Letter No. 33

Rec/Park, 10/2

Date: October 2, 2012

RE: Loring Guessous' Comments regarding the Rose Bowl Draft EIR and how the NFL games will negatively effect Recreational Uses

I have been a resident of the Pasadena Arroyo Seco region for the past 21 years, most recently residing for the past 16 years on the bluff off Linda Vista looking at the Rose Bowl 50 yard line. In that time, I have raised two college age children who were schooled and involved in extracurricular sports in this community. In the past 4 years, I made a significant life savings reinvestment in my property to maintain the standard of my home in keeping with the neighborhood as well as to enhance the value of my asset.

Like most families who move to this region of Pasadena, we came here for a multitude of reasons:

- safe neighborhoods
- high standard of emergency services and public facilities such as the hospitals
- strong community pride
- natural beauty of the region
- large open green spaces maintained by strong city oversight
- amazing accessibility and affordability to free or low cost recreational facilities
- beautiful rehabilitated downtown shopping district
- reasonable traffic and significantly cleaner air
- close proximity to major urban work destinations
- enhanced property values
- historic preservation of the Rose Bowl region

In short, the region has embraced a healthy community that places a high value on the attributes of outdoor activities as a mitigant to urban sprawl. Measured city development has kept all of these elements in balance.

The western arroyo is renowned for the preservation of its natural rural setting designed to allow residents and visitors equal access on an unlimited basis daytime and nighttime. Night time lighting has always been kept to a minimum and the absence of sidewalks deliberately maintain these characteristics similar to LaCanada's city planning design. This is a zone that is considered safe at all times of the day or night for residents and visitors to access. I consider the Arroyo Seco to be **Pasadena's Central Park**.

Residents of the Arroyo have learned to compromise, tolerate and even embrace the events staged at the Rose Bowl as an experienced dance partner. The balance of access to the Arroyo versus the benefits of large public events for the community has been an accepted feature of living in this area. However, this delicate balance is about to be upended because city officials have failed to accurately assess the financial costs and funding for this project prior to embarking on such a massive stadium renovation. The renovation was never designed to be a mandate for a professional football team.

If an NFL team is allowed to reside at the Rose Bowl for a "temporary 5 year period", as contemplated by the Draft EIR, the impact will be significant, unavoidable and will have permanent negative ramifications on Pasadena's residential community at large.

Doubling the 12 currently permitted "Displacement Events" to 25 will place extreme stress on the delicate ecological system in a compressed period of time from August to January. Most importantly, recreational access for households and visitors who work during the week and have children in class during the week will be essentially eliminated on weekends during this time frame annually. The Arroyo will go from being one of the premier southern California active recreational locations to a congested passive venue for sports enthusiasts where the vibrant residential community surrounding the area declines into a decaying neighborhood.

For the past 40 years, I and my family have used the Arroyo Seco region for every active recreational use possible. Starting with hunting frogs in the Hahamonga Watershed basin for a summer school biology class at LaCanada High School, to boarding horses at San Pascual stables in South Pasadena, using the riding trails to JPL, Angeles Crest Forest, and my home off Arroyo Blvd, to having my kids play their school and club team games for years at the baseball and soccer fields, playing water polo matches at the Rose Bowl Aquatic Center, visiting Kids Space Museum, decorating Rose Bowl floats at the Rose Bowl Pavillion, volleyball practices at Chandler School's gym, taking my young kids to fish at the casting pond and use the archery range, playing golf regularly at Brookside's world class golf courses, Arroyo Seco 3-par golf course, Aquatic Center tennis courts, walking, running and biking limitless laps around the Rose Bowl, hiking extensively throughout the Arroyo, charity walk-a-thons, music festivals and orchestra concerts, bicycle concourses, events at the Arroyo Casita, RV sales events, automobile maneuvering courses, Pasadena Police motorcycle exhibitions, and Tom Sawyer Camp. In short, I'm an Arroyo enthusiast expert. 1

To be fair, we have also enjoyed the benefits of attending some monumental events at the Bowl including: the Soccer World Cup, Tournament of Roses New Years Day Rose Bowl games, BCS games, major concerts such as U2, incredible firework displays on the 4th of July, festive UCLA college football games and community oriented swap meets.

