

LIVING WITH AN ICON

A Report from the Neighborhoods Beneath the Hollywood Sign

INTRODUCTION:

In response to continuing and unaddressed concerns by its stakeholders, the Hollywood United Neighborhood Council (HUNC) created an Ad Hoc Committee to investigate the impact of the increasing worldwide interest in the Hollywood Sign on its surrounding neighborhoods. The areas considered by the committee included Lake Hollywood Estates as well as Beachwood Canyon and the upper Beachwood neighborhood of Hollywoodland.

In this report, we establish the nature of the impact the Hollywood Sign (and associated tourism and promotion) has on our neighborhoods. We address the confluence of factors that have led us to this point, and we propose several targeted and generalized approaches where we seek partnership from the City to address these concerns.

The Committee consisted of three HUNC directors, including Sheila Irani who served as Committee Chair, Jim Van Dusen and Robert Morrison, as well as five representatives from Sign-adjacent neighborhoods, including Steve Alper, Chip Clements, John Dotto, Augusta Johnson and Kristina O'Neil.

While many of the issues and solutions presented in this report are not new, the neighborhoods have raised these issues and concerns multiple times with little response from local government and as a result the area has yet to receive adequate planning and attention.

It should be noted that most public comments at the committee's meetings are from residents who are proud to live near our city's biggest icon but are concerned with public safety and risk to natural habitat under the current unmanaged situation.

THE CHALLENGE: MILLIONS OF VISITORS IN A RESIDENTIAL AREA

The Hollywood Sign (Sign) is a globally recognized icon. It is LA's most prominent landmark. Not only is it part of the attraction for our City's 55+ million annual visitors, for many it is in fact a destination itself.

We have observed that with the exponential growth of social media, taking a selfie-style picture close to the Hollywood Sign has become wildly popular among tourists and Angelenos alike.

Until recently, analog navigation largely limited the number of visitors attempting to reach the Sign. Now GPS, coupled with way-finding digitization, has given anyone with a phone the ability to easily locate and access the Sign vista points along Mulholland Highway, Deronda Drive, and Lake Hollywood Park, all in the 90068 zip code area. In the last decade, millions of visitors have traversed these historic hillside neighborhoods by private car to closely view the Sign.

Overwhelming traffic to the Sign is not just an unpleasant experience for residents and an unsustainable one for the neighborhood's aging substandard roadways, but it is also an unsafe one for visitors and residents alike. Unaddressed, the situation will only get worse.

Previous efforts to channel Sign visitors to more distant, non-residential vista locations, such as the Griffith Observatory and the Hollywood & Highland shopping center were ineffective at reducing the number of vehicles visiting the neighborhoods. Those more distant alternatives never caught on.

Preferred Parking Districts (PPDS) have successfully provided relief in some areas, especially to residents at specific choke-points and bottlenecks. However, they are a partial solution and have not reduced the overall traffic burden caused by the Sign's visitors. Additionally, while PPDs may once have discouraged neighborhoods becoming clogged with parked cars, these restrictions are now often ignored.

As the Committee report will show, the challenge facing the City is how to mitigate the risks to public safety of residents and visitors, along with the negative impacts on natural habitats caused by the Sign's magnetic appeal.

BACKGROUND

In 1923 Los Angeles developers, Woodruff, Shoultz and Chandler built the "HOLLYWOODLAND" Sign as an advertisement atop Beachwood Canyon to be seen from all over town as a promotion for the neighborhood below. As a result of the developers' eventual bankruptcy, the title of the Sign and its surrounding land was transferred to the City, and subsequently incorporated into Griffith Park. Maintenance ceased. By 1949, the Sign was in terrible disrepair and residents asked the City to dismantle it. In response, the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) offered to repair the Sign if they could remove the last four letters, "LAND", and use it to promote Hollywood. The residents' request was denied and the Chamber was given permission to repair the sign.

By 1978 the Chamber had allowed the Sign to fall into disrepair again. Private donations were collected to rebuild the sign in metal, with better footings and without lighting.

Currently, the Sign is managed and maintained by the Hollywood Sign Trust (Trust) which is run by nine board members, most of whom are members of or selected by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber owns the trademarks related to the Sign. The Chamber collects all Sign-related licensing fees and royalties, an amount said to approach \$1 million annually. In turn, when conditions are met, the Chamber funds the Trust up to \$150,000 a year, with the remainder of the revenue to be used at the Chamber's discretion.

Griffith Park, where the Sign is located, is managed by Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP), which receives permit fees for filming within Griffith Park.

Due to the divided ownership and control structure of the Sign, neither the Chamber, the Trust, the City nor RAP currently accept responsibility for managing the millions of visitors who come to view the Sign.

Los Angeles enjoys a significant financial benefit from tourism measuring over \$36 billion annually per the LA Times. This includes significant tax revenues from hotels, rental cars, and sales tax. By failing to adequately plan and manage this popular tourist destination, the City is jeopardizing the economic benefit resulting from this landmark.

EVER-INCREASING POPULARITY

Eyewitness accounts, in-person surveys, internet commentary and cell-phone location data all indicate a skyrocketing increase of visitors to the Sign.

Digital way-finding has created convenient methods to access the Sign by both pedestrians and vehicles. In December 2022, a search of the term "Hollywood Sign" produced 1.23 billion results. The Sign is geotagged an average of 1 million times a year in social media posts.

Since its inception in 1996, social media has managed to infiltrate over half of the 7.84 billion people in the world. It is estimated that by 2023 there will be 4.74 billion, or 59.3% of the total global population using social media.

With the ease of digital way-finding, the expansion of social media and the hosting of the World Cup in 2026 and the Olympics in 2028, the residents below the Sign are anticipating the number of visitors to the Hollywood Hills surrounding the Sign will explode.

SPECIFIC NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS

Too many vehicles

There is no public transit serving the areas immediately below the Sign. Without alternatives, the millions of visitors wishing to visit the Sign vistas are forced to travel through hillside neighborhoods by private vehicle or on foot.

Two of the most popular Sign vista destinations (Lake Hollywood Park and Deronda plateau) are within the boundaries of Griffith Park. RAP does not provide parking for any visitor vehicles. The narrow hillside residential streets are easily and often clogged, as visitors search for limited parking. The intensity of the congestion is exacerbated when frustrated drivers resort to parking along red curbs, in front of fire hydrants, or double park on narrow roads while they take photographs of the Sign.

The lack of parking on hillside roads worsens the congestion as does an unusually restricted number of routes in and out of the entire mountainous area. Additionally, many tourists opt to traverse these roads on foot creating risk and danger for all concerned as there are no sidewalks in most of the neighborhoods below the Sign.

LADOT Parking Enforcement Officers can be found in these residential areas, but there is a real need for Traffic Control Officers on a regular basis to manage the congestion. To date, increased parking enforcement has little discernible effect on reducing the overall number of vehicles coming to the enforced areas.

Substandard Infrastructure

- 1) Roads: The physical infrastructure in the neighborhoods below the Sign was not engineered to handle the volume of traffic it currently supports. The 100-year-old hillside roads are rapidly deteriorating under increasing visitor pressure. As more substantial repairs become necessary, more dangerous congestion can be expected.
- 2) Facilities: After driving to see LA's iconic landmark from its most popular vistas, visitors will find no bathroom facilities. Many of the Sign's visitors are forced to improvise wherever they can, which is an inconvenience for visitors and a health hazard for residents.
- 3) Cell Service: The residential areas beneath the Sign have poor cell service which causes navigation systems to become unavailable and visitors to become lost. Most importantly, cell phone users often cannot call for assistance in an emergency.

Emergency Access and Evacuation

There is no official evacuation plan on record for residents or visitors. Due to substandard infrastructure, both residents and visitors are imperiled in any emergency, especially should a natural disaster strike.

Neighborhoods below the Sign and Griffith Park have a documented history of fires caused by careless smoking, fireworks, arson, and homeless encampments. With only two routes for egress, safe evacuation can barely be ensured for residents without adding the unmanaged congestion caused by Hollywood Sign visitors.

These congested conditions significantly hamper emergency response from fire, police, ranger, and ambulance services. Additionally, the Sign and surrounding neighborhoods are in a Very High Fire Severity Zone, exponentially magnifying the danger. Fire trucks will have difficulty reaching the fire as visitors and residents attempt to flee by car, creating bottlenecks on the narrow streets.

Hollywood Sign Lighting

The Chamber and Trust have indicated that they intend to light the sign on special occasions. Neighborhood residents are concerned that illuminating the sign at night will attract a heavy influx of visitors. Naturalists are concerned about the impact on wildlife, and Griffith Park's natural habitats.

Helicopters and Drones

Low-flying helicopter tours and private drones flown around the sign are a constant annoyance to residents and visitors alike. Atop of Mt. Lee, behind the Hollywood Sign, are the Homeland Security, LAPD, LAFD dispatch towers that can be a target by the helicopters and drones for nefarious purposes.

Communication and Coordination

The various departments and organizations involved with the Sign, such as Recreation and Parks, Park Rangers, LAPD, LAFD and the Trust, lack coordinated communication and responsibilities. Not only does this exacerbate problems, it prevents them from being fully addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

Increased Security & Enforcement

The most heavily visited areas below the Sign need consistent and constant oversight by Park Rangers. This would include but is not limited to Lake Hollywood Park, Mulholland Highway vista points, the Innsdale Trail and the Deronda entrance to the Park. Rangers should enforce laws against smoking, illegal parking, moving violations and criminal activity. Beyond that, LADOT should provide traffic management and parking enforcement. While an enhanced security presence does not reduce the overall number of vehicles visiting the area, permanent enforcement can be very effective in managing the negative impacts of congestion and violations of the law.

A number of eligible streets in the Beachwood Canyon area remain undesignated for Red Flag days, including Deronda, Rockcliff, Rodgerton, Woodhaven and Belden Drives. Additional signs for Red Flag designation are critical for these streets in a fire emergency.

Assignment of permanent LADOT personnel to the Hollywood Sign vicinity is long overdue. Consistent management of traffic will ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for visitors and residents by keeping roads open and traffic moving, especially for first responders.

Turning away slow moving and overweight tour buses that illegally access the area and block traffic at photo vistas is also vital to ensuring public safety.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Ranger Substation

The installation of a permanent ranger station at Lake Hollywood Park would ensure consistent law enforcement and security for an area that attracts thousands of visitors daily. The closest Ranger station is located 25 minutes away at Crystal Springs.

Bathrooms

The Hollywood Sign stands alone as the only world-renowned monument without a public restroom. Lake Hollywood Park would provide an ideal location because it already has utility connections. Otherwise, the closest facilities are the portable toilets on the walking path around Lake Hollywood, more than a mile away from Lake Hollywood Park.

Roads and Signage

Poor maintenance of neighborhood streets contributes to increasing rates of congestion and vehicle accidents. Many of the road surfaces are cracked and potholed. Crosswalks are non-existent for thousands of visitors accessing the vista points. Street signs are

missing. Limit lines are faded. Overgrown foliage covers STOP signs. Dirt, gravel, and rocks slough onto the roads from hillsides, further restricting already narrow roadways. Sidewalks are largely non-existent in the area. The City must boost its investment in maintaining neighborhood streets to ensure the safety of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

Mulholland Hwy. between Durand Dr. and Ledgewood Dr. is a bi-level road that has two- way traffic on the upper level and one-way traffic on the lower level. The upper level and the fenced area of Mulholland Hwy are heavily used by pedestrians, especially the portion between Innsdale Trail and Ledgewood. The Committee recommends the City conduct a traffic study of Mulholland Hwy. focusing on pedestrian safety.

