



Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Councilmember, CD8
200 N. Spring Street, Room 450
Los Angeles, CA 90012

March 22, 2021

Dear Councilmember Harris-Dawson:

Measure JJJ, TOC and CCSP Amendment Requests for PMHCC

The Park Mesa Heights Community Council (PMHCC), which includes Hyde Park, Angeles Mesa and View Heights are being severely impacted by the Transit Oriented Communities' (TOC) Housing Incentive Guidelines, and provisions allowed through Measure JJJ. Although PMHCC supports affordable housing initiatives, the TOC and Measure JJJ does not effectively address nor achieve the Area Median Income (AMI) goals for the residents and stakeholders who currently live and conduct their business within our community.

PMHCC encompasses a limited number of communities within Los Angeles with a population that is primarily African American families.[1] However, the changes in the economy and political landscape created a huge loss of property and employment opportunities. The neglect of the community in planning and economic empowerment remain a major challenge for the community at large. Further, the new TOC and Measure JJJ guidelines are preventing our community from growing economically and gaining a viable existence.

In 2004, stakeholders battled with the L.A. City Planning Department and the City Council's Planning and Land Use Committee, which eventually led to the agreed Crenshaw Corridor Specific Plan (CSSP). The objective of the CCSP was to maintain and encourage economic growth and vitality on the Crenshaw Corridor (for the existing community) and to ensure affordable housing for area's median income

The Eighth Council District constituents and stakeholders believe that Measure JJJ and the TOC guidelines largely eradicated affordable housing, adequate commercial space, and sufficient parking within new projects due to opportunistic developers desire for financial windfalls. Additionally, both Measure JJJ and the TOC guidelines are used to obtain approval on projects that do not meet the needs of the community. In fact, most of the CCSP guidelines are viewed as mere recommendations.

It is our objective to have a viable and thriving community with affordable housing, adequate parking and commercial space. Similar to the Boyle Heights Latinx community, who have been under siege through inequitable land use, the Park Mesa Heights community must have a development plan that is working for the ***benefit of the African American community.*** [2]



The following is a list of major concerns that must be reconciled:

- 1) Affordable Housing - developers continue to submit projects with a false narrative that they are providing housing that is affordable [3]; instead the projects they submit to PMHCC's Planning Land Use Management and Beautification committee (PLUMB) provide an insufficient number of affordable units that do not address the PMHCC communities' Median Area Income of approximately \$36,000 to \$40,000 for a family of four annually. Projects with mixed-use units are mostly "market rates" and are unattainable for existing residents. This fact continues to cause on-going community displacement. These realizations are profoundly egregious especially with the pending "luxury" redevelopment planned for Dorset Village housing that will demolish existing affordable housing and displace 206 existing households. (as per the letter sent to the Councilman Marqueece Harris-Dawson **October 20, 2020** by PMHCC.)
- 2) Commercial Space - developers continue to submit projects with commercial space that is less than fifty-percent of the ground floor space. However, in the CCSP guidelines it states, "at least 75 percent of ground floor frontage of any building including any portion of a building used for parking, should be devoted to retail or commercial uses."
- 3) Parking Spaces - developers continue to submit projects with inadequate to no parking spaces for new residents. The TOC incentive for **Residential Minimum Parking Requirements**, particularly "Tier 4: No required parking for residential units in an Eligible Housing Development" is a misguided effort to encourage mass public transit rather than car ownership. Thus developers get to eliminate parking for tenants with no significant contribution to the actual needs of current and future residents in the community.
- 4) Local Hire - developers have not included local hires on their projects. There is no 30% local hire taking place because developers do not work with local centers such as the Black Workers Center, the Neighborhood Council, Developing Options, My Brother's Keeper, National Association of Minority Contractors or the Council Office to identify and train African American workers. Having a Job Fair is not sufficient. For development to be economically beneficial to our community, the project needs to produce jobs for community members.

The PMHCC requests the following immediate changes to the TOC, Measure JJJ and CCSP guidelines:

- Exempt Park Mesa Heights from TOC
- Provide status on the Planning Dept report on revising TOC guidelines per LA City Council Motions CF 20-1314 (Oct 13, 2020) and CF 20-0189 (Feb 2, 2020) and Affordable Linkage Fee Ordinance 185342



- Replace “should” to “shall” in the current CCSP guidelines
- Mandate “open space” on the ground level instead of rooftops in CCSP
- Mandate 100% commercial frontage for all mixed-use projects
- Mandate “affordable units” to 50 percent mixed income units in all guidelines and include a combination of extremely low, very low, and moderate rates
- Override and amend the TOC **Residential Minimum Parking Requirements** in all Tiers but most particularly change “Tier 4: No required parking for residential units in an Eligible Housing Development” to at least .5 spaces per bedroom.
- Mandate that CEQA have direct review of all projects and Environmental Impact Studies
- Utilize resources itemized in #4 regarding local hire and enforce the following MBE/WBE (Minority and Women Business Enterprises) requirements as stated in Measure JJJ on developers’ hires:
 - ❑ guarantee to offer at least 30 percent of the work-hours to city residents, with 10 percent coming from those living within five miles of the project;
 - ❑ pay standard wages for the area; and
 - ❑ employ members of apprenticeship training programs and workers with real-world experience.
- Direct resources and create equitable institutions to support cooperative housing initiatives and community land trusts that empower community ownership.

These requested changes will help to begin the healing process for the oppressed residents and stakeholders whose communities continue to experience inequities and bring us closer to the goals within the **Mayor’s Executive Directive No. 27, “Racial Equity in City Government”**.

We are requesting that our Eighth Council District use its authority combined with the intent of the Mayor’s Executive Directive, No. 27 and the Planning Department’s Core Objective Statement to achieve our crucial concerns.

Respectfully,

Park Mesa Heights Community Council



Copies to:
Director, LA Planning
Director LA Building and Safety
LA Tenants Association
Hyde Park Organizational Partnership for Empowerment
LA City Council
County Supervisor Holly Mitchell
California State Senator Sydney Kamlager

Footnotes/supporting documents:

1. The second largest population in PMHCC is 0-10 years old, as stated in the *L.A. Times* Mapping Information and cited in the 2000 Census, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and the LA City Planning Dept., U.S. Census Bureau 2010. The PMHCC PLUMB committee understands these facts to mean “families” need adequate housing to raise their families instead of small studio and one-bedroom units.
2. LA Planning Dept: [Boyle Heights Community Plan](#) ([Plan document](#) PDF)
3. [The Embarcadero Institute: Reports on Housing](#)