential conflicts with plans may indicate significant GHG impacts that warrant further mitigation.

Response to Comment No. 1-9

This comment asserts that the Project’s VMT is 41.42 per “service population” that exceeds SCAG’s projected 22.2 (2016)/21.4 (2020)/19.7 (2035) VMT per capita for Los Angeles County. The 41.42/capita/day VMT calculation is based on the very conservative annual VMT estimation of 11,536,920 total annual VMT made in CalEEMod, the modeling program used to estimate a project’s pollutant emissions. The CalEEMod VMT estimation for the Project is based on default VMT values in CalEEMod that were not overridden to reflect a more accurate VMT estimation for the Project when the modeling was conducted for the IS/MND. The more conservative CalEEMod VMT calculations for the Project were used in the IS/MND’s Air Quality and GHG Emissions analyses to allow for a conservative analysis. As discussed in detail on pages 4-207 and 4-208 the IS/MND, the Project’s residential VMT per capita is 8.81 (with PDF-1), with an employment VMT per employee of 14.39 (with PDF-1), respectively. Thus, the Project’s VMT per capita/employee is much lower than SCAG’s projected VMT preferences. As a result, the Project is not inconsistent with SCAG’s RTP/SCS.

Comment No. 1-10

E. VMT AND TRAFFIC ASSUMPTIONS SEEM UNSUBSTANTIATED

CEQA requires analysis of VMT traffic impacts related to a project. (See *Kings County Farm Bureau v. Hanford* (1990) 221 Cal.App.3d 692, 727.) In particular, CEQA requires analysis of project-related traffic impacts in a manner that does not minimize cumulative impacts. (See e.g., *Cleveland III*, 17 Cal.App.5th at 444-445 [on remand, traffic analysis based on methodology with

known data gaps that underestimated traffic impacts necessarily prejudiced informed public participation and decisionmaking]; *Kings County Farm Bureau*, supra at 718, 727 [rejecting determination that less than one percent of area emissions was less than significant because analysis improperly focused on the project-specific impacts and did not properly consider the collective effect of the relevant projects on air quality]; *Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara* (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1072 [upholding analysis under “stringent cumulative-impact threshold”]; *Al Larson Boat Shop, Inc. v. Board of Harbor Comm’rs*, (1993) 18 Cal.App.4th 729, 749 [upholding analysis where cumulative impacts were not minimized or ignored].) The relevant inquiry is not only the relative amount of increased traffic that the Project will cause but whether any additional amount of Project traffic should be considered significant in light of an already serious problem. (See *Los Angeles Unified School District v. City of Los Angeles* (1997) 58 Cal.App.4th 1019, 1025.)

Here, the IS/MND estimated the Project’s traffic generation utilizing traffic rates based on the assumption that the Project included 118 apartment dwelling units (using ITE code 221 for multi-family housing), 11 condos (same), and 175 hotel rooms (ITE code 310 for hotels). (IS/MND, PDF p. 246.) However, the IS/MND characterizes the Project’s apartment dwelling units as “118 ‘serviced apartment’ extended stay hotel rooms” (id., at PDF p. 11, 18-19), which are anticipated to be occupied only part-time associated with sports teams, leagues, concert promoters, and other nearby entertainment venues (e.g., SoFi Stadium, Intuit Dome, YouTube Theater, Forum, etc.) (id., at PDF pp. 219, 249). These are not “primary places of residence” and will be occupied only on an intermittent basis. (Id., at PDF p. 19 [fn 3].) However, there is no proposed condition of approval restricting occupants/tenants to those working at nearby locations, nor are these units considered workforce housing for onsite employees. These units seem indistinguishable from extended-stay hotel units, which should be analyzed as such under ITE code 310 for hotel use (i.e., 8.36 trips per unit) versus ITE code 221 for mid-rise multi-family (i.e., 4.54 trips per dwelling unit). (APP, PDF pp. 880-881 [Traffic Study Tbl. 5-1].) Furthermore, because extended-stay is not a permanent housing but instead temporary lodging for hotel guests, the service population may need to be revised to remove the hotel guests that are being counted as residents under the IS/MND (i.e., “2.97 persons per household”) (IS/MND, PDF p. 219 [Tbl. XIV-2]), and consider only the employees generated by the hotel component (discussed further below).

Additionally, for the 175 hotel guest rooms, the IS/MND’s VMT analysis relies on an employment generation assumption of 12 employees per 10 hotel guestrooms (1.2 per unit) and four employees per 1,000 square feet of floor area of event/entertainment uses. (IS/MND, PDF p. 92, 219, 250; APP, PDF p. 887.) However, no facts or other evidence have been provided to support this assumption. In contrast, other traffic experts have opined on other developments that the ITE trip rate for hotel use (i.e., ITE code 310) generates one employee per two hotel rooms (i.e., 0.5 employees per unit).¹⁸ This one worker per two hotel rooms is also consistent with the City of Los Angeles VMT assumptions about job generation.¹⁹ Overestimating the number of employees could artificially reduce the number VMTs per employee metric in some instances. So too, inaccurate employee assumptions could infect the VMT equivalency assumptions (discussed below).

Furthermore, the IS/MND relies on an office equivalency formula claiming the general office employment VMT is similar to hotel and event/entertainment space employment VMT. (IS/MND, PDF p. 250; APP, PDF p. 887.) However, office projects tend to generate the majority of their

VMTs by employees, whereas hotels and regional entertainment uses tend generate the majority of their VMTs from non-employee patrons.²⁰ Here, the VMT analysis does not consider the VMTs generated by the hotel/event/entertainment patrons. Also, the IS/MND does not explain where the hotel-to-office formula's 10.84 trips is derived. (Id.)

In sum, these assumptions seem unsubstantiated, and the IS/MND does not provide the fundamental data justifying these assumptions. Not only should this be disclosed, but the City should also consider the best available data about job generation and VMTs, including but not limited to similarly situated uses in the City, such as the existing 137-room hotel operation on the Project Site. This and other City hotels and event centers should be inventoried and considered when making assumptions about the proposed VMTs and vehicle trips associated with the Project. Additionally, the City should consider the hotel/event patron VMTs, which are inherently "event center and regional serving retail" and, thus, subject to the stated no net increase VMT threshold. (IS/MND, PDF p. 249.) Ultimately, the current VMT analysis may have resulted in traffic/VMT impacts being underestimated and warranting further mitigation.

Response to Comment No. 1-00

This comment asserts that the VMT and traffic assumptions used in the traffic analysis for the Project are unsubstantiated. As described in the attached response memorandum from Linscott, Law and Greenspan, the Project's traffic engineer, the trip generation forecast for the Project (refer to Table XVII-2 on page 4-204 of the IS/MND) conservatively assumes that the 118 proposed apartment dwelling units would be occupied on a full-time basis, when the likelihood would be that the units would be occupied on a part-time basis. However, no reductions were made to the trip generation forecast or VMT to account for the units being occupied on a part-time basis. Furthermore, while not primary places of residence, the 118 units would be utilized as a place of residence for those staying in the units, with primary trips conservatively assumed to being made to and from work. The VMT analysis provided in the IS/MND does not assume any reduction in vehicle travel lengths that may occur related to Project residents working at nearby locations.

Regarding hotel employees and trip generation rates, the City, as the Lead Agency under CEQA, is responsible for providing the guidance related to the preparation of the VMT analysis for the Project. While other jurisdictions have their own guidance, the City is responsible for setting their own standards. City staff provided the employment generation factors utilized in the VMT analysis.

Regarding the office equivalency formula, Per Section 3.2.3 of the City's *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines* (TIA Guidelines), VMT screening and impact evaluation for hotel projects should be evaluated based on travel patterns of hotel employees (i.e., Employment VMT per Employee). Employee trip patterns related to the hotel and event/entertainment component of the Project are assumed to be similar to office uses, where employees primarily travel from home to work and back. The Project's event/entertainment component is an ancillary use to the hotel, and therefore, its employment is directly associated. Furthermore, the event/entertainment component is expected to be an ancillary use of the Project, intended to serve hotel guests, as well as guests and visitors of other nearby entertainment venues (e.g., SoFi Stadium, Intuit Dome, YouTube Theater, Forum, etc.). It is not intended or expected to be a standalone regional attraction.

City staff directed LLG to prepare the VMT analysis for the hotel and event/entertainment components of the Project based on the office equivalency methodology provided in the TIA, including the 10.84 trip factor, which is equal to the average daily trip rate for ITE Land Use Code 710 (General Office Building), of 10.84 trips per 1,000 square feet of floor area.

