Dear President James and Honorable Commissioners:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc., founded in 1952, represents 42 homeowner and resident associations with approximately 250,000 constituents spanning the Santa Monica Mountains. At its meeting of July 18, 2018, the Hillside Federation voted to urge the Board of Public Works to consider requiring the analysis of a polyphagous shot hole borer (“PSHB”) expert within the context of an adequate environmental analysis before approving the proposed extensive tree removal at 10768 West Bellagio Road.

Community members have identified numerous shortcomings in the proposal and project documents, including a Notice of Exemption that does not accurately describe the project. A Categorical Exemption is an inappropriate environmental document for a project with obvious significant impacts to 85 trees, including almost two dozen protected trees. In addition, the tree report concludes, without sufficient expert evidence, that mere PSHB symptoms necessitate tree removal without respect to the actual health of the tree, which fails to reflect the best practice in PSHB management.

We urge the Board of Public Works to reject the project until adequate consideration of its environmental impacts has been undertaken, including investigation of PSHB affected trees by a qualified expert.

Sincerely,

Charley Mims