

HERB J. WESSON, JR.  
COUNCILMEMBER, 10TH DISTRICT  
PRESIDENT, LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

September 17, 2019

South Los Angeles Area Planning Commission  
Department of City Planning  
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
Crenshaw Customer Service Center  
4030 Crenshaw Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90008

**RE: SUPPORT OF APPEAL - DIR-2018-3204-SPR-SPP-1A  
3650-3700 S. CRENSHAW BOULEVARD; 3450-3500 OBAMA BOULEVARD**

Dear Honorable Commissioners:

When the District Square project was first approved by our Los Angeles City Council, it was designed as a retail center bringing much needed amenities to the community. The community supported this development nearly unanimously in an effort to bring retail stores such as Target and Ralphs and much-needed commerce into our community. At that time, the CRA/LA was still in existence and this was exactly the type of project that the community, wanted, deserved, and expected. However, I am not comfortable with the current proposal and ask that you support the appeal and reject the project.


I cannot support what is currently being proposed. We voted as a Council for a development that would improve, not displace, the community. We have no need for a six-story development consisting of 577 luxury apartment units that will be unaffordable to most of the neighborhood's current residents. What we need is affordable housing. The median income in this area is about \$43,000. To build a development that does not take this into account is unacceptable. **There must be a significant number of affordable housing units in order for me to consider supporting this development.**

The original plan was designed to build up the area so that members in the community could use these local amenities, improve their everyday lives, and strengthen the economy of our neighborhoods. It is well known that owners of retail stores, particularly supermarkets, are less inclined to open new stores in our neighborhoods which need them most. That was why we were thrilled to be building a retail center on the corner of Obama and Crenshaw. We need to build developments in these areas that community members can enjoy and benefit from

economically while also bringing new people to the area, not developments that will push existing tenants out. Bringing in 577 market rate luxury residential units does not build up or benefit the community. Instead, it will drive up rent prices and displace life-long community members.

We are going to continue to face this problem with the increasing number of residential developments sprouting up across the city. To mitigate the damage to our communities and neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles that these projects will cause, I will be introducing a motion to create a policy to implement anti-displacement zones near luxury developments like this. This policy would cap rent prices within a two-mile radius of these kinds of projects and protect renters in the surrounding area of a luxury development from predatory rent-hikes. While we can protect our neighborhoods in the future with this policy, for now I urge you to listen to our community members, support the appeal, and reject the current plan.

With the utmost respect,



**HERB J. WESSON, JR.**  
President, Los Angeles City Council  
Councilmember, 10<sup>th</sup> District

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