Comment No. 1-11

F. STRONGER MITIGATION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

Here, the IS/MND applies no energy or GHG mitigation (IS/MND, PDF pp. 108/, 120) and applies minimal traffic-related design features and mitigation for traffic impacts, including PDF-1 Promotions and Marketing TDM Strategy 4-N (i.e., passive education/promotion materials) and mitigation measure TRAFFIC-1 (minimum of \$0.75 per day transit subsidy to a minimum of 30 percent of the Project's hotel and event and entertainment employees). (IS/MND, PDF pp. 41, 249, 251.) The above-mentioned issues may have resulted in underestimated impacts that warrant additional mitigation, such as those numerous feasible mitigations intended to reduce GHGs and VMTs recommended by SCAG, SCAQMD, California Air Pollution Control Officers Association ("**CAPCOA**"), California Air Resources Board ("**CARB**"), and the Office of Planning Research ("**OPR**"),^{21, 22} including but not limited to:

1. Including restricted affordable housing or workforce housing units to ensure reduced VMTs and mobile emissions,
2. maximizing onsite solar panel use,
3. achieving LEED Platinum, and/or achieving Tier 1 or Tier 2 CalGreen status, and
4. applying a hotel/entertainment-specific mandatory commuter reduction program, which could include:
 - A specific performance level to be reached (e.g., specific VMT or average daily trip reduction or both);
 - A specified participation level (e.g., 100 % employees);
 - Participation in guaranteed ride programs;
 - Incentives such as employee carpool/vanpool access to preferential parking spaces or hotel valet service or both;
 - Subsidized transit passes for hotel workers and patrons; and
 - A dedicated shuttle service for hotel patrons toward nearby destinations.²³

Response to Comment No. 1-01

This comment asserts that mitigation is required for the Project's GHG emissions and VMT impacts. Regarding the Project's GHG emissions impacts, no significant GHG emissions impacts were identified in the IS/MND, and therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

As described in the attached response memorandum from Linscott, Law and Greenspan, the Project's traffic engineer, and as discussed on page 4-209 of the IS/MND, prior to mitigation, the estimated employment VMT per Employee for the Project's hotel and event and entertainment components is 15.28 employment VMT per Employee. This exceeds the City's significance threshold of 14.46 employment VMT per Employee. As discussed on the same page of the IS/MND, implementing the Transit Subsidies TDM strategy (Strategy 1-C) as a mitigation measure (Mitigation Measure TRAFFIC-1) (specifically a minimum daily transit subsidy of \$0.75 offered to a minimum of 30 percent of employees) reduces the Project's employment VMT per Employee to 14.39 VMT per Employee and would fall below the City's threshold of 14.46 VMT per Employee. Therefore, the impact is mitigated to a less-than-significant level, and no additional mitigation measures are required.

In addition to implementing the Transit Subsidies TDM strategy as a mitigation measure, the Project would implement the Promotions and Marketing TDM strategy as a PDF (Strategy 4-N), with 100 percent of employees participating. As shown in Table 7-1 of the Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) prepared for the Project, included in Appendix C to the IS/MND, with the Promotions and Marketing TDM strategy implemented as a PDF in addition to the Transit Subsidies TDM strategy implemented as a mitigation measure, the Project's VMT per Employee remains at 14.39 VMT per employee, less than the City's threshold of 14.46 VMT per Employee.

Comment No. 1-12

In conclusion, Local 11 is concerned with the Project's potentially significant impact on air quality, land use consistency, energy, GHG, and VMT impacts. Collectively, the IS/MND errors discussed herein could mask potentially significant impacts that can be lessened via project-specific mitigation added to the Project. Until such time, the MND fails to incorporate applicable mitigation contrary to CEQA. Thus, Local 11 respectfully asks the City to stay action on the Project Approvals until the various errors are cured in a CEQA-compliant environmental review that incorporates additional mitigation, including those referenced above.

Local 11 reserves the right to supplement these comments at future hearings and proceedings for this Project. (See *Galante Vineyards v. Monterey Peninsula Water Management Dist.* (1997) 60 Cal.App.4th 1109, 1120 [CEQA litigation not limited only to claims made during EIR comment period].) This office requests, to the extent not already on the notice list, all notices of CEQA actions and any approvals, Project CEQA determinations, or public hearings to be held on the Project under state or local law requiring local agencies to mail such notices to any person who has filed a written request for them. (See Pub. Res. Code §§, 21092.2, 21167(f) and Gov. Code § 65092.) Please send notice by electronic and regular mail to the address identified on page one of this letter.

Thank you for consideration of these comments. We ask that this letter be placed in the administrative record for the Project.

Response to Comment No. 1-02

This comment includes closing statements for the comment letter. The commenter is referred to Responses to Comments No. 1-2 through 1-11.

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December 3, 2024

VIA EMAIL:

Christine Rivera, Planner (crivera@cityofinglewood.org)
City of Inglewood

RE: IS/MND Comments 4200 Century Blvd. Project

Dear Christine Rivera and Planning Department:

On behalf of UNITE HERE Local 11 ("Local 11"), this office respectfully submits these comments¹ to the City of Inglewood ("City") regarding the above-referenced proposal to develop a 333,500 square-foot, 13-story mixed-use building that will include 11 condos, a 175-room hotel, 118 extended stay serviced apartments, and retail uses ("Project") on an approximately 1.98-acre property located at 4200 West Century Boulevard currently developed with a 137-room hotel and associated surface parking lot (proposed for demolition) ("Site").

In furtherance of the Project, 4200 QOF LLC ("Applicant") seeks various land use approvals from the City under the Inglewood Municipal Code ("IMC" or "Code"), including: a General Plan Amendment to change the Project Site's land use designation from Industrial to Commercial / Residential; a Zoning Code Amendment regarding extended-stay hotel use; Approval of a Planned Assembly Development and Special Use Permit for the Project Site to allow certain deviations from various IMC provisions; a Tract Map and Condominium Plan; Site Plan Review; a Sign Agreement to allow the Project's proposed digital signage; and a Tree Removal Permit (collectively "Entitlements").² Additionally, for environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"),³ the Applicant seeks approval of an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration ("IS/MND").^{4, 5}

Upon review of the relevant documents, Local 11 has concerns with the Project and the requested Entitlements and IS/MND (collectively "Project Approvals"). Local 11 has a significant interest in the Project given it represents more than 25,000 workers employed in hotels, restaurants, airports, sports arenas, and convention centers throughout Southern California and Phoenix, Arizona.

As discussed further below, the Project's IS/MND seems to contain various flaws. First, the IS/MND's air quality analysis relies on an outdated construction timeline, the land use discussion does not address the Project's seemingly unprecedented height under the Code, nor does the energy impact analysis provide any specific details about the use of solar panels onsite.

¹ Herein, page citations are either the stated pagination (i.e., "p. #") or PDF-page location (i.e., "PDF p. #")

² See IS/MND, PDF pp. 42 (p. 3-28).

³ Pub. Res. Code § 21000 et seq. and 14 Cal. Code Regs. ("CEQA Guidelines") § 15000 et seq.

⁴ https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/308361-1/attachment/ERPijRe-JPwiCw2jJ2ZvQDkdzo9kFFVOAhBPTpcYDNLphkgq7iyB4ZzSXJc7TagzLLBxDezwX_y-k4oH0.

⁵ Inclusive of appendices A through J ("APP"), retrieved from City website. (See <https://www.cityofinglewood.org/DocumentCenter/View/20824/MND--NOI-Appendices-A-thru-J>.)

Additionally, the Project's greenhouse gas ("GHG") emissions seem to exceed widely used thresholds, and the IS/MND's consistency evaluation of applicable GHG plans is too cursory. Furthermore, the IS/MND's impact analysis of vehicle miles traveled ("VMT") seems to rely on several unsupported assumptions. Collectively, these flaws may mask impacts that warrant further mitigation—particularly those measures intended to reduce GHGs and VMTs, including but not limited to the following:

1. Including restricted affordable and/or workforce housing to ensure reduced VMTs and mobile emissions,
2. Maximizing onsite solar panel use,
3. Achieving LEED Platinum, and/or achieving Tier 1 or Tier 2 CalGreen status, and
4. Applying a hotel/entertainment-specific mandatory commuter reduction program, with robust transportation demand management ("TDM") strategies, such as:
 - A specific performance level to be reached (e.g., specific VMT or average daily trip reduction or both);
 - A specified participation level (e.g., 100 % employees);
 - Participation in guaranteed ride programs;
 - Incentives such as employee carpool/vanpool access to preferential parking spaces or hotel valet service or both;
 - Full subsidized transit passes for all hotel/entertainment workers and patrons; and
 - A dedicated shuttle service for hotel patrons to nearby destinations.