Parking

Paid parking, as found at Griffith Observatory, should be adopted on both sides of the street adjacent to Lake Hollywood Park. Currently the parking adjacent to the park is free.

The Beachwood Canyon Preferred Parking District should be extended west to include Lake Hollywood Estates. Also, unpermitted areas in upper Beachwood Canyon such as Lower Deronda Drive should be included.

Other considerations might include reservation parking, handicapped spaces, rideshare drop-off locations and bike racks.

Turnaround

Lake Hollywood Park is accessed by a two-lane road with parking on both sides. Without a designated place to turn around, most drivers attempt a multi-point turnaround in the road, which often contributes to the road blockages. A designated turnaround could be built at the vista on Canyon Lake Drive and Mulholland Highway, which is flat and spacious.

Passenger Loading Zones

Designated passenger loading zones should be created for visitors arriving via rideshare vehicles, also handicapped parking spaces should be created near Lake Hollywood Park.

Fencing

Fencing is needed in various neighborhood locations to protect wildlife corridors, to prevent drivers from stopping in red-zoned areas or to photograph the sign, to provide closure of public areas after dark, and to protect residents from intruders.

Areas that would benefit from fencing include:

- Mulholland Hwy west of Durand Drive
- Canyon Lake Drive across from Lake Hollywood Park – CD4 will be providing shortly

In 2018, Recreation and Parks installed green-screened chain link fencing along Mulholland Highway (between the Lake Hollywood vista and Durand Dr.) to block the street view of the Sign and reduce visitor vehicles stopping to photograph the Sign.

This solution worked: there are no longer traffic blockages along this stretch of Mulholland Highway. However, this temporary fence continues to deteriorate both from the weather and from visitors cutting and defacing it. Now it poses a liability due to the temporary nature of its construction as it can fall onto vehicles and pedestrians in windy weather. The fence extends the entire length of the road, but the Sign can only be seen from a few specific sections. Only these particular sections should be addressed with permanent structures that block the sign from view so that drivers do not unsafely stop in the red zone on Mulholland Highway.

Gating/Barriers

The short, dead-end stretch of Mulholland Hwy, just north of Ledgewood Dr. is commonly referred to as Dirt Mulholland. Located immediately below the Sign, it is a tourist magnet. This portion of Mulholland is particularly difficult to navigate and does not have a navigable turnaround. Traffic on this road and at the intersection at Ledgewood and Mulholland becomes so congested that LADOT and LAPD are frequently called to clear it. Temporary barriers placed by the residents at the intersection have been effective in relieving the congestion on Dirt Mulholland. Similar to the Runyon Park north entrance, permanently gating this portion of the road in a manner that permits pedestrians and cyclists but restricts unauthorized vehicles would ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for residents and visitors.

SMOKING AND FIRE PREVENTION

The entire area below the Sign is classified as a Very High Fire Severity Zone. Fire is the neighborhoods' most pressing concern. Visitors unaware of the area-wide smoking prohibition are often seen smoking in their cars or while walking the streets. More anti-smoking signs, visitor education and strict enforcement are necessary elements for reducing the risk of fire.

The Committee recommends that Google Maps and all other GPS services depict the hillsides with red cross hatching and include the words VERY HIGH FIRE SEVERITY ZONES – NO SMOKING ALLOWED.

The neighborhood below the Sign once benefitted from two large, solar powered Variable Message Signs stating NO SMOKING. This type of signage should be returned to the area.

A permanently manned Park Ranger station in the Hills, mentioned earlier, would result in constant, consistent enforcement and would help eliminate the danger from smoking and other fire hazards.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MODES

Reducing traffic volume with alternative transportation modes is particularly effective when provided in conjunction with measures that make travel by private vehicle less desirable. Alternative transportation modes provide ample opportunity to educate riders about park safety, No Smoking regulations, and Hollywood history, while they generate ancillary revenue through advertising.

Several alternative transportation proposals were made to the Committee: a shuttle service, tour buses and aerial trams. Aerial Trams should not traverse the Hollywood Knolls or Beachwood/Hollywoodland neighborhoods or allow for the destruction of natural habitats. The origin and destinations for consideration should be the Sign, the MTA Red Line and Walk-of-Fame. The alternative modes would also contribute to the City carbon emission reduction goals.

Aerial Tram

The tram options explored by the City involved going over parts of Griffith Park. The LA Tourism Master Plan (2018) contains a proposal to install an overhead tram to the Hollywood Sign from multiple points, including the Warner Bros. parking lot off Forest Lawn Drive. Many meetings regarding various proposals to run the overhead tram over Griffith Park to the Hollywood Sign have consistently concluded that this is not a viable option due to expensive infrastructure requirements such as parking, platform construction, tram towers along the route, crowd management, no smoking enforcement and wildlife disruption that may be in violation of the Griffith Park Trust agreement between the Griffith family and the City of LA. The lack of viability of this option is underscored by the decision of Warner Brothers Studios to drop the project that was estimated to cost \$100 million.

Shuttle

Any public shuttle to the vistas or Lake Hollywood Park should avoid or limit use of Beachwood/Hollywoodland and Hollywood Knoll's substandard roads.

The route can start at the MTA Red Line in downtown Hollywood, stop at Hollywood Bowl or Ford parking lot, and terminate at Lake Hollywood Vista. It could exclusively use the LADWP heavy equipment road above Montlake Drive which is gated currently. The use of shuttle should only be adopted IN LIEU of allowing vehicles from visitors, not in addition, or congestion will not be reduced. Legal restrictions on outside vehicles must be explored with City Attorney.

Tour Vehicles

The Committee would like to consider the use of managed, permitted and regulated tour vehicles in lieu of individual vehicle use. Adding tour vehicles to the number of vehicles currently coming into the area substantially increases grid-lock and safety hazards.

Tour vehicle would need to be monitored to make sure they are not over the 6,000-pound limit.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is currently the main driver of visitors to the area beneath the Sign. Tighter information control of social media is important to counter the abundance of misinformation, like directions to false trails, parking at night in tow away zones, etc. An advertising campaign funded by the City, Tourism Bureau or the Chamber could direct people interested in visiting the sign to areas better suited to large numbers of tourists.

NO-FLY ZONE

The draw of the Hollywood Sign extends to those wishing to see it by helicopter and private plane. Many tour helicopters fly level with the Sign at great nuisance to both the residents and visitors just below. Additionally, and despite selected no-fly areas, aviators often fly close to the Sign in private planes. Beyond that, the Sign is a popular destination for drone pilots. While the buzz of overhead drones is annoying, the shared airspace with helicopters and planes makes the situation dangerous, notwithstanding all this is happening right above a Very High Fire Severity Zone.

An extended no-fly zone should be established around Mt. Lee, covering the Sign, the communication towers and emergency helipad, and the airspace above the most popular vistas. The restrictions should apply to drones, fixed wing aircraft and helicopters, excluding LAFD and LAPD.

AREA CLOSURES and RESTRICTIONS

Similar to the neighborhoods around the Hollywood Bowl, when parking and roadways are heavily congested the area of Beachwood to Barham could be managed by using blockades and police cadets for enforcement, allowing residents and guests entrance but closed to others.

Landscaping the Vistas above Lake Hollywood Park has been considered for the purpose of closing the areas to visitors who go there to photograph the Sign. However, the result of this closure would be that the crowds would relocate to Lake Hollywood Park, Dirt Mulholland and Lake Hollywood Estates. The congestion and crowds throughout the area would continue unabated.

The Beachwood Gate closure in 2017 into Griffith Park is recognized to have driven more traffic and visitors into the Lake Hollywood and The Oaks area. The Committee recommends the City to review the reason behind the decision to close this gate.

Another remedy that could reduce the dangerously high traffic volumes would be to install gates at the entrances to the area from Beachwood Drive to Barham Blvd. They would be open only to residents, their guests, public shuttles and pedestrians or cyclists. This way traffic would be managed and tourists and LA residents can access the area to hike or take selfies. No other method will be able to manage the increased crowds being experienced now and when the World Cup and Olympics take place in LA. The legality of public street gate closures would need to be explored with the City Attorney and possibly the California Attorney General.

An alternative to shutting down the Barham entrance would be to shut down access at the Lake Hollywood Drive/Montlake Drive, Tahoe Drive/Montlake Drive intersections where there is room for a turnaround. This latter approach recognizes that the Hollywood Reservoir is a popular location for walking and there is substantial street parking on Lake Hollywood Drive that does not impede access to residential properties.

Park Rangers at Yosemite Park, another park that has suffered from dangerous traffic volumes, closely monitor the traffic situation and shut down the area to non-resident vehicles when a saturation point is reached. This method has been adopted sporadically in Griffith Park when parking lots are full at Fern Dell and Crystal Springs and should be considered for the Lake Hollywood & Hollywood woodland areas.

VISITOR CENTER

A dedicated visitor center near the Walk of Fame with a good view of the Sign and pleasing photo opportunities could divert a significant portion of Sign seekers from driving up to neighborhood vistas. The idea is not new and many stakeholders seem interested, yet to date no action has been taken. We encourage the relevant bodies, such as the Los Angeles Tourist and Convention Bureau and Hollywood Chamber of Commerce to build a world- class visitor center with Hollywood Sign views.

DISASTER PREPARATION

Narrow hillside roads and limited routes for egress within a Very High Fire Severity Zone call for a customized, interagency emergency protocol specifically for this area. A history of fires in this crowded area adds to the urgent need to protect both residents and visitors.

There are no published plans on managing the neighborhoods below the Sign during an emergency, whether due to fire, earthquake or terrorist activities. Mt. Lee serves as a base for significant fire, police, and civil defense communication sites. If the Lake Hollywood Park area is to remain as a viewpoint for the Hollywood Sign, it is imperative that a disaster preparedness plan be drawn up for the safety of all residents and visitors.

This will be particularly relevant as Los Angeles gets ready for upcoming World Cup and Olympics events.

LIGHTING THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN

The nocturnal lighting of the Sign has been controversial because of the crowds it attracts. In spite of neighborhood resistance and environmental concern about the effects on wildlife, the Chamber has indicated an intention to light the Sign for commercial purposes. Currently, there are no procedures or protocols for illumination of the Sign. Ownership and control of the sign is unclear. It is hard to tell which official is authorized to permit lighting or who should benefit from the revenues generated from lighting the Sign.

Lighting the Sign only increases its visibility and popularity. Lighting the Sign often will encourage sign visitation at night, which magnifies all the hazards described earlier in this report. If the Sign is to be lit, it should be limited and rare. We also encourage the City and Chamber to share revenues from illumination with the neighborhoods for security and safety purposes. Clear protocols and support of the neighborhood must be defined before any lighting can happen.

Also, lighting the Sign has an impact on wildlife, especially birds. The Sign is in Griffith Park and lighting it should be guided by the Griffith Park Vision Plan developed in 2013. New lighting and lighting pollution must be minimized. Reducing anthropogenic influence of light pollution on wildlife can impact almost 300 species of birds.

This Committee suggests the creation of an Environmental Impact Report to understand impact to local wildlife from nighttime illumination of the Sign.

HOLLYWOOD SIGN MANAGEMENT

The management of the Hollywood Sign is severely bifurcated between the Sign Trust and the City, and needs revision. There are several proposals to remedy this as follows.

