



WESTFIELD STATEMENT RE: DONATION TO *CNC/No on Measure A 2016*

December 9, 2015 -- Westfield announced today that it will donate \$75,000 to *CNC/No on Measure A 2016*, the grassroots citizens' organization opposing the Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan (the 85/15 Project) in Carlsbad. In keeping with the Company's practice of transparency, Westfield has elected to make public its decision to support this effort.

Westfield is a significant owner of regional malls and other real property throughout California with more than \$10.5 billion in assets under management in the State. Over the past 15 years, Westfield has invested more than \$3 billion in improvements to its California properties, with an additional \$3.2 billion of projects in progress or planned for the next 5 years. As part of such ongoing investment and development activities, Westfield always has complied with its obligations under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), recognizing the value of a uniform system of environmental review which offers appropriate checks and balances along with a fair and even playing field for all parties.

Westfield previously raised concerns about the initiative process employed by the developer and the City to circumvent CEQA. We made these concerns known publicly in response to media inquiries and in testimony before the Carlsbad City Council at its August 25, 2015 meeting at which the Council voted to approve the 85/15 Project. In reviewing the environmental materials prepared for the initiative process, Westfield confirmed that the environmental analysis of the proposed 85/15 Project was flawed in numerous respects; flaws which were not addressed because the CEQA process was bypassed.

While Westfield prepared its own independent analyses of the 85/15 Project, a group of local citizens raised their own concerns about the process. Those citizens' efforts have now compelled the City to put the matter to a public vote. A balanced assessment of the environmental impacts of the 85/15 Project is of utmost importance so the community can make an informed decision when going to the polls. In order to permit the community to have access to such information, Westfield has shared with the City several of the expert reports it commissioned via a letter submitted to the City on December 8, 2015. Presumably the City will post this letter, and the accompanying analyses, along with all the other information currently offered on its website with regard to this subject (see attached letter to the City of Carlsbad, including supporting documents).

However, given the 85/15 project proponents have indicated they would spend significant resources to justify the decision to by-pass CEQA, Westfield believes that its donation to *CNC/No on Measure A 2016* while modest in comparison to the amounts already spent and pledged to be spent in support of the 85/15 project, is appropriate and may assist in "leveling the playing field."

Westfield's concern continues to be that bypassing CEQA in Carlsbad and the use of the initiative process for projects of this type generates a very slippery slope, with the very real potential to undermine the foundation of how development decisions are made in municipalities across California. As has been Westfield's position throughout, following CEQA's well-established and transparent review process would best ensure that all potential environmental impacts are fully analyzed and understood by the public, by decision-makers and will avoid the patchwork quilt type of development that is likely to result if the initiative process is validated as a means to avoid CEQA review.