For these reasons, Local 11 respectfully asks the City to stay its action on Project Approvals until the issues discussed below are cured in a CEQA-compliant review.

A. AIR QUALITY ANALYSIS MAY BE UTILIZING OUTDATED CONSTRUCTION ASSUMPTIONS

Under CEQA, air quality impacts and their concomitant impacts on human health must be studied in CEQA documents. (See *Bakersfield Citizens for Local Control v. City of Bakersfield* (2004) 124 Cal.App.4th 1184, 1220 [quoting CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2(a)].) Here, the IS/MND states that the Project's construction is anticipated over 26 months. (IS/MND, PDF p. 11, 41, 93.) However, the air quality modeling under CalEEMod appears outdated and shorter, with assumptions of a 21-month construction schedule from November 2022 through August 2024. (APP, PDF pp. 161, 304.) This discrepancy may impact the IS/MND's air quality analysis, which may impact sensitive residential receptors immediately south of the Project Site. (IS/MND, PDF p. 59, 97, 202; APP, PDF p. 60 [SR #1]; PDF p. 803 [Receptor 7].) This assumption may result in an underestimation of air impacts that may warrant further mitigation. It may also infect the IS/MND's other analysis as it relates to GHG impacts (discussed further below).

B. THE PROJECT'S EXCESSIVE HEIGHT SEEMS INCONSISTENT WITH ZONING CODE

Under CEQA, any inconsistencies between the proposed development and applicable land use plans should be addressed. (CEQA Guidelines § 15125(d); *Pfeiffer v. City of Sunnyvale City Council* (2011) 200 Cal.App.4th 1552, 1566; *Friends of the Eel River v. Sonoma County Water Agency* (2003) 108 Cal.App.4th 859, 881.) Here, the Site is zoned C-2A (Airport Commercial), and the Project is proposing 13 stories reaching heights up to 150 feet. (IS/MND, PDF p. 18, 44, 191.) This seems inconsistent with the City's zoning code, which limits hotel structures (with a minimum of

50 units) to seven stories or 75 feet. (IMC § 12-24-12.1.) So too, this seems incompatible with the single-story, single-family homes immediately south of the Project Site. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 59, 97, 202; APP, PDF p. 60 [SR #1], p. 803 [Receptor 7].) Thus, a revised CEQA-compliant review should address this potential inconsistency.

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C. THERE ARE NO SPECIFIC DETAILS ABOUT THE PROJECT'S USE OF SOLAR PANELS THAT MAY INDICATE ENERGY IMPACTS

CEQA requires an EIR to analyze a project's energy consumption. (Pub. Res. Code § 21100(b)(3).) In addition to examining whether there is a "wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources," lead agencies must investigate whether any renewable energy features could be incorporated into the project. (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2(b); *League to Save Lake Tahoe v. County of Placer* (2022) 75 Cal.App.5th 63, 167-168 [duty to investigate renewable energy option is required as part of determining whether project impacts on energy resources are significant].) A project's compliance with building codes may not be enough where they do not address many considerations under Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, like "whether a building should be constructed at all, how large it should be, where it should be located, whether it should incorporate renewable energy resources, or anything else external to the building's envelope." (*California Clean Energy Committee v. City of Woodland* (2014) 225 Cal.App.4th 173, 211.)

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Here, the IS/MND states that the Project would not have an energy impact and would be consistent with the City's 2013 Energy and Climate Action Plan ("ECAP"). However, there is no in-depth discussion of whether solar panels will be incorporated. (See e.g., IS/MND, PDF p. 113 [including solar panels in a laundry list of other measures that "may" be incorporated], p. 158 [only stipulating "reservation of solar-ready areas"].) This may indicate that the energy impacts are underestimated and warrant mitigation, which is also relevant to the Project's GHG analysis (discussed below).

D. MORE ROBUST GHG ANALYSIS IS NEEDED

The California Supreme Court demands a robust GHG analysis to assess a project's impact on climate change. Lead agencies must provide "the contours of their logical argument," leaving no "analytical gaps" in the analysis, and supporting determinations "through substantial evidence and reasoned explanation." (*Center for Biological Diversity v. Cal. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife* ("Newhall Ranch") (2015) 62 Cal.4th 204, 227; see also *Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Assn. of Governments* ("Cleveland II") (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497, 504, 519 [analysis must be "based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data ... stay[ing] in step with evolving scientific knowledge and state regulatory schemes." (Quoting CEQA Guidelines § 15064(b))].) This analysis must include good faith efforts to disclose a project's anticipated emissions and consider consistency with the State's GHG reduction requirements, such as: reducing to 1990 GHG emission levels by 2020 (i.e., AB 32); 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 (i.e., SB 32); and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 (i.e., Executive Order S-3-05). (See CEQA Guidelines § 15064.4.)

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1. FAILURE TO APPLY OBJECTIVE BRIGHT LINE AND EFFICIENCY THRESHOLDS

Here, while the IS/MND claims there is “no ‘bright line’ threshold of significance for GHG emissions” (IS/MND, PDF p. 145), the City has previously used thresholds proposed by South Coast Air Quality Management District (“SCAQMD”)—including SCAQMD’s Tier 3 bright-line threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr for mixed-use developments and SCAQMD’s Tier 4 efficiency standard for year 2035 of 3.0 MTCO₂e/yr per service population (i.e., residents + workers) (“sp”) for project-level and 4.1 MTCO₂e/yr/sp for plans.^{6, 7} Also noteworthy, the City has previously used a “net-zero threshold” for other redevelopment projects.⁸

According to the IS/MND’s GHG modeling (i.e., CalEEMod), the Site’s existing uses generate 2,019 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent per year (“MTCO₂e/yr”), with the proposed Project anticipated to generate 5,662 MTCO₂e/yr, for a net total increase of 3,643 MTCO₂e/yr. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 156-157 [Tbl. VIII-7].) The IS/MND also estimates that the Project will serve 383 residents and 380 jobs for a total service population of 763. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 219 [Tbl. XIV-2].) Accordingly, the Project’s net increase in GHG emissions (i.e., 3,643 MTCO₂e/yr) exceeds SCAQMD’s Tier 3 bright line threshold for mixed-use projects (i.e., 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr). Additionally, the Project’s annual emissions (i.e., 5,662 MTCO₂e/yr) divided by its service population (i.e., 763 residents + employees) results in 7.42 MTCO₂e/yr/sp efficiency level, which exceeds SCAQMD’s Tier 4 project-level efficiency standard (i.e., 3.0 MTCO₂e/yr/sp for year 2035). So too, this exceeds the City’s prior net zero threshold.

Courts recognize exceeding SCAQMD’s unadopted thresholds as substantial evidence that a development will have a significant GHG impact.⁹ Furthermore, SCAQMD’s thresholds are similar to other thresholds adopted by other air districts, including Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD,¹⁰ Bay

⁶ See SCAQMD (Oct. 2008) Draft Guidance Document – Interim CEQA GHG Significance Threshold, pp. 3-10 – 3-16, [http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/greenhouse-gases-\(ghg\)-ceqa-significance-thresholds/ghgattachmente.pdf](http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/greenhouse-gases-(ghg)-ceqa-significance-thresholds/ghgattachmente.pdf); see also SCAQMD (12/5/08) Board Letter, p. 5, [http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/greenhouse-gases-\(ghg\)-ceqa-significance-thresholds/ghgboardsynopsis.pdf?sfvrsn=2](http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/greenhouse-gases-(ghg)-ceqa-significance-thresholds/ghgboardsynopsis.pdf?sfvrsn=2); SCAQMD (9/28/10) Minutes for the GHG CEQA Significance Threshold Stakeholder Working Group # 15, [http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/greenhouse-gases-\(ghg\)-ceqa-significance-thresholds/year-2008-2009/ghg-meeting-15/ghg-meeting-15-minutes.pdf](http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/greenhouse-gases-(ghg)-ceqa-significance-thresholds/year-2008-2009/ghg-meeting-15/ghg-meeting-15-minutes.pdf).)

