

# MR. MAYOR, THE BLACK COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU NOW!



## The Mayor Holds the Key

He holds the key to the economic revival and survival of the Crenshaw Boulevard community along the proposed light rail line from Exposition Blvd. to Florence Blvd.

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas urges residents of the district, along with business owners and all those with a stake in the outcome, to sign a petition to see that the new Crenshaw-to-LAX light rail line will be a first-rate project and to know that they have an opportunity to let the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) hear their voice.

A petition urging the MTA to include important design features that will enhance the commuting experience for all County residents is now in wide circulation. It calls for two critical developments: a station stop in Leimert Park Village and an under-grounding the segment of light rail that will run along Crenshaw Blvd. from 48th to 59th streets.

More than 1,000 people already have signed the petition, and Supervisor Ridley-Thomas encourages everyone who is able to join the movement. The goal is to present thousands of signatures to the Metro board before its meeting at 9 a.m. on May 26.



MAYOR ANTONIO VILLARAIGOSA

### THE COMMUNITY HAS SPOKEN IN A UNITED VOICE THROUGH THEIR ELECTED OFFICIALS, PASTORS AND EVERYONE CONCERNED. AND THIS IS WHAT THEY HAVE SAID.



#### CONGRESSWOMAN MAXINE WATERS (CA-35)

"There is a significant cost associated with the Federal Aviation Administration's request for the Crenshaw/LAX line to go below street level at Los Angeles International Airport, which is in my district. My office is working with the FAA and my constituents to explore alternatives which may create enough cost savings to fund the Leimert Park stop, which I support."



#### CONGRESSWOMAN LAURA RICHARDSON (CA-37)

"I am continuing to work hard to bring transit options to our region. As gas prices escalate and traffic congestion worsens on our roads and highways, it is crucial that we invest in our public transportation systems. With the America Fast Forward initiative I am hopeful that we will see a great deal of progress for our transit systems over the coming years. I am doing everything I can in Congress to make sure that the federal government rewards local communities who are willing to invest in their transit systems, including through my legislation, the TIFIA enhancement Act of 2011, which I recently reintroduced and Metro has officially endorsed."

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#### SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS (2ND DISTRICT)

"Let Metro know that running a train down the middle of the street in Park Mesa Heights is unacceptable and that a station in Leimert Park Village is a must," the Supervisor said. "Each signature sends a message. The petition conveys the unity of the region's concerned citizens and their insistence that the Metro Board to vote yes for safety, financial opportunity, and the community's future growth."



#### SENATOR CURREN PRICE (S- 26TH DISTRICT)

"I have been supportive of Supervisor Ridley-Thomas' efforts and proposals on the Crenshaw-LAX Light Rail at all stages. I am in agreement with undergrounding the entirety of the Crenshaw Blvd portion of the rail line, and adding a station at historic Leimert Park Village.

I have written letters and had staff testify in support of it. I also support the project's labor agreement which calls for local hire and MTA's small business contract efforts. This is economic justice.

This will be a good regional economic booster providing jobs and it is a long overdue investment in transportation."



#### JEROME HORTON (STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION -4TH DIST.)

"The minority community will benefit more than any other community ... they utilize the transit system more than any other community, and correspondingly the appropriate amount of service, attention and resources should be provided to communities of color ... and that includes a Leimert Park station."



#### ASSEMBLYMAN MIKE DAVIS (A-48TH DISTRICT)

"I support the Leimert Park Station and also believe firmly that we need to have appropriate funding for underground transportation in the Crenshaw community as is recommended by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. I believe that our community should have an equal opportunity to have the kind of spending that will demonstrate that MTA and other transportation authorities believe strongly in diversity in spending. I was very pleased to see Senator Barbara Boxer come to the Crenshaw area during the recent elections. She stated that there was going to be millions of dollars available for the rail transportation corridor project in the Crenshaw area. I'm very thrilled to know that residents and local leaders have come together with a significant proposal that will help to improve the transportation, not only in our region but also in the entire area by the implementation of underground rail which the available funding that our senator talked to us about."



#### COUNCILMAN BERNARD PARKS (8TH DISTRICT)

"My top priority for the proposed Crenshaw Light Rail Line is ensuring an additional station is built in Leimert Park," Councilmember Bernard C. Parks said. "As community residents know, Leimert Park is considered the center of the African-American arts scene in Los Angeles. Without an accompanying station at Leimert Park which matches and reinforces the unique character of the surrounding neighborhood, this cultural destination will be severely impacted, and our efforts to revitalize the neighborhood with projects like the multi-million dollar restoration of the historic Vision Theater will be dealt a significant setback."



