

Myths and Facts about the New West Charter School Relocation

There are too many myths and misstatements floating around regarding the relocation of New West Charter School to 1905 S. Armacost Avenue. These facts refute those myths and present verifiable facts about this project.

Myth: New West Charter is an exclusive private school.

Fact: New West Charter is a high-performing public, tuition-free charter school. It is chartered by the State of California and admissions are based on a non-biased lottery system.

Myth: New West Charter will cause increased parking on residential streets.

Fact: There will be NO school-related parking on any nearby residential streets. Students will not be allowed to drive to school, pursuant to “Home-School” contracts required to be signed by all students and their parents prior to admission.¹ There will be a total of 34 daily faculty and staff, including 28 full-time teachers. At most, there will be 38 faculty and staff utilizing 55 parking spaces - leaving plenty of space for occasional school guests without causing any parking on nearby residential streets. In addition, a Preferential Parking District will be explored to limit non-resident parking on nearby streets.

Myth: There will be 1,000 daily car trips to the school.

Fact: Following implementation of LADOT’s required trip reduction traffic mitigation, which will become a project Condition of Approval, trip caps will be imposed to reduce the number of estimated daily car trips to the school. The identified trip caps will limit the school to 241 morning peak hour trips (approximately 120 cars) and 126 afternoon peak hour trips (approximately 63 cars) – which equates to approximately 590 total daily trips (approximately 295 cars).² These trip reductions would be implemented through an aggressive carpool program (minimum of 3 students per car), not allowing any student drivers and other transportation mitigation methods (emphasizing public transit use, walking and bicycling).³

Myth: The school has no plans to monitor or police students in the local community.

Fact: New West Charter requires strictly enforced “Home-School” contracts, which are signed by parents and students and have harsh penalties for disobedience, including expulsion. All student activity, both on and off-campus, are regulated by these contracts and are made to ensure that our students present themselves in the best light both at school and in the community.

Myth: There will be numerous special events that will require neighborhood parking.

Fact: Pursuant to anticipated LA City conditions, all large-scale special events will be held off-site.⁴ New West Charter currently uses Beverly Hills High School for all such events and will continue to do so, or use other off-site site locations, after relocation. For yearly parent-teacher conferences, which will be held on site and will occur only 4 nights a year, all meetings will be

¹ “Attachment A” to Master Land Use Application for 1905 S. Armacost Avenue, New West Charter School, July 28, 2011, Pg. 4

² Traffic Impact Analysis Report for Proposed 875-Student Charter Middle and High School at 1905 Armacost Avenue, Mitigation Measures, September 2011, Pg. 102

³ LADOT Initial Traffic Assessment Memo for the Proposed 875-Student Charter School Project at 1905 Armacost Avenue, October 6, 2011, Pg. 4

⁴ “Attachment A” to Master Land Use Application for 1905 S. Armacost Avenue, New West Charter School, July 28, 2011, Pg. 17

staggered and by-appointment only to reduce any parking and traffic impacts.⁵ It is anticipated that off-site, non-street parking will be made available, if necessary.

Myth: The proposed site of the school isn't big enough.

Fact: The California Department of Education has thoroughly reviewed and approved the proposed relocation site and found that there is adequate space for 875 students. The proposed relocation site also meets the City's requirements for schools. If it wasn't large enough to comfortably and safely accommodate our students, we wouldn't have selected it.

Myth: Local students won't be allowed to attend New West Charter.

Fact: All local families with children entering middle school will be encouraged to apply to New West Charter's state-mandated lottery system for admission. Pursuant to its charter, regulated by the California Department of Education (CDE), New West Charter offers a "local preference" option to the elementary school within CDE's attendance boundary. Brockton Elementary will be the local school within the attendance boundary for the proposed relocation site on Armacost Avenue. If at least 70% of the students at Brockton qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch program, then any student who attended that school for all 6 years (K-5) will receive automatic admission into New West Charter as a 6th grader. Admissions to New West Charter is one of the most closely monitored aspects of its charter, to promote fairness to all applicants. Currently, 60% of students attending New West Charter live on the Westside of Los Angeles.

Myth: New West Charter is required to have an EIR for their relocation.

Fact: Absolutely false. All potential impacts have been reviewed in a Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared by the City for the relocation, which found that there are NO significant unmitigatable impacts for the relocation.⁶

Myth: Stoner Park is at capacity and cannot accommodate New West Charter students.

Fact: New West Charter already uses Stoner Park for recreational purposes and will not increase the amount of students currently using Stoner Park. In addition, New West Charter is currently in negotiations with Bally's Total Fitness next door and several other fitness venues to provide access for students for recreational purposes.

Myth: Students will be forced to leave campus to eat lunch everyday.

Fact: Just like every other school, food will be brought on-campus for those students that do not bring their own lunch. All lunch, however, will be consumed on-site and students will not be allowed to leave campus. Currently, 30% of students opt into the on-site lunch program and 70% bring their own lunch to school.

Myth: A new school will cause a decline in property values.

Fact: According to recent studies, property values near high-performing schools actually increase, not decrease.⁷

Myth: If New West Charter doesn't move to this location, a lower-impact business will.

Fact: *By right*, alternative uses for 1905 S. Armacost Avenue include a supermarket with over 5,000 daily trips; an entertainment casting agency with hundreds of people lined up outside daily; or an industrial business that requires 18-wheeler truck access.

⁵ "Attachment A" to Master Land Use Application for 1905 S. Armacost Avenue, New West Charter School, July 28, 2011, Pg. 17

⁶ City of Los Angeles Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, ENV-2011-1924-MND, Draft, November 9, 2011

⁷ <http://profitofeducation.org/?p=10101>