

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-0001

September 25, 2000

VIA Facsimile & U.S. Mail

The Honorable Rocky Delgadillo
Deputy Mayor for Economic Development
City of Los Angeles
200 North Main Street, Suite 800
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: City of Los Angeles – Section 108 Application – Cornfields B-99-MC-06-0523

Dear Deputy Mayor Delgadillo:

HUD has received numerous letters and expressions of concern about the environmental impacts of the proposed Cornfields/River Station Industrial Park from environmental groups, community-based organizations, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, state government officials, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Park Service.

In addition, late last week, a coalition whose members include Friends of the Los Angeles River, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Los Angeles, Concerned Citizens of South Central Los Angeles, Environmental Defense, Latino Urban Forum, Natural Resources Defense Council and Northeast Renaissance Corporation, submitted a formal administrative complaint to HUD alleging that the proposed project violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the President's Executive Order on Environmental Justice because it would have disproportionately negative impacts on members of minority groups, particularly the residents of Chinatown.

We are also aware that on September 6, the same coalition filed a lawsuit against the City and others, alleging that the City has failed to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act and other applicable local laws.

In light of the serious concerns raised about the environmental impacts of the proposed project, including the environmental justice issues, as well as questions concerning the range of alternatives considered by the City, and the adequacy of the opportunities for citizen participation in the process of deciding the best use of the Cornfields site, HUD now believes that the City should proceed directly to preparing an environmental impact statement rather, than an environmental assessment.

An EIS would include public participation in the scoping process to identify the full range of options that the community believes should be considered for the use of the Cornfields, as well as a full-blown assessment of environmental impacts, including environmental justice concerns. A fuller airing of these critical issues can only be of benefit to the City and its residents. For these reasons, an EIS is the only vehicle that can assure HUD that it has fulfilled its mission of meeting the priorities and needs identified by the local community if HUD were to agree to disburse funds in support of this project.

Please feel free to call me at (202) 708-2236 with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Nancy F. Lesser
Senior Counsel to the Secretary

Cc:

John Dewitt

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