#### COUNCILMAN HERB WESSON (10TH DISTRICT)

"A Leimert Park Station will greatly benefit not only the adjacent communities, but our region as well, particularly from an economic development perspective. So, I'm a strong supporter of having a station located there."



#### MAYOR JAMES BUTTS (INGLEWOOD)

"The Crenshaw EXPO line is a vital component for the future economic resurgence of the city of Inglewood. The line will reduce vehicle traffic and emissions while providing low cost, fast and efficient transportation. The city of Inglewood enthusiastically supports the EXPO line."



#### DANNY J. BAKEWELL, SR. (CHAIRMAN, NNPA)

"The Mayor and his appointees have five votes and the community believes that it is crucial to our economic survival that there be a station at Leimert Park and that the light rail continues underground down Crenshaw to the Florence Avenue turnoff. Mr. Mayor, we need your support."

#### LEON JENKINS (PRESIDENT - NAACP, L.A.)

"I don't believe that a rapid transit system passing through the heart of the African-American community- should not have a stop at Leimert Park, the central gathering place for African-Americans and their businesses. Socially, it is part of our entertainment center and to not have a station there is almost nonsensical.

"All of the MTA reports vested it as a win-win for everybody. [It's] a win-win for everybody because there's a stop that allows people to gather and support the African American shops, our park and to socialize. It also increases ridership and also helps in terms of traffic congestion. The rail should not go above ground-because it's too disruptive."



#### BISHOP CHARLES BLAKE (CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST)

"I'm in support of the Leimert Park Station because too frequently various modes of transportation and movement of people bypass significant areas of our community. Many times when freeways are planned, the off-ramps are not positioned nor located for convenience to our citizens. We are a vital part, and vital role of the constituency of the city of Los Angeles.

"...Our community certainly needs every convenience that every other community also has. The Leimert Park stop would be many, many blocks away from The Martin Luther King/Crenshaw intersection stop. I think Leimert Park is a historic area of our city that will add both to the experience of citizens who would better themselves if they stop there and also, it would give the system an opportunity to make a valid contribution to a very important area in the African-American community here in the city of Los Angeles.

"I strongly, strongly advocate that there should be a stop at Leimert Park and the transit should continue underground at 68th Street."



#### BISHOP T. LARRY KIRKLAND (5TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT AME CHURCH)

"The motion by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas is on point. The inclusion of a station to create access to Leimert Park Village and the design of the Crenshaw/LAX rail line to run below grade from Exposition and Crenshaw to the Harbor Subdivision/Florence right of way are important to this community and the over 25 AME Churches in the Los Angeles area," declared Bishop Theodore Larry Kirkland, presiding prelate of the AME Churches in the 5th Episcopal District which includes Southern California.

"The Village and surrounding neighborhoods are symbolic of the civil rights struggles including removal of housing covenants and other barriers which prevented African Americans and others from enjoying the full benefits of economic opportunities. Surely we want those who arrive at LAX and travel to our downtown center to know the richness of our culture and to know what the Crenshaw area businesses have to offer," continued Bishop Kirkland who is also the President of the General Board of the AME Church International."



#### BISHOP GREGORY L. DIXON (FIRST CHURCH OF GOD ... CENTER OF HOPE, INGLEWOOD)

"We stand in support of the proposed amendment made by 2nd District Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas to amend the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor project to include the Leimert Park/Vernon Station and undergrounding the segment of the alignment from 48th to 59th Streets as a part of the Base Project. This amendment will insure that our communities are provided the best possible transportation services and economic development opportunities that we so greatly need."

#### REV. WILLIAM SMART (LOCAL ACTIVIST and INGLEWOOD PASTOR)

"Inglewood is located at the heart of the [Crenshaw] Line, therefore residents of the city have a tremendous interest and stake in how it's designed in Los Angeles, Inglewood and the airport-area."

#### NJIDEKA OBJIYAKU (AN INGLEWOOD RESIDENT AND DAUGHTER OF A LEIMERT PARK BUSINESS OWNER)

"A victory on May 26th will signal to residents who live in areas around the Line that our voices do indeed count, such a success will create great excitement in Inglewood as we begin designing our own Crenshaw Line stations and more broadly, attempt to rebuild our local economy."

"I promise we would not let a train come through Crenshaw Boulevard above ground. I am asking the community to join me in an act of civil disobedience to stop this from happening."

—COMPLIMENTS OF THE BAKEWELL FAMILY

Note: THE SURVIVAL OF OUR COMMUNITY IS AT STAKE; YOUR HELP IS NEEDED. TO GET INVOLVED E-MAIL US AT: NICOLE@LASENTINEL.NET