CEQA Lawsuit Should Not Stop Progress at LAX

Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is finally doing something to improve traffic, congestion, and overall access to the airport. The Landside Access Modernization Program (LAMP) is the most comprehensive plan to improve the operations of the airport for visitors, residents, and employees. The plan will include an automated people mover that will connect LAX with Metro’s regional transit system, an offsite consolidated rental car facility (ConRAC), and a comprehensive series of roadway improvements to alleviate congestion in and around the airport.

The LAMP proposal already has received the unanimous support of the Los Angeles City Council, major business organizations across the region, environmental groups, homeowner associations near the airport, and the labor community. Elected leaders, business groups, and labor unions have all come together with a shared vision for the future of our airport.

The plan will include a shared vision for the future of our airport.

Only one thing stands in the way of progress. The sole owner-operator of The Parking Spot on Century Boulevard is threatening to bring the entire project to a halt by abusing a law that was meant to protect the environment. A lawsuit filed by the company claims an environmental impact report on the project was insufficient in its consideration of its effects on traffic. The plan’s restrictions on shuttle buses would affect current practices by The Parking Spot and similar operators.

The Parking Spot on Sepulveda is supporting LAMP and is not part of the lawsuit. This lawsuit is one of many examples in which opponents or competitors use the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to stop or delay projects.

The LAMP project will create new opportunities for local small businesses and will result in well-paying jobs for residents in the surrounding communities. LAMP will create over 4,000 well-paying local construction jobs, with a commitment to hire women and minority workers from the workforce from the communities immediately adjacent to LAX or in the City of Los Angeles. The ConRAC alone will reduce passenger traffic by nearly 30% in the terminal area alone, and remove nearly 3,200 shuttle trips a day from the surrounding streets. LAMP also will create a viable transportation alternative to accessing the airport, reduce the number of vehicles going into the airport, and improve air quality by improving access and relieving congestion.

We are embarking on the largest infrastructure project in the history of Los Angeles, and the largest public private partnership that has ever been approved in California. This is the type of LAMP modernization our city needs right now. It will re-imagine how people live, work, get around, and experience our region. The LAMP project will create real jobs and opportunities for residents. And we need to ensure that we have a world-class airport to welcome our guests from around the world for the 2028 Olympics.

We stand with the Los Angeles City Council, business, labor and environmental leaders, and the hard-working residents of Los Angeles to urge The Parking Spot on Century Boulevard to drop this lawsuit, and to support these much-needed improvements to our City.

Rusty Hicks is executive secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Trades Council; Gary Toebben is president and chief executive of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce; Stuart Waldman is president of the Valley Industry and Commerce Association.