



May 1, 2026

Planning and Land Use Management Committee
Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Hall, Council Chambers
200 N. Spring Street, Room 340
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Sent via email to clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org

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**RE: 500 South Central Ave (364-448 and 425-433 South Central Avenue;
715 and 730 East 4th Street) aka the Fourth and Central Project**
Case Number(s): Council Files No. 26-0047, 26-0047-S1, and 26-0047-S2

We respectfully submit this letter to support the Little Tokyo Community Council's ("LTCC") appeal of the City Planning Commission's approval of Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 82974-CN-HCA, and request that the Planning and Land Use Management Committee deny all other requested entitlements and approvals for the proposed Fourth and Central ("Cold Storage") Project ("the Project").

We also express strong support for LTCC's comprehensive community comment letter.

Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP) is a Little Tokyo-based organization working toward a vision of diverse leaders driving change for the benefit of all through its mission of achieving full participation and equality for Asian and Pacific Islanders (APIs) through leadership, empowerment and policy.

We echo the LTCC's technical concerns regarding the Project's inconsistency with the **DTLA 2040 Community Plan** and we are writing to specifically highlight the severe, irreversible threats this development poses to the Little Tokyo neighborhood's survival and cultural heritage and our organization's home for over 40 years.



As one of only three historic Japantowns remaining in the country, Little Tokyo recently celebrated 140 years of resilience. However, this heritage is under immediate threat. In 2024, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named Little Tokyo one of the **11 Most Endangered Places in America**. For years, our community has steadfastly opposed projects that prioritize scale over people. The proposed Project, as currently designed, risks accelerating the displacement and cultural loss that our community has long fought to prevent, potentially erasing the unique heritage that makes Little Tokyo a historic Japanese American landmark and distinctly important visitor draw.

We support the LTCC appeal and opposed the project as currently designed based on the following critical concerns:

- **Excessive Scale and Density:** The proposed 7.13:1 FAR represents a density that is fundamentally out of scale with our neighborhood. At 2.3 million square feet, with towers reaching 30 stories, the Project is nearly double the height of the tallest buildings in Little Tokyo. This massive massing overwhelms historic structures like the one-story Centenary Church and the three-story Little Tokyo Marketplace, failing to integrate with the surrounding community.
- **Displacement of Legacy Businesses and Nonprofits:** Little Tokyo is home to over 400 small businesses (51 are legacy businesses) and 50+ community organizations such as LEAP. This luxury-heavy development will trigger a surge in local rents, threatening to displace our small and legacy businesses and long-established nonprofit organizations that serve as the neighborhood's social and cultural backbone.
- **Lack of Deeply Affordable Housing:** With 1,589 units that are largely luxury-priced, this Project ignores the reality of a neighborhood where the median household income was recently cited at approximately \$15,500. While nearby luxury units rent for over \$3,100, this Project only meets bare-minimum affordability requirements. We request that at least **30% of units** be affordable to households at 50% AMI or less to prevent further exclusion and displacement of our residents.
- **Traffic, Parking, and Pedestrian Safety:** Flooding 1.5 city blocks with luxury residential and office space will inevitably increase vehicle traffic in already congested corridors. Furthermore, the lack of adequate parking and circulation planning will result in spillover congestion that chokes local access and creates a hazardous environment for the many seniors, visitors, and families who walk these streets, directly undermining the City's **Vision Zero** goals.
- **Long-Term Construction Impacts:** The sheer magnitude of a 7+ acre development ensures years of disruptive construction. Beyond the noise and air quality hazards, the prolonged blockage of streets and sidewalks will create a "dead zone" for foot traffic, potentially shuttering local businesses and service providers long before the Project is completed.



Again, we urge the Planning and Land Use Management Committee to grant LTCC's appeal, overturn the City Planning Commission's approval of Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 82974-CN-HCA, and deny all other related entitlements and approvals. Please uphold the vision of **DTLA 2040**—a plan our community helped shape to ensure equitable growth – and require that any development on this site is appropriately scaled and reflects the actual needs and historic character of the Little Tokyo community.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Akutagawa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Linda Akutagawa
President & CEO