The Committee recommends that RAP pursue a concessionaire's agreement for the land that sits under the Sign to recover costs of having to maintain the areas below the Sign. Currently, the Sign Trust makes no contribution towards this end. Representatives from Hollywoodland and Lake Hollywood should be included on the Hollywood Sign Trust Board of Trustees specifically so that the Trust's responsibility is inclusive of the residents who are most impacted by the Sign's visitor traffic.

The Chamber has disproportionate control over the Sign Trust and has shown to be insensitive to the residents of the areas surrounding the Sign. Meetings have been held with the Chamber and the Trust with community leaders including Sheila Irani and George Skarpelos, both previous Presidents of HUNC, but the claim of lack of funding has prevented any assistance to be provided to the neighborhood. The fact that many members of the Sign Trust are also members of the Chamber and all but 2 of the 9 Trustees were selected by the Chamber means that their allegiance is not to the Park or residents' interests, but rather the business interests of the tourism industry. This is a conflict of interest. We are hopeful that the new leadership of the Trust and Chamber will be open to the recommendations found in this report and a constructive dialogue with funded solutions will ensue.

Since 1991, the agreement (Stipulation) between the City and Hollywood Chamber of Commerce limits the financial allocation to the Sign Trust to a maximum of \$150,000 to be used exclusively for the Sign's security and maintenance. This agreement has no cost of living clause, and has been capped at \$150,000 for over 30 years. This committee recommends that the \$150,000 cap be dropped and 30% of licensing revenues to the Chamber be retained and distributed to the Sign Trust. This will allow escalating security and maintenance costs to be covered appropriately, just as licensing revenues increase over time. The Sign Trust should then dedicate some of their funds on the security and maintenance needs of the surrounding communities that are negatively impacted by the volume of Sign visitors. Additionally, the licensing revenues raised by the Chamber should be open to City audit and available to the public.

IN SUMMARY: WHERE'S THE MONEY?

The Hollywood Sign is an accidental international icon. Other icons like Paris's Eiffel Tower, New York's Statue of Liberty and South Dakota's Mt. Rushmore were designed to accommodate and welcome admiring visitors from all over the world. The Hollywood Sign, conceived as a temporary advertising device a hundred years ago, gained its icon status as it silently kept watch over the decades-long boom of America's entertainment industry. There was no plan for visitors and no infrastructure to support high volumes of visitors.

This report details the consequences of living beneath the Hollywood Sign. Lack of planning, lack of coherent management, insufficient and decaying infrastructure make living with or visiting the Sign a taxing experience for everyone.

The Sign generates monumental funds for both the City that benefits from the tourist dollars of 50+ million visitors a year and for the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, which profits from the Sign's copyrights and trademarks. But none of that money is set aside to deal with the consequences of all those visitors to the neighborhoods beneath the sign.

Crumbling roads, chronic traffic snarls, fire hazards in an officially designated Very High Fire Severity Zone and a host of other issues are patiently listened to by empathetic City officials who have the will but lack the power or the money to help. The Hollywood Sign is a key component of our City's appeal to tourists that annually contribute over \$30 billion dollars to the city's economy, including hotel, sales and vehicle rental taxes.

The specific recommendations of this report are rooted in decades of local experience and advocacy by all the residential groups that neighbor the Sign. This includes Hollywoodland, Beachwood Canyon, and Lake Hollywood Estates. Each solution requires significant ongoing investment from the City, especially in light of the growth in tourism from the upcoming World Cup and Olympics. We recommend the City provide analysis of the costs of implementing the solutions proposed in this report in the interest of determining how a reasonable portion of this revenue can be allocated to address these issues and ensure a long life for our local icon.

The Hollywood United Neighborhood Council celebrates the special significance of the Sign along with the creativity and passion the Sign inspires around the world. However, we believe the City must support the community in providing equitable and well-managed access to the Sign so all stakeholders in this community can look up and remain inspired instead of seeing a source of frustration and division.