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LAND USE ENTITLEMENTS □ LITIGATION □ MUNICIPAL ADVOCACY

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May 17, 2019

VIA EMAIL AND HAND DELIVERY

Chair Harris-Dawson and Honorable Members of the Planning  
and Land Use Management Committee  
Los Angeles City Council  
Attn: Rita Moreno, Committee Clerk  
200 N. Spring Street, Room 375  
Los Angeles, Calif. 90012

*clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org*

RE: The Fig Project – Council File Nos. 19-0370 and 19-0370-S1, to be heard by the  
PLUM Committee on May 21, 2019

Dear Chair Harris-Dawson and Honorable Committee Members,

We represent the Ventus Group (the “Applicant”), which is seeking to develop the mixed-use project at 3900 South Figueroa Street (the “Project”) that is before your Committee at its May 21, 2019 meeting. The Project provides a number of significant City and community benefits including provision of 186 new multi-family dwelling units including up to 82 units affordable to low- and very low-income families, 222 new student housing units near USC and the Expo Line, new hotel rooms across from Exposition Park, new community-serving retail and restaurant uses, and new office space in place of a significantly underutilized site. The Project enjoys significant public support, including from over 1,250 individual supporters who live near the Project, as well as from the office of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, the California Science Center, and many other businesses and community stakeholders. The Project is also supported by UNITE HERE and the Building Trades Council.

The City Planning Commission approved or recommended approval of each of the Project’s requested entitlements; however, despite overwhelming support for the Project, two opponents appealed the City Planning Commission’s actions to your Committee. Detailed responses to those appeals were provided to the Committee by the Department of City Planning, which found that they have no merit. Accordingly, we respectfully request that you deny the appeals and recommend approval of this much needed Project.

Furthermore, we request the following minor revisions to the Project’s “Q” qualified conditions. These revisions clarify that the amount of affordable housing volunteered by the Applicant will continue to constitute 20 percent of the Project’s dwelling units, even if the

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Applicant were to elect to construct less than the maximum allowable residential density. The revisions would also reflect the fact that the Project proposes rental and not for-sale units, and that the land use authority of the former Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles is anticipated to be transferred to the City in the near future.

The requested clarifications are as follows (proposed additions appear in underline, deletions appear in ~~striketrough~~):

**Q Qualified Condition A.1. Site Development.** The use and development of the property shall be in substantial conformance with the Plot Plan, Site Plan, Floor Plans, Unit Plans, Building Elevations, Courtyard Plans, and Landscape Plans (Exhibit A, dated February 14, 2019) of the subject case file. No change to the plans will be made without prior review by the Department of City Planning, and written approval by the Director of Planning. Each change shall be identified and justified in writing. Minor deviations may be allowed in order to comply with the provisions of the Municipal Code or the project conditions. The project shall be constructed in a manner consistent with the following project description:

- a. Limit the proposed development to up to 298 guest rooms (including up to 160 short-term and 138 long-term stay rooms), up to 222 student housing units, up to 186 dwelling units (including up to 82 units reserved for Very Low and Low Income households), up to 55,326 square feet of retail/restaurant uses, up to 20,364 square feet of office, and up to 7,203 square feet of meeting rooms, totaling up to 620,687 square feet of floor area.

**Q Qualified Condition A.2. Affordable Housing.** In accordance with Footnote 14 of the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan (2000), a minimum of 20 percent of the total dwelling units shall be restricted as affordable units. Should the maximum allowable number of residential dwelling units (408 dwelling units) be constructed, 77 units shall be reserved as Low Income Restricted Affordable Units, and a minimum of 5 units shall be reserved as Very Low Income Restricted Affordable Units, for a total of 82 restricted affordable units, or 20 percent of the total dwelling units. Should a lesser number of residential dwelling units be constructed, the number of Low Income Restricted Affordable Units and Very Low Income Restricted Affordable Units shall be reduced proportionally; notwithstanding, approximately one percent of the total constructed units shall continue to be reserved as Very Low Income Restricted Affordable Units and approximately 19 percent of the total constructed units shall continue to be reserved as Low Income Restricted Affordable Units, to maintain a required affordable housing

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component of 20 percent of the total constructed dwelling units. These units shall be restricted to households earning no more than 80 percent of the Area Median Income for Low Income Restricted Affordable Units and no more than 50 percent of the Area Median Income for Very Low Income Restricted Affordable Units, as defined by Section 50079.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, and as determined by the Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department (HCIDLA).

**Q Qualified Condition A.3. Housing Requirements.** Prior to issuance of a building permit, the owner shall execute a covenant to the satisfaction of the Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department (HCIDLA) to make up to 77 units available to Low Income Households and up to 5 units available to Very Low Income Households, in conformance with the affordable housing requirements of Q Condition A.2, for sale or rental as determined to be affordable to such households by HCIDLA for a period of 55 years. Enforcement of the terms of said covenant shall be the responsibility of HCIDLA. The applicant will present a copy of the recorded covenant to the Department of City Planning for inclusion in this file. The project shall comply with any monitoring requirements established by the HCIDLA.

**Q Qualified Condition A.7. Community Redevelopment Agency Plan.** Prior to the issuance of a building permit, suitable arrangements shall be made for clearance with the CRA/LA or the appropriate successor agency for the Exposition / University Park Redevelopment Project area.

Thank you for consideration of these requested clarifications, and we respectfully request that you deny the appeals and recommend approval of the Project with the suggested revisions to the conditions of approval.

Very truly yours,



William F. Delvac

cc: Sherilyn Correa, Director of Planning & Economic Development, Council District 9  
Luciralia Ibarra, Chief Deputy, Planning, Land Use, and Policy, Council District 8  
Lisa Webber, Deputy Director of Planning  
Heather Bleemers, Senior City Planner, Major Projects  
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