⁷ See e.g., Prairie Station Apartments, Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, PDF pp 36- 37 (Tbl. 3-5 utilizes 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr Tier 3 threshold), https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/282517-2/attachment/9hCt-gCFw9qM5ElMhad_nBRUrOR9Xl5UXKc-HBQkW6k9yCnbLssTrC3Wi0ZheQO069CVQhf7Q5iyWJ1Z0; Westchester/Veterans and Crenshaw/Imperial Transit Oriented Development Plans, Draft EIR, PDF pp. 301-302 (referencing 4.1 MTCO₂e/yr/sp Tier 4 threshold for plan), https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/158703-2/attachment/Xk9FuGgkXDQd8D0yQvC_cel-OibaMXjt9e_D4QivtH0VIFmJfm40vzfDda6Zm0Ui-BzC8uNUbyzc2MJx0;

⁸ See e.g., Inglewood Transit Connector Project, Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report, PDF pp. 664, 669-670, <https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/189318-5/attachment/F5s0pziTOF85aHVJhmL5PQMDhX5UXuIPWfxFn5rhQmrltWy1qz18eImjLXBHSoBA5NRayawLQrdIJE020>; Inglewood Basketball and Entertainment Center, Draft EIR, PDF pp. 594, 621, <https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/60191-3/attachment/a-wQrPYfgqX6rH7PlozmRPEvEaRCdDy9wtEOIK6Lkzx9y2kM5Y76yA2pvL0h1Nhm4o1xu79V9PavU-kk0>.

⁹ *IBC Business Owners for Sensible Development v. City of Irvine* (2023) 88 Cal.App.5th 100, 135

¹⁰ SMAQMD (May 2018) Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County, pp. 6:1-3, 6:10-12 (“(GHG) emissions adversely affect the environment through contributing, on a cumulative basis, to global climate change ... the District recommends that lead agencies address the impacts of climate change on a proposed

Area AQMD,¹¹ Placer County APCD,¹² and San Luis Obispo County APCD¹³—which is further evidence that bright line and efficiency thresholds are “in step with evolving scientific knowledge and state regulatory schemes.” (*Cleveland II*, supra, 3 Cal.5th at 519 [Quoting CEQA Guidelines § 15064(b)].)

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2. CONSISTENCY EVALUATION SEEMS ABBREVIATED

Here, the IS/MND provides a brief evaluation of the Project’s consistency with the City’s 2013 ECAP citing four generic strategies. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 157-158.) However, there is no discussion of specific “local actions” or “state policies & regulations” or “implementation action[s]” listed in the ECAP for each of the strategies.¹⁴ Nor is there any discussion of the points achieved by the Project for a “fully compliant” ECAP project,¹⁵ as the City has done for another development project.¹⁶

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project and its ability to adapt to these changes in CEQA documents ... [thus urging] evaluating whether the GHG emissions associated with a proposed project will be responsible for making a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change.”[emphasis original]], <http://www.airquality.org/LandUseTransportation/Documents/Ch6GHGFinal5-2018.pdf>; see also SMAQMD Thresholds of Significance Table, <http://www.airquality.org/LandUseTransportation/Documents/CH2ThresholdsTable5-2015.pdf>.

¹¹ BAAQMD (May 2017) CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, p. 2:1-4 (“No single project could generate enough GHG emissions to noticeably change the global average temperature [but rather] [t]he combination of GHG emissions from past, present, and future projects contribute substantially to the phenomenon of global climate change and its associated environmental impacts.”), http://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/planning-and-research/ceqa/ceqa_guidelines_may2017-pdf.pdf?la=en.

¹² PCAPCD (Oct. 2016) CEQA thresholds of Significance Justification Report, pp. E-2, 2, 17-22 (“CEQA requires that the lead agency review not only a project’s direct effects on the environment, but also the cumulative impacts of a project and other projects causing related impacts. When the incremental effect of a project is cumulatively considerable, the lead agency must discuss the cumulative impacts in an EIR. [citing CEQA Guidelines § 15064]”), <https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2061/Threshold-Justification-Report-PDF>; see also PCAPCD (11/21/17) CEQA Thresholds and Review Principles, <http://www.placerair.org/landuseandceqa/ceqathresholdsandreviewprinciples>.

¹³ SLOAPCD (Mar. 28, 2012) GHG Threshold and Supporting Evidence, pp. 5, 25-30, 42 (“No single land use project could generate enough GHG emissions to noticeably change the global average temperature. Cumulative GHG emissions, however, contribute to global climate change and its significant adverse environmental impacts. Thus, the primary goal in adopting GHG significance thresholds, analytical methodologies, and mitigation measures is to ensure new land use development provides its fair share of the GHG reductions needed to address cumulative environmental impacts from those emissions.”), <https://storage.googleapis.com/slocleanair-org/images/cms/upload/files/Greenhouse%20Gas%20Thresholds%20and%20Supporting%20Evidence%204-2-2012.pdf>.

¹⁴ See ECAP, PDF pp. 56 (Tbl. 12: Strategy 2-Increase Energy Efficiency), p. 59 (Tbl. 13: Strategy 3- Support Renewable Energy Generation), pp. 63-64 (Tbl. 14: Strategy 4-Improve Transportation Options and Manage Transportation Demand), p. 67 (Tbl. 15: Strategy 5: Reduce Consumption and Waste), pp. 73-80 (Tbl. 17: Inglewood ECAP Implementation Actions for all six strategies), <https://www.cityofinglewood.org/DocumentCenter/View/148/Inglewood-Energy-and-Climate-Action-Plan-ECAP-Adopted-2013?bidId=>.

¹⁵ Ibid., ECAP, PDF pp. 130-135 [20 points for Climate-Ready Development Standards to directly reduce GHG emissions],

¹⁶ See e.g., Market Gateway IS/MND, PDF pp. 98-99 (Tbl. 3.7-3), <https://www.cityofinglewood.org/DocumentCenter/View/6571/ph1pdf?bidId=>;

Additionally, the IS/MND claims the Project is consistent with SCAG's adoption of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, primarily relying on the generic description that the Project is a mixed-use development designed to reduce VMTs. (IS/MND, PDF pp. 171-173 [Tbl. VIII-9].) However, the IS/MND CalEEMod estimates the Project would collectively generate 11,536,920 VMTs annually. (APP, PDF p. 170.) Even assuming the 763 service population (discussed supra), the Project would generate 41.42 VMT/sp, which exceeds the 2020 RTP/SCS assumed daily VMT per capita for Los Angeles County (22.2 VMTs in base year 2016 to 19.2 VMTs in 2045 under plan).¹⁷ This may indicate the Project is inconsistent with the RTP/SCS.

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In sum, exceedances of SCAQMD's thresholds and potential conflicts with plans may indicate significant GHG impacts that warrant further mitigation.

E. VMT AND TRAFFIC ASSUMPTIONS SEEM UNSUBSTANTIATED

CEQA requires analysis of VMT traffic impacts related to a project. (See *Kings County Farm Bureau v. Hanford* (1990) 221 Cal.App.3d 692, 727.) In particular, CEQA requires analysis of project-related traffic impacts in a manner that does not minimize cumulative impacts. (See e.g., *Cleveland III*, 17 Cal.App.5th at 444-445 [on remand, traffic analysis based on methodology with known data gaps that underestimated traffic impacts necessarily prejudiced informed public participation and decisionmaking]; *Kings County Farm Bureau*, supra at 718, 727 [rejecting determination that less than one percent of area emissions was less than significant because analysis improperly focused on the project-specific impacts and did not properly consider the collective effect of the relevant projects on air quality]; *Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara* (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1072 [upholding analysis under "stringent cumulative-impact threshold"]; *Al Larson Boat Shop, Inc. v. Board of Harbor Comm'rs*, (1993) 18 Cal.App.4th 729, 749 [upholding analysis where cumulative impacts were not minimized or ignored].) The relevant inquiry is not only the relative amount of increased traffic that the Project will cause but whether any additional amount of Project traffic should be considered significant in light of an already serious problem. (See *Los Angeles Unified School District v. City of Los Angeles* (1997) 58 Cal.App.4th 1019, 1025.)

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Here, the IS/MND estimated the Project's traffic generation utilizing traffic rates based on the assumption that the Project included 118 apartment dwelling units (using ITE code 221 for multi-family housing), 11 condos (same), and 175 hotel rooms (ITE code 310 for hotels). (IS/MND, PDF p. 246.) However, the IS/MND characterizes the Project's apartment dwelling units as "118 'serviced apartment' extended stay hotel rooms" (id., at PDF p. 11, 18-19), which are anticipated to be occupied only part-time associated with sports teams, leagues, concert promoters, and other nearby entertainment venues (e.g., SoFi Stadium, intuit Dome, YouTube Theater, Forum, etc.) (id., at PDF pp. 219, 249). These are not "primary places of residence" and will be occupied only on an intermittent basis. (Id., at PDF p. 19 [fn 3].) However, there is no proposed condition of approval restricting occupants/tenants to those working at nearby locations, nor are these units considered workforce housing for onsite employees. These units seem indistinguishable from extended-stay hotel units, which should be analyzed as such under ITE code 310 for hotel use (i.e., 8.36 trips per unit) versus ITE code 221 for mid-rise multi-family (i.e., 4.54 trips per dwelling unit). (APP, PDF pp. 880-881 [Traffic Study Tbl. 5-1].) Furthermore, because extended-stay is not a permanent housing

¹⁷ SCAG Connect SoCal 2020 RTP/SCS, PDF p. 122, https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocal-plan_0.pdf?1606001176.

but instead temporary lodging for hotel guests, the service population may need to be revised to remove the hotel guests that are being counted as residents under the IS/MND (i.e., “2.97 persons per household”) (IS/MND, PDF p. 219 [Tbl. XIV-2]), and consider only the employees generated by the hotel component (discussed further below).

Additionally, for the 175 hotel guest rooms, the IS/MND’s VMT analysis relies on an employment generation assumption of 12 employees per 10 hotel guestrooms (1.2 per unit) and four employees per 1,000 square feet of floor area of event/entertainment uses . (IS/MND, PDF p. 92, 219, 250; APP, PDF p. 887.) However, no facts or other evidence have been provided to support this assumption. In contrast, other traffic experts have opined on other developments that the ITE trip rate for hotel use (i.e., ITE code 310) generates one employee per two hotel rooms (i.e., 0.5 employees per unit).¹⁸ This one worker per two hotel rooms is also consistent with the City of Los Angeles VMT assumptions about job generation.¹⁹ Overestimating the number of employees could artificially reduce the number VMTs per employee metric in some instances. So too, inaccurate employee assumptions could infect the VMT equivalency assumptions (discussed below).

Furthermore, the IS/MND relies on an office equivalency formula claiming the general office employment VMT is similar to hotel and event/entertainment space employment VMT. (IS/MND, PDF p. 250; APP, PDF p. 887.) However, office projects tend to generate the majority of their VMTs by employees, whereas hotels and regional entertainment uses tend generate the majority of their VMTs from non-employee patrons.²⁰ Here, the VMT analysis does not consider the VMTs generated by the hotel/event/entertainment patrons. Also, the IS/MND does not explain where the hotel-to-office formula’s 10.84 trips is derived. (Id.)

In sum, these assumptions seem unsubstantiated, and the IS/MND does not provide the fundamental data justifying these assumptions. Not only should this be disclosed, but the City should also consider the best available data about job generation and VMTs, including but not limited to similarly situated uses in the City, such as the existing 137-room hotel operation on the Project Site. This and other City hotels and event centers should be inventoried and considered when making assumptions about the proposed VMTs and vehicle trips associated with the Project. Additionally, the City should consider the hotel/event patron VMTs, which are inherently “event center and regional serving retail” and, thus, subject to the stated no net increase VMT threshold. (IS/MND, PDF p. 249.) Ultimately, the current VMT analysis may have resulted in traffic/VMT impacts being underestimated and warranting further mitigation.

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¹⁸ Woodspring Suites Extended Stay Hotel VMT memo, PDF p. 4, <https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/307008-1/attachment/mORMC4yF23fos1R8ncKVscqWB7jhveG14V3CUUI-QiX0q5mhlwQJDrVK7hEZIYClkfKQMrCfXdsCxCou0>.

¹⁹ City of Los Angeles VMT Calculator Documentation, PDF p. 15-16 (tbl. 1), https://ladot.lacity.gov/sites/default/files/documents/vmt_calculator_documentation-2020.05.18.pdf.

²⁰ See e.g., Ibid., at PDF p. 6 (discussing regional-serving retail and entertainment projects); see also LADOT Traffic Assessment Guide, PDF pp. 18, 20-22 (entertainment projects, event centers, and hotel uses), https://ladot.lacity.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2020-transportation-assessment-guidelines_final_2020.07.27_0.pdf; OPR Technical Advisory, PDF p. 18 (discussing regional-serving retail), https://lci.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf;

F. STRONGER MITIGATION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

Here, the IS/MND applies no energy or GHG mitigation (IS/MND, PDF pp. 108/, 120) and applies minimal traffic-related design features and mitigation for traffic impacts, including PDF-1 Promotions and Marketing TDM Strategy 4-N (i.e., passive education/promotion materials) and mitigation measure TRAFFIC-1 (minimum of \$0.75 per day transit subsidy to a minimum of 30 percent of the Project's hotel and event and entertainment employees). (IS/MND, PDF pp. 41, 249, 251.) The above-mentioned issues may have resulted in underestimated impacts that warrant additional mitigation, such as those numerous feasible mitigations intended to reduce GHGs and VMTs recommended by SCAG, SCAQMD, California Air Pollution Control Officers Association ("CAPCOA"), California Air Resources Board ("CARB"), and the Office of Planning Research ("OPR"),^{21, 22} including but not limited to:

1. Including restricted affordable housing or workforce housing units to ensure reduced VMTs and mobile emissions,
2. maximizing onsite solar panel use,
3. achieving LEED Platinum, and/or achieving Tier 1 or Tier 2 CalGreen status, and
4. applying a hotel/entertainment-specific mandatory commuter reduction program, which could include:
 - A specific performance level to be reached (e.g., specific VMT or average daily trip reduction or both);
 - A specified participation level (e.g., 100 % employees);
 - Participation in guaranteed ride programs;
 - Incentives such as employee carpool/vanpool access to preferential parking spaces or hotel valet service or both;
 - Subsidized transit passes for hotel workers and patrons; and
 - A dedicated shuttle service for hotel patrons toward nearby destinations.²³

In conclusion, Local 11 is concerned with the Project's potentially significant impact on air quality, land use consistency, energy, GHG, and VMT impacts. Collectively, the IS/MND errors discussed herein could mask potentially significant impacts that can be lessened via project-specific mitigation added to the Project. Until such time, the MND fails to incorporate applicable mitigation

²¹ See https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/exhibit-a_connectsocial_peir.pdf?1606004156.

²² SCAG (Dec. 2019) Final Program EIR, pp. 2.0-18 – 2.0-71 (see "project-level mitigation measures" for air quality, GHG, and transportation impacts), https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/fpeir_connectsocial_complete.pdf?1607981618; CARB 2022 Scoping Plan, 4, 7, 24, 29 & Appendix D, pp. 23, <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/ab-32-climate-change-scoping-plan/2022-scoping-plan-documents>; CARB's 2017 Scoping Plan, Appendix B-Local Action, pp. 1-8, 7-9 & Appendix D, p. 2, https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/app_b_local_action_final.pdf; OPR (Dec. 2018) Technical Advisory, pp. 27, https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf; CAPCOA (Dec. 2021) Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity, pp. 31-32, 73, 76, 80-96, https://www.airquality.org/ClimateChange/Documents/Final%20Handbook_AB434.pdf; CAPCOA (Aug. 2010) Quantifying GHGs and Mitigation, pp. 64-74, <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/34123/CAPCOA-2010-GHG-Quantification-PDF>.

²³ See e.g., Santa Monica Municipal Code § 9.5.130(B)(2)(b); <https://www.octa.net/getting-around/rideshare/oc-rideshare/employers/guaranteed-ride-home-program/>; <https://www.ci.healdsburg.ca.us/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/3098?fileID=21731>.

contrary to CEQA. Thus, Local 11 respectfully asks the City to stay action on the Project Approvals until the various errors are cured in a CEQA-compliant environmental review that incorporates additional mitigation, including those referenced above.

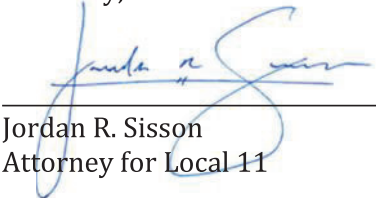
12
(Cont.)

Local 11 reserves the right to supplement these comments at future hearings and proceedings for this Project. (See *Galante Vineyards v. Monterey Peninsula Water Management Dist.* (1997) 60 Cal.App.4th 1109, 1120 [CEQA litigation not limited only to claims made during EIR comment period].) This office requests, to the extent not already on the notice list, all notices of CEQA actions and any approvals, Project CEQA determinations, or public hearings to be held on the Project under state or local law requiring local agencies to mail such notices to any person who has filed a written request for them. (See Pub. Res. Code §§, 21092.2, 21167(f) and Gov. Code § 65092.) Please send notice by electronic and regular mail to the address identified on page one of this letter.

