



MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON
Councilmember, Eighth District

Friday, November 13, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

There have been many questions, concerns and contentions regarding the embattled Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Mall site. My singular concern is that Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, one of the most economically viable assets in South LA, is developed in a manner that reflects the interests and aspirations of local stakeholders. Given the time, energy and engagement the community has expended, nothing less will be acceptable.

A community-driven vision for Crenshaw mall is still a long way from being realized. The Downtown Crenshaw Rising proposal has its merits, and I appreciate the community vision and hard work necessary to develop a proposal for a land trust. Of course, it would be ideal if architects, developers and investors from our community could carry out the project; however, any potential developer must first convince the current owner to execute a sale agreement. I recognize efforts are ongoing, however, to date, no such agreement has materialized with the Downtown Crenshaw Rising group.

Many have called on me to vocally oppose specific bidders and support others. Such engagement at this stage would be detrimental to the long-term interests of my constituents. Not only does this have no legal bearing on the parties involved, it would likely provide fodder for courts to revoke discretionary authority over any future project. This has occurred on several key projects, including ones in the Crenshaw district, where elected officials were pressured to take public positions before the matter came before them for a vote. As the current Chairperson on the Planning and Land Use Management Committee, I am particularly sensitive to this. Such a setback would be deeply harmful to the entire Crenshaw District.

BHCP is so near and dear to our hearts, and is rightly the focus of so many in our community. The project has been the subject of so many twists and turns, hopes and disappointments, promises and missed opportunities. I am continually encouraged by the righteous fight so many continue to wage for the very heart and soul of economic life in our community.

Onward,

Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson