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Los Angeles City Planning Department Mulholland Specific Plan Staff 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 351 Van Nuys, CA 91401

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February 11, 2011

RE:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc. Opposition to the Realignment of the Mulholland Bridge

Dear Mulholland Design Review Board Members:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc. (The "Federation") was founded in 1952 for the purpose of protecting the property and quality of life of the residents of the Santa Monica Mountains and other hillside areas of Los Angeles and its environs, and to encourage and promote those policies and programs that will best preserve the natural topography and wildlife of the mountains and hillsides for the benefit of all the people of Los Angeles. The Federation's membership includes 33 residential and homeowner associations spanning the Santa Monica Mountains. At its February 2011 meeting, the Federation voted unanimously to oppose the proposed realignment of the Mulholland Bridge because the environmental impacts of that action have not been disclosed, analyzed or subjected to public comment and review in the manner required by the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA").

The proposed realignment raises many potentially significant adverse environmental impacts as well as substantial changes to the previous, EIR-certified reconstruction of the Mulholland Bridge. Among the environmental impacts that must be disclosed and analyzed are: the footprint of disturbed soil, retaining walls, grading, hauling, drainage, aesthetics, views, scenic resources, interruption of a continuous highway to an engineered intersection, wildlife connectivity, the realignment of a scenic highway from its historic ridgeline, the realignment of a wildlife corridor, the realignment of the Core Trail, the realignment of the Specific Plan boundary forcing more homes into the process of design review, and consistency with the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan.

The I-405 Sepulveda Widening Project EIR did not disclose, consider or analyze the impacts of moving the Mulholland Bridge, thereby realigning the Mulholland Scenic Parkway. The proposal to do so now requires approval from the City of Los Angeles, which triggers the CEQA obligation to undertake environmental review of this new project. Given the potentially significant environmental impacts, the City

Bel Air Knolls Property Owners Bel Air Skycrest Property Owners Bel Air Ridge Association Benedict Canyon Association Cahuenga Pass Neighborhood Crests Neighborhood Assn. Encino Property Owners Assn. Forrest Hills Homeowners Assn. Franklin Ave./Hollywwod Bl. West Franklin Hills Residents Assn. Highlands Owners Assn. Hollywood Dell Civic Assn. Hollywood Heights Assn. Hollywoodland Homeowners Holmby Hills Homeowners Assn. Kagel Canyon Civic Assn. La Tuna Canyon Community Assn. Laurel Canyon Assn. Los Feliz Improvement Assn. Mt. Olympus Property Owners Mt. Washington Homeowners All. Nichols Canyon Assn. N. Beverly Dr./Franklin Canyon Oak Forest Canyon Assn. Outpost Estates Homeowners Residents of Beverly Glen Roscomare Valley Assn. Shadow Hills Property Owners Sherman Oaks H O Assn. Studio City Residents Assn. Tarzana Property Owners Assn. Torreyson Flynn Assn. Upper Mandeville Canvon Whitley Heights Civic Assn.

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must begin the process of preparing a full Environmental Impact Report. Moreover, the realignment also triggers an obligation on the part of Caltrans to prepare (at a minimum) a Supplemental EIR to address this substantial change from the actions analyzed in its certified EIR.

The Mulholland Scenic Parkway is a treasure of the Santa Monica Mountains, as recognized by the City in promulgating the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan in May 1992. The Hillside Federation and its members were instrumental in passing this important and protective ordinance. The City must be responsible to its citizenry and follow the proper process required by this ordinance, the municipal code and state environmental laws to ensure that all potential significant adverse impacts are disclosed and analyzed to give the public the opportunity for input in a full and transparent process before this historic resource is forever altered. Because no EIR has been prepared for this project, the board must recommend denial of the request to realign the Mulholland Bridge at this time.

Sincerely yours,

Marian Dodge, President

cc:

**Senator Pavley** 

Assemblymember Feuer Assemblymember Brownley Supervisor Yaroslavsky Councilmember Koretz Councilmember Rosendahl

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy