

MOTION

The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and various City departments are currently engaged in the Jordan Downs public housing redevelopment which will double the density of the community from roughly 700 units to nearly 1,500. To prevent displacement and disruption to the lives of current residents, HACLA is utilizing a Build First Model which will allow current Jordan Downs residents to move from an old unit to a new unit within the development or use their voucher at a different property in HACLA's portfolio.

While this is a laudable and well-considered approach, similar considerations and protections should be established for Watts residents adjacent to Jordan Downs and throughout the community. Currently, Watts residents, including some who tirelessly advocated for the Jordan Downs redevelopment and other investments for Watts, must apply for units via a lottery system and compete with residents throughout the City to access the redeveloped Jordan Downs homes.

The recently opened New Harvest building at Jordan Downs, for example, offered 48 non-replacement housing unit opportunities. Due to the lottery, only 16% of units were ultimately occupied by Watts residents. And while Jordan Downs' rents are stabilized due to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's public housing income guidelines, properties on the open market have fewer safeguards, especially if they do not fall under the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO).

According to the University of California, Berkeley's Urban Displacement Project and similar research, communities like Watts are highly susceptible to gentrification and displacement. Preventing gentrification and displacement requires the implementation of a wide range of proactive and protective measures, such as geographic preference policies. The City of San Francisco is one example of a municipality that adopted a Neighborhood Housing Preference to lessen the displacement of vulnerable residents.

It is fitting that, in light of these circumstances, the City should move forward with the adoption of a Watts-based Geographic Preference Policy for the Jordan Downs redevelopment effort.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles be REQUESTED to adopt a policy similar to San Francisco's Neighborhood Resident Housing Preference for the Watts community as defined by the boundaries of the Watts Neighborhood Council.

PRESENTED BY:



JOE BUSCAINO
Councilmember, 15th District

SECONDED BY:





ORIGINAL

MAR 3 0 2022