13

Thank you for consideration of these comments. We ask that this letter be placed in the administrative record for the Project.

Sincerely,



Jordan R. Sisson
Attorney for Local 11

LETTER NO. 2 – UNITE HERE LOCAL 11 (DECEMBER 4, 2024)

Jordan R. Sisson
Law Office of Jordan R. Sission
3993 Orange Street, Suite 201
Riverside, CA 92501

Comment No. 2-1

On behalf of UNITE HERE Local 11 ("Local 11"), this office respectfully submits these comments¹ to the City of Inglewood ("City") Planning Commission regarding the above-referenced proposal of a 13-story, 293-room hotel, 11 condos development ("Project") located on an approximately 1.98-acre property currently developed with a 137-room hotel ("Site"). These comments supplement prior comments submitted yesterday regarding the Project's Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration ("IS/MND") and other land use entitlements ("Entitlements") (collectively "Project Approvals"), which are attached hereto.

In short, Local 11 has concerns with the Project's IS/MND compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA").² As thoroughly discussed in Exhibit A, the Project's IS/MND seems to contain various flaws that may mask potential impacts on air quality during construction, land use consistency, energy impacts, greenhouse gas ("GHG"), and vehicle miles traveled ("VMT"). These flaws potentially mask impacts that warrant further mitigation—particularly those measures intended to reduce GHGs and VMTs. Based on the above-referenced item Staff Report dated December 4, 2024, we would add:³

1. Staff report claims the request for higher intensity "in concentrated commercial nodes ... less than half a mile from the Intuit Dome and the sports and entertainment district, including SoFi stadium, Hollywood Park retail, and the Forum." (Staff Report, PDF p. 4 [emphasis added].) Yet, this is mid-block, not adjacent to the district (Id., at PDF p.12 [Attachment 2 Project Plans, p. 2].)
2. Staff report) claims the "General Plan Amendment removes inconsistencies between the zoning designation" (Id., at PDF p. 4.) Yet, the C-2A zone limits height to seven stories (75 feet), which the Project greatly exceeds (i.e., 13 stories. 150 feet). While the Sports Entertainment Overlay may allow 150 feet in height (IMC§ 12-38.95.2), that is limited to an "Event Center Structure" that includes an "Arena" (IMC § 12-38.91), which this does not include. Nor is this an "Event Center Supporting Structure" within the SE overly that is allowed 100 feet in height (IMC§§ 12-38.91 [definitions],12-38.95.2 [height].)
3. Staff Report states additional entitlements are required (e.g., PAD, Tract Map, Site Plan Review, etc.). (Staff Report, PDF p. 5.) However, you are only being asked to approve the General Plan Amendment without these other approvals. This does not allow the Planning Commission to apply necessary conditions of approval that address the potential impacts of this Project. In short, you are placing the cart before the horse.

Response to Comment No. 2-1

This comment addresses land use and zoning items in the City's staff report and is not a comment on the content of the IS/MND. The City will respond to this comment.

Comment No. 2-2

This is a huge entertainment venue with a bowling alley, event space/hall, glove simulator, broadcast studio, rooftop pool, health club, food hall, bar/café shown. (Id at PDF pp. 13, 22- 27, 29.) This should be subject to the City's no net increase VMT threshold.

Response to Comment No. 2-2

This comment claims that the Project should be made subject to a no-net-increase threshold of significance regarding VMT, which the City's TIA Guidelines identify as the appropriate threshold of significance for event centers and regional-serving retail projects. However, as clearly described in the IS/MND's Project Description section, the Project is neither an event center nor a regional-serving retail project, but instead predominantly consists of condominium and both serviced apartment/extended stay and non-extended stay hotel uses, with an ancillary event and entertainment component. Specifically, as reflected in the traffic analysis prepared for the IS/MND, the Project's trip-generating event and entertainment component comprises 42,350 square feet of floor area, or only approximately 12 percent of the overall Project's floor area of 333,500 square feet, the remainder of which comprises residential condominium and serviced apartment/extended-stay and non-extended-stay hotel uses. Therefore, the City, as lead agency under CEQA, has determined that the Project's residential and non-residential components should properly be analyzed for potential VMT impacts under the City's adopted VMT thresholds for such residential and non-residential uses.

Comment No. 2-3

5. The Staff Report does not address the Project's compliance with the C-2A zoning height limits of seven stories and 75 feet (IMC§12-24.12.1), nor other hotel/motel regulations (IMC§ 12-16.1).
6. Zone changes must be recommended by Planning Commission for City Council approval (IMC§12-99.7 &12-99.8). It is unclear whether tonight's Planning Commission is being asked to approve the General Plan Amendment or make a recommendation for the City Council. Please confirm all local rules and policies regarding appeal and/or request for City Council consideration of this action, as required under state law. (See Gov. Code§ 65354.5(a) [request for a hearing by legislative body], § 65355 [legislative body shall hold at least one public hearing].)
7. You are being asked to approve the IS/MND; please also confirm any and all appeal procedures and requirements.

For these reasons, Local 11 respectfully asks the City to stay its action on the IS/MND and General Plan Amendment until the issues discussed herein and the attached comment letter is cured in a CEQA-compliant review that considers additional measures to be incorporated, such as:

1. Including restricted affordable and/or workforce housing to ensure reduced VMTs and mobile emissions,
2. Maximizing onsite solar panel use,
3. Achieving LEED Platinum, and/or achieving Tier 1 or Tier 2 CalGreen status, and
4. Applying a hotel/entertainment-specific mandatory commuter reduction program, with robust transportation demand management ("TDM") strategies, such as:
 - A specific performance level to be reached (e.g., specific VMT or average daily trip reduction or both);
 - A specified participation level (e.g., 100 % employees);
 - Participation in guaranteed ride programs;
 - Incentives such as employee carpool/vanpool access to preferential parking spaces or hotel valet service or both;
 - Full subsidized transit passes for all hotel/entertainment workers and patrons; and
 - A dedicated shuttle service for hotel patrons to nearby destinations.

Thank you for consideration of these comments.

Response to Comment No. 2-3

This comment addresses land use and zoning items in the City's staff report and is not a comment on the content of the IS/MND. The City will respond to this comment. Regarding the commenter's attached second commenter letter, the commenter is referred to Responses to Comments No. 1-1 through 1-12.



MEMORANDUM

To:	Christine Rivera City of Inglewood	Date:	January 10, 2025
From:	David S. Shender, P.E. Jason A. Shender, AICP Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers	LLG Ref:	1-21-0574-1
Subject:	Responses to Comments on the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the 4200 Century Project		

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www.llgengineers.com

Pasadena
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San Diego

Linscott, Law & Greenspan (“LLG”) in receipt of comments¹ prepared by the Law Office of Jordan R. Sisson on behalf of UNITE HERE Local 11 (“Local 11”). The comments were provided in response to the Transportation Impact Analysis² (“TIA”) prepared as part of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (“IS/MND”) for the 4200 Century project (“Project”) located at 4200 W. Century Boulevard and 4229-4233 W. 101st Street (“Project Site”) in the City of Inglewood (“City”). This memorandum provides responses to the individual traffic and transportation-related comments contained in the Local 11 letter.

Provided below are the restated (or paraphrased) comments, followed by a response prepared by LLG:

Comment No. 1

The trip generation forecast utilized rates based on the assumption that the Project included 118 apartment dwelling units, 11 condominiums, and 175 hotel guestrooms. ITE Land Use Code 221 (Multifamily Residential [Mid-Rise]) trip generation average rates were utilized to forecast trips for the 118 apartment dwelling units and 11 condominiums, while ITE Land Use Code 310 (Hotel) trip generation average rates were utilized to forecast trips for the 175 hotel guestrooms. However, the IS/MND characterizes the 118 apartment dwelling units as “serviced apartment” extended stay hotel rooms, which are anticipated to be occupied only part-time associated with sports teams, leagues, concert promoters, and other nearby entertainment venues (e.g., SoFi Stadium, Intuit Dome, YouTube Theater, Forum, etc.). These are not primary places of residence and will be occupied only on an intermittent basis. However, there is no proposed condition of approval restricting occupants/tenants to those working at nearby locations, nor are these units considered workforce housing for onsite employees. These units seem indistinguishable from extended-stay hotel units, which should be analyzed as such under ITE Land Use Code 310 for hotel use.

Response to Comment No. 1

The trip generation forecast prepared for the Project (provided in Table 5-1 of the TIA) conservatively (i.e., “worst case”) assumes that the 118 apartment dwelling units would be occupied on a full-time basis. As discussed in the IS/MND and the TIA, the 118 units

¹ *IS/MND Comments 4200 Century Blvd. Project*, Law Office of Jordan R. Sisson, December 3, 2024.

² *Transportation Impact Analysis – 4200 Century*, Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers, August 16, 2024.

are anticipated to be occupied only on a part-time basis. However, no reductions were made to the trip generation forecast to account for the units being occupied on a part-time basis, and therefore a reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (“VMT”). Furthermore, while not primary places of residence, the 118 units will be utilized as a place of residence for those staying in the units, with primary trips conservatively assumed to being made to and from work. The VMT analysis provided in the IS/MND does not assume any reduction in vehicle travel lengths that may occur related to Project residents working at nearby locations.

Comment No. 2

For the 175 hotel guest rooms, the VMT analysis provided in the IS/MND relies on an employment generation assumption of 12 employees per 10 hotel guestrooms and four employees per 1,000 square feet of floor area of event/entertainment uses. However, no facts or other evidence have been provided to support this assumption. In contrast, other traffic experts have opined on other developments that the ITE trip rate for hotel use (i.e., ITE Land Use Code 310) generates one employee per two hotel rooms (i.e., 0.5 employees per unit). This one worker per two hotel rooms is also consistent with the City of Los Angeles VMT assumptions about job generation.

Response to Comment No. 2

The City, as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), is responsible for providing the guidance related to the preparation of the VMT analysis for the Project. While other jurisdictions (i.e., City of Los Angeles) have their own guidance, the City is responsible for setting their own standards. City staff provided the employment generation factors utilized in the VMT analysis.

Comment No. 3

Furthermore, the VMT analysis provided in the IS/MND relies on an office equivalency formula claiming the general office employment VMT is similar to hotel and event/entertainment space employment VMT. However, office projects tend to generate the majority of their VMT by employees, whereas hotels and regional entertainment uses tend generate the majority of their VMT from non-employee patrons. Here, the VMT analysis does not consider the VMT generated by the hotel/event/entertainment patrons. Also, the IS/MND does not explain where the hotel-to-office formula’s 10.84 trips is derived.

Response to Comment No. 3

Per Section 3.2.3 of the City’s *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines*³ (“TIA Guidelines”), VMT screening and impact evaluation for hotel projects should be evaluated based on travel patterns of hotel employees (i.e., Employment VMT per Employee). Employee trip patterns related to the hotel and event/entertainment component of the Project are assumed to be similar to office uses, where employees primarily travel from home to work and back. The Project’s event/entertainment component is an ancillary use

³ *City of Inglewood Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines*, City of Inglewood Public Works, October 2022.

to the hotel, and therefore, its employment is directly associated. Furthermore, the event/entertainment component is expected to be an ancillary use of the Project, intended to serve hotel guests, as well as guests and visitors of other nearby entertainment venues (e.g., SoFi Stadium, Intuit Dome, YouTube Theater, Forum, etc.). It is not intended or expected to be a standalone regional attraction.

City staff directed LLG to prepare the VMT analysis for the hotel and event/entertainment components of the Project based on the office equivalency methodology provided in the TIA, including the 10.84 trip factor, which is equal to the average daily trip rate for ITE Land Use Code 710 (General Office Building), of 10.84 trips per 1,00 square feet of floor area.

Comment No. 4

The Project applies minimal transportation-related design features and mitigation for transportation impacts, including implementing Promotions and Marketing (TDM Strategy 4-N as a Project Design Feature (“PDF”) and providing a minimum daily transit subsidy (TDM Strategy 1-C) of \$0.75 per day to a minimum of 30% of the Project’s hotel and event and entertainment employees.

Response to Comment No. 4

As discussed in Section 7.3 of the TIA, prior to mitigation, the estimated employment VMT per Employee for the Project’s hotel and event and entertainment components is 15.28 employment VMT per Employee. This exceeds the City’s significance threshold of 14.46 employment VMT per Employee. As discussed in Section 7.4 of the TIA, implementing the Transit Subsidies TDM strategy (Strategy 1-C) as a mitigation measure (specifically a minimum daily transit subsidy of \$0.75 offered to a minimum of 30% of employees) reduces the Project’s employment VMT per Employee to 14.39 VMT per Employee and would fall below the City’s threshold of 14.46 VMT per Employee. Therefore, the impact is mitigated, and no additional mitigation measures would be required.

In addition to implementing the Transit Subsidies TDM strategy as a mitigation measure, the Project will implement the Promotions and Marketing TDM strategy as a PDF (Strategy 4-N), with 100% of employees participating. As shown in Table 7-1 of the TIA, with the Promotions and Marketing TDM strategy implemented as a PDF in addition to the Transit Subsidies TDM strategy implemented as a mitigation measure, the Project’s VMT per Employee remains at 14.39 VMT per employee, less than the City’s threshold of 14.46 VMT per Employee.

cc: File

LAW OFFICE OF JORDAN R. SISSON

LAND USE, ENVIRONMENTAL & MUNICIPAL LAW

3993 Orange Street, Suite 201
Riverside, CA 92501

Office: (951) 405-8127
Direct: (951) 542-2735

jordan@jrsissonlaw.com
www.jrsissonlaw.com

December 4, 2024

VIA EMAIL & HAND DELIVERY:

Planning Commission, City of Inglewood
c/o Christine Rivera, Planner (crivera@cityofinglewood.org)
City Council Chambers, Ninth Floor
1 West Manchester Boulevard
Inglewood, CA 90301

**RE: Item 6a, Planning Commission Hearing Scheduled December 4, 2024;
4200 Century Blvd. Hotel Project (GPA-2022-001)**

Dear Chair Spring and Planning Commissioners:

On behalf of UNITE HERE Local 11 (“Local 11”), this office respectfully submits these comments¹ to the City of Inglewood (“City”) Planning Commission regarding the above-referenced proposal of a 13-story, 293-room hotel, 11 condos development (“Project”) located on an approximately 1.98-acre property currently developed with a 137-room hotel (“Site”). These comments supplement prior comments submitted yesterday regarding the Project’s Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (“IS/MND”) and other land use entitlements (“Entitlements”) (collectively “Project Approvals”), which are attached hereto.

In short, Local 11 has concerns with the Project’s IS/MND compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”).² As thoroughly discussed in Exhibit A, the Project’s IS/MND seems to contain various flaws that may mask potential impacts on air quality during construction, land use consistency, energy impacts, greenhouse gas (“GHG”), and vehicle miles traveled (“VMT”). These flaws potentially mask impacts that warrant further mitigation—particularly those measures intended to reduce GHGs and VMTs. Based on the above-referenced item Staff Report dated December 4, 2024, we would add:³

1. Staff report claims the request for higher intensity “in concentrated commercial nodes ... less than half a mile from the Intuit Dome and the sports and entertainment district, including SoFi stadium, Hollywood Park retail, and the Forum.” (Staff Report, PDF p. 4 [emphasis added].) Yet, this is mid-block, not adjacent to the district. (Id., at PDF p. 12 [Attachment 2 Project Plans, p. 2].)
2. Staff report) claims the “General Plan Amendment removes inconsistencies between the zoning designation” (Id., at PDF p. 4.) Yet, the C-2A zone limits height to seven stories (75 feet), which the Project greatly exceeds (i.e., 13 stories, 150 feet). While the Sports Entertainment Overlay may allow 150 feet in height (IMC § 12-38.95.2), that is limited to an “Event Center Structure” that includes an “Arena” (IMC § 12-38.91), which this does not include. Nor is this an “Event Center Supporting Structure” within the SE overly that is allowed 100 feet in height. (IMC §§ 12-38.91 [definitions], 12-38.95.2 [height].)

¹ Herein, page citations are either the stated pagination (i.e., “p. #”) or PDF-page location (i.e., “PDF p. #”)

² Pub. Res. Code § 21000 et seq. and 14 Cal. Code Regs. (“CEQA Guidelines”) § 15000 et seq.

³ <https://www.cityofinglewood.org/DocumentCenter/View/20846/Item-6a-GPA-2022-001>.

