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PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD FOR THE LAUSD DRAFT EIR EXTENDED FOR THE AMBASSADOR HOTEL SITE

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) today announced the extension of the public review period for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for school sites at the location of the former Ambassador Hotel.

The new deadline for public review and the submission of written comments on the Draft EIR has been extended 15-days to Saturday, August 16, 2003 to provide more opportunity for public input. The DEIR was released by the District on June 17, 2003.

“We know that many people are interested in our plans for the Ambassador site, and we have been committed to obtaining as much public input as feasible throughout this process,” said School Superintendent Roy Romer. “We hope this extension will provide adequate time for all who are interested in sharing their comments and I encourage them to do so.”

Los Angeles Board of Education President José Huizar, who represents the district in which the Ambassador Hotel site is located, added, “We are committed to an open and transparent process in building this much needed school for this community. We hope that by extending the process we will give the public and stakeholders more time to review the information and share any responses.”

The DEIR contains five project alternates for the 23.8-acre Ambassador site. The alternates currently under consideration are:

- Alternate One, Maximum Reuse

(more)

- Alternate Two, Partial Reuse
- Alternative Three, Reuse of the North Tower
- Alternate Four, New Construction
- Alternate Five, Commercial Frontage

The District is considering constructing three schools on the Ambassador property to help relieve intense overcrowding at schools in the surrounding neighborhood. The District is planning a K-12 campus on the site which desperately needs 825 elementary school seats, 1,392 middle school seats, and 2,154 high school seats. The Phase I plan for these schools will get students off the buses and provide 180-day instructional calendars.

The three school campus will relieve five severely overcrowded schools: Belmont High School, Los Angeles High School, Berendo Middle School, Virgil Middle School and Hoover Elementary School.

More than 3,800 children who live around these five schools are bused out of their neighborhood each day – sometimes more than an hour each way. This is three to four times more children than are bused out of any other community the District serves.

After the District has reviewed and addressed all public comments and certified the DEIR, the staff will make a recommendation and the Board of Education is expected to select a plan in November 2003.

The DEIR is available for public viewing at the following locations: LAUSD Office of Communications, Pio-Pico Koreatown Branch Library, Wilshire Branch Library, Memorial Branch Library, Los Angeles Central Library, Belmont Senior High, Berendo Middle School, Virgil Middle School, Hoover Elementary School and www.laschools.org/amb.