The Draft EIR must accurately measure the volume of users for all of these active Rose Bowl events which will be displaced by the NFL's agenda. It is not clear that sufficient, recent or accurate data has been measured for these activities during the season to be impacted – the Fall. 2

What is clear, the Draft EIR is inadequate in measuring the number of patrons and vehicles anticipated to attend NFL events. The report only measures projected paid patrons ignoring a vast number of sports fans who will come to enjoy the festive tailgating atmosphere free of charge; preferring to set up RV and tent city encampments with the latest technology and jumbo flat screens. The prohibitive cost of NFL tickets and advancement in satellite TV technology have introduced a entirely new breed of sports 3

fan enthusiast. These fans transport all of their own food and beverage rather than padding the coffers of Pasadena merchants and restaurants. 3

The Arroyo is essentially **Pasadena's Central Park**. Would NYC allow Central Park to be closed off to recreational users for more than a quarter of the year on every weekend during the peak weather months of August through January? Why would a city prioritize a sedentary spectator-centric lifestyle for a healthy active lifestyle? Why are the citizens of Pasadena now asked to accept this possible reality? The only answer is that the citizens welfare is being sacrificed at the expense of city official incompetence arising from mismanagement of the Rose Bowl renovation project. 4

Allowing the NFL to invade Pasadena will result in a community that becomes physically divided due to the traffic impact. Families in the western arroyo neighborhoods with kids engaged in sports or other activities outside of the home will be significantly impaired by navigating this congestion almost every weekend and some weeknights. Elderly citizens will become more vulnerable to a weakened emergency response system. All residents will be landlocked during peak game hours. The closure of the recreational areas will place undue pressure on an already strained city infrastructure for fields and alternative venues. More residents will be forced to find alternative locations outside of Pasadena for their recreational and shopping use. This will compound weekend commutes and shift household expenditures from local merchants to adjacent cities. It's not clear that this loss of revenue for merchants and city sales tax will be more than compensated by incremental revenue from NFL sports patrons. 5

The golf courses and surrounding fields will be more permanently impacted if there are multiple events back to back on weekends when it is raining. If these parking venues are closed then traffic will turn into an East side version of Carmageddon. If Brookside is closed for too many days, the golf course will become less viable as a standalone self financing vehicle. Historically, a great deal of the profits from Brookside have helped to subsidize Rose Bowl operation funding shortfalls. How does the ongoing closure of Brookside impact the cost benefit analysis? 6

The Draft EIR has not evaluated the impact of extended lighting and noise required to clean up back to back events. Ironically, the city has always regulated the hours of lighting curfews for recreational facilities in the Arroyo such as Jackie Robinson Field, the tennis courts, the Aquatic Center, San Pascual Stables, and the Arroyo Seco 3-par golf course. This is designed to reduce glare and to maintain the natural habitat of the Arroyo for local residents. Why is the Rose Bowl permitted to significantly exceed these time limits by doubling the events to occur in a compressed period? Now that the Rose Bowl has completed a block of suites and premium seating on the southern wing, the exterior lighting is left on all night. Historically, the bowl was never lit at night other than a few perimeter lights. The city is incurring additional unnecessary utility costs. Now the visusal impact at night is comparable to staring at a multi-story commercial building dropped into the middle of a single family residential zone. 7

All of these issues and many more must be examined in a comprehensive cost benefit analysis. This has yet to occur.

The simple solution is for the NFL to use the Coliseum near downtown for it's temporary home. This will get patrons accustomed to commuting to a site near the teams ultimate permanent site, Farmers Field. The Coliseum is not in a residential community. It sits in a community zoned for mixed commercial, industrial, and educational facilities.

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Pasadena officials need to be more creative in finding solutions to their construction funding gap. The original partners who are benefiting from the remodel need to reevaluate their contributions for this project. The Rose Bowl is an incredible asset for the city. There are ways to utilize this venue to raise additional funds without destroying a historic community in the process.

In closing, I'd like to propose one final solution to solve multiple issues currently facing the city. Why not run the 710 freeway extension through the Arroyo Seco directly to the front gate of the Rose Bowl!

Author: Loring Guessous
804 Linda Vista Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91103
Email: loringguessous@aol.com
Tel: (213) 703-1813

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Loring Guessous
804 Linda Vista Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91103
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Response 33-1

The first part of the comment includes an introduction to comments that follow. No further response is required.

Response 33-2

Refer to **Response 7-10** for a discussion of the number of active users at the Rose Bowl in the fall.

Response 33-3

Refer to **Response 6-2**.

Response 33-4

The comment concerns the overall merits of the proposed project. The comment will be included as part of the record and made available to the decision makers prior to a final decision on the proposed project.

Response 33-5

Draft EIR Section 3.7 acknowledges significant traffic impacts. Please see **Response 8-45** regarding emergency access before and after events. Please see discussion of Impact 3.6-1 in the Draft EIR and **Response 8-15** for a discussion of impacts on other parks in Pasadena. The comment regarding potential economic impacts will be forwarded to the City Council as part of the Final EIR.

Response 33-6

See **Response 8-11** regarding repair of the golf course after game day activities. The comment regarding potential economic impacts will be forwarded to the City Council as part of the Final EIR.

Response 33-7

Refer to **Response 16-28**.