



April 8, 2015

Mr. Michael Shull
General Manager
Department of Recreation and Parks
221 N. Figueroa Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Greek Theatre

Dear General Manager Shull:

On behalf of the Greek Theatre Advisory Committee (“GTAC”), we are writing to express our deep concerns about the proposal currently under review by the Department of Recreation and Parks (the “Department”) to “self-operate” the Greek Theatre (the “Greek”) as an “open venue” in lieu of awarding the contract to a qualified concert operator/promoter.

As a preliminary matter, we note that GTAC was not involved in the recent selection process for a new concessionaire to run the Greek. The Department chose to retain an outside, independent panel with industry expertise to evaluate the responses to the Request for Proposals (“RFP”) and make a recommendation to the Commission as to their preferred selection. GTAC was not asked to review the proposals or otherwise provide any meaningful input into the process. Accordingly, our comments today express no opinion about whether Live Nation or Nederlander-AEG submitted the best proposal to operate the Greek. Rather, our comments are solely focused on the proposed concept of a City-run Greek.

For those copied on this letter that may not be familiar with GTAC, we are an “arm” of the Department. Our purpose is to make recommendations to the Department regarding issues such as theatre operations, traffic control and community relations; we also ensure compliance with the cultural credits required under the current concession contract. We meet monthly (except during the off-season) with representatives of the Department, the current operator, the Council Office, the Department of Transportation and the community to discuss issues impacting the Greek. Over our many years of service, we have gathered an intimate view of the delicate balance involved in running a venue with such a complex mix of competing objectives: generating substantial revenue for the City; fulfilling the entertainment needs of the vast array of cultures and musical tastes of the citizens of (and visitors to) the City of Los Angeles; and operating a large and popular venue hosting thousands of visitors each show night in the midst of a residential neighborhood with limitations on noise, parking and traffic.



With all due respect to the Department, we do not believe it is in a position to assume responsibility for operating the Greek given the financial commitments, staffing and industry expertise required. While we understand members of the Department have visited the Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Colorado, which is also a municipal-run facility, we hardly think this qualifies them to assume control of the Greek next season. For one thing, Red Rocks is not located in an urban center; for another, the City and County of Denver has had nearly 70 years at the helm of Red Rocks, and no doubt went through a steep learning curve to be able to run an efficient venue. The citizens of Los Angeles cannot afford to have the Greek subject to an experiment of this nature while the Department – without adequate staffing, training or funding – endeavors to try its hand at concert promotion.

We understand that it will take some time for the Department to put together another RFP for the Greek concession, to gather responses, to evaluate the proposals and to (hopefully) make a selection that both the Commission and the City Council will agree is in the best interests of the City. Until that time, the only prudent course of action is to permit Nederlander to continue to run the Greek under an extension of its current contract. For these reasons, GTAC voted unanimously at its April 2, 2015 meeting to recommend that Nederlander's contract be extended for an additional two-year period, through the end of the 2017 season.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

David DeFore
President
Greek Theatre Advisory Committee

Ellen Berkowitz
Vice-President
Greek Theatre Advisory Committee

CC:

The Honorable Eric Garcetti
Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners
Los Angeles Alliance of Neighborhood Council
Los Feliz Improvement Association
Hollywood Hills West Neighborhood Council
Greater Toluca Lake Neighborhood Council
Hollywood Studio District Neighborhood Council
Central Hollywood Neighborhood Council

Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council
Neighborhood Council Advocate Budget Committee
Los Feliz Neighborhood Council
Silver Lake Neighborhood Council
East Hollywood Neighborhood Council
Studio City Neighborhood Council
Atwater Village Neighborhood Council
Members of GTAC