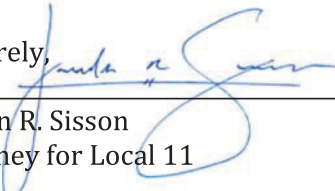
3. Staff Report states additional entitlements are required (e.g., PAD, Tract Map, Site Plan Review, etc.). (Staff Report, PDF p. 5.) However, you are only being asked to approve the General Plan Amendment without these other approvals. This does not allow the Planning Commission to apply necessary conditions of approval that address the potential impacts of this Project. In short, you are placing the cart before the horse.
4. This is a huge entertainment venue with a bowling alley, event space/hall, glove simulator, broadcast studio, rooftop pool, health club, food hall, bar/café shown. (Id at PDF pp. 13, 22-27, 29.) This should be subject to the City's no net increase VMT threshold.
5. The Staff Report does not address the Project's compliance with the C-2A zoning height limits of seven stories and 75 feet (IMC § 12-24.12.1), nor other hotel/motel regulations (IMC § 12-16.1).
6. Zone changes must be recommended by Planning Commission for City Council approval (IMC § 12-99.7 & 12-99.8). It is unclear whether tonight's Planning Commission is being asked to approve the General Plan Amendment or make a recommendation for the City Council. Please confirm all local rules and policies regarding appeal and/or request for City Council consideration of this action, as required under state law. (See Gov. Code § 65354.5(a) [request for a hearing by legislative body], § 65355 [legislative body shall hold at least one public hearing].)
7. You are being asked to approve the IS/MND; please also confirm any and all appeal procedures and requirements.

For these reasons, Local 11 respectfully asks the City to stay its action on the IS/MND and General Plan Amendment until the issues discussed herein and the attached comment letter is cured in a CEQA-compliant review that considers additional measures to be incorporated, such as:

1. Including restricted affordable and/or workforce housing to ensure reduced VMTs and mobile emissions,
2. Maximizing onsite solar panel use,
3. Achieving LEED Platinum, and/or achieving Tier 1 or Tier 2 CalGreen status, and
4. Applying a hotel/entertainment-specific mandatory commuter reduction program, with robust transportation demand management ("TDM") strategies, such as:
 - ☒ A specific performance level to be reached (e.g., specific VMT or average daily trip reduction or both);
 - ☒ A specified participation level (e.g., 100 % employees);
 - ☒ Participation in guaranteed ride programs;
 - ☒ Incentives such as employee carpool/vanpool access to preferential parking spaces or hotel valet service or both;
 - ☒ Full subsidized transit passes for all hotel/entertainment workers and patrons; and
 - ☒ A dedicated shuttle service for hotel patrons to nearby destinations.

Thank you for consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



 Jordan R. Sisson
 Attorney for Local 11

ENCLOSURE Local 11 IS/MND Comments (12/3/24)

LETTER NO. 3 – CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DECEMBER 3, 2024)

Department of Transportation
District 7
100 S. Main Street, MS 16
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Comment No. 3-1

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced project. The Project includes the demolition and removal of all existing uses from the Project Site and the development of the site with a 333,500-square-foot mixed-use building. The building would be 13 stories over one level of subterranean parking, reaching a maximum height of 150 feet, and would reflect a contemporary architectural style. The building would include 11 residential condominium units on levels 9-12; 118 “serviced apartment” extended stay hotel rooms located on levels 7-12; 175 hotel rooms on levels 3-6; and approximately 54,700 square feet of event/entertainment space, hotel lobby/lounge, and hotel-associated bar and restaurant on levels 1-2. The City of Inglewood is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The closest state facilities are SR 105 and I-405. After reviewing the project’s documents, Caltrans has the following comments:

Caltrans aims to reach zero traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries by 2050 as there is a direct link between impact speeds and the likelihood of fatality or serious injury. To reach this goal, Caltrans encourages the Lead Agency to incorporate high-quality Complete Streets infrastructure for the proposed project. The most effective methods to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist exposure to vehicles are through physical design and geometrics, therefore Caltrans recommends the following improvements for this project:

- Promote increased usage of public transportation along W. Century Blvd., as there are several stops and nearby attractions accessible via transit.
- Exceed the minimum requirements of IMC Section 12-42.1 by adopting best practices for bike parking siting and design. For further information, please see [EssentialsofBikeParking_FINA.pdf](#).
- Construct physically separated facilities such as Class IV bikeways, wide sidewalks, curb extensions, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, and reductions in crossing distances through roadway narrowing.
- Include visual indicators such as pedestrian and bicyclist warning signage, flashing beacons, crosswalks, signage, and striping should be used in addition to physical design improvements to indicate to motorists that they can expect to see and yield to people walking or riding bikes.

Response to Comment No. 3-1

This comment summarizes the Project description and identifies pedestrian and transit improvements for the Project. The commenter should note that as noted on page 3-27 in Section 3 (Project Description) of the IS/MND, the Project will “promote increased usage of public transportation along W. Century Blvd.” through utilization of promotional and marketing tools to educate and inform employees and residents about alternative transportation options and the effects of their travel choices. Additionally, as noted on page 4-209 in Section 4 (Environmental Impact Analysis) in Mitigation Measure TRAFFIC-1, the Project will offer a minimum transit subsidy of \$0.75 per day to a minimum of 30 percent of the Project’s hotel and event and entertainment employees. (Implementation of this mitigation measure alone would ensure that Project impacts related to transportation would be less than significant.) The Project will also include bicycle parking in accordance with City regulations as implemented through the requested Planned Assembly Development and Special Use Permit approvals. Further, the Project includes sidewalk improvements along the Project Site frontages and site access points. Finally, a safety assessment of the Project’s access points was included in the IS/MND on pages 4-209 through 4-212. As discussed in detail there, the Project will not result in any significant pedestrian and bicycle safety impacts.

Comment No. 3-2

Additionally, Caltrans requests that the MND provide the Traffic Impact Analysis Report (Appendix I) for the VMT and Traffic analysis. Caltrans recommends limiting large truck travel and construction traffic to off-peak commute hours. A permit for any heavy construction equipment and or materials that require the use of oversized transport vehicles on State highways. If construction traffic is expected to cause issues on any State facilities, please submit a construction traffic control plan detailing potential impacts for Caltrans for review.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jaden Oloresisimo, the project coordinator, at Jaden.Oloresisimo@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS # 07-LA-2024-04685.

Response to Comment No. 3-2

This comment requests the Traffic Impact Analysis Report for the Project. This report is available on the City’s website at:

<https://www.cityofinglewood.org/DocumentCenter/View/20824/MND--NOI-Appendices-A-thru-J>

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 7

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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life*

December 3, 2024

Christine Rivera

City of Inglewood

1 W. Manchester Boulevard, 4th Floor

Inglewood, CA 90301

RE: 4200 Century Mixed-Use Project: MND

GTS # 07-LA-2024-04685

SCH # 2024110250

Vic. SR 105 PM 34.997

I-405 PM 22.241

Dear Christine Rivera:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced project. The Project includes the demolition and removal of all existing uses from the Project Site and the development of the site with a 333,500-square-foot mixed-use building. The building would be 13 stories over one level of subterranean parking, reaching a maximum height of 150 feet, and would reflect a contemporary architectural style. The building would include 11 residential condominium units on levels 9-12; 118 "serviced apartment" extended stay hotel rooms located on levels 7-12; 175 hotel rooms on levels 3-6; and approximately 54,700 square feet of event/entertainment space, hotel lobby/lounge, and hotel-associated bar and restaurant on levels 1-2. The City of Inglewood is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The closest state facilities are SR 105 and I-405. After reviewing the project's documents, Caltrans has the following comments:

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- Promote increased usage of public transportation along W. Century Blvd., as there are several stops and nearby attractions accessible via transit.

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment."

- Exceed the minimum requirements of IMC Section 12-42.1 by adopting best practices for bike parking siting and design. For further information, please see [EssentialsofBikeParking_FINA.pdf](#).
- Construct physically separated facilities such as Class IV bikeways, wide sidewalks, curb extensions, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, and reductions in crossing distances through roadway narrowing.
- Include visual indicators such as pedestrian and bicyclist warning signage, flashing beacons, crosswalks, signage, and striping should be used in addition to physical design improvements to indicate to motorists that they can expect to see and yield to people walking or riding bikes.

1
(Cont.)

Additionally, Caltrans requests that the MND provide the Traffic Impact Analysis Report (Appendix I) for the VMT and Traffic analysis. Caltrans recommends limiting large truck travel and construction traffic to off-peak commute hours. A permit for any heavy construction equipment and or materials that require the use of oversized transport vehicles on State highways. If construction traffic is expected to cause issues on any State facilities, please submit a construction traffic control plan detailing potential impacts for Caltrans for review.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jaden Oloresisimo, the project coordinator, at Jaden.Oloresisimo@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS # 07-LA-2024-04685.

Sincerely,

Anthony Higgins

Anthony Higgins
Acting LDR Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse