Dear Neighbors,

Thank you for reading “The Eighth: Quarterly Review” – our inaugural issue highlighting Council District 8 news and recent updates on how my staff and I are serving you!

With this newsletter, our goal is to keep you informed on policy issues, community initiatives and opportunities to engage with my office. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or provide feedback as my goal is to keep residents at the center of everything I do in Council District 8.

My personal belief is that the greatest assets of the 8th District are the people. As we move ahead in 2016, I welcome community input on how we can work together in making South LA a vibrant place to work, play and live. I envision our district having quality housing, good paying jobs, bustling commercial corridors and high-performing schools. Our community should be healthy and vibrant with safe and open spaces and parks and multiple modes of transportation. Lastly, we need a robust infrastructure for civic participation where local residents are empowered to lead and move our community forward.

In our first eight months, we want to share our focus on government responsiveness, economic vitality, and safe and thriving neighborhoods. I continue to commit a significant amount of my time visiting neighborhoods of the Eighth District and getting to know members of the community and their needs and concerns. We’ve held community town halls, attended neighborhood meetings, visited local schools and organizations- all with the intention of putting our neighborhoods and businesses first!

With your engagement, together we can build a brighter future for South Los Angeles. I am eager to serve you and I look forward to being your voice at City Hall.

Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson
Increasing awareness and education

In July, Council District launched the Clean and Safe Streets Initiative to focus on infrastructure repair and street beautification and to raise the profile and usage of 311 in Council District 8. The initiative is a coordinated effort with community-based organizations* and neighborhood councils to mobilize and educate residents about the use of 311, which is the city’s service to report illegal dumping, graffiti and other issues.

Our field deputies have worked closely with the Los Angeles Sanitation Department to ensure that bulky item pick-ups and alleyway cleanups are performed regularly. We will devote more resources and maximize city services to respond to requests regarding bulky item pick up and other conditions that contribute to community blight.

Community Education and Mobilization

Field deputies explained the purpose of the MyLA311 mobile application and encouraged residents to use the application and to help the community become cleaner and safer.

In addition, our office has collaborated with community organizations, local schools, neighborhood councils and block clubs to mobilize residents to participate in a total of five 311 tours. During the tours, residents participate in an orientation on the 311 department and how they can assist residents, followed by a training on how to use the mobile application. Lastly, they canvass neighborhoods to submit requests for streets and alleyways that need a bulky item pick-up, graffiti removal or street repairs. A large share of our tours are community driven, but field deputies from our office join these groups to help community members with this effort and help reinforce what Councilmember Harris-Dawson wants to see in the district.

Increasing Response in our District

In the first three months of the initiative, 311 service requests from CD 8 residents nearly doubled from 4,828 requests to 8,713 requests and the Bureau of Sanitation reported collecting 236 tons of waste from CD 8 alleys and sidewalks. From July 2015 to January 2016, CD 8 has a total of 50,082 requests! Please continue to call 311 or use the free MyLA311 app!

*The complete list of partners that are leading community clean-ups and 311 trainings include: Community Coalition, SCOPE, Green Dot Public Schools, Alliance Public Schools and Best Start Metro LA Richardson Park Neighborhood Leadership Group.

To get more information on how to get involved or to sign your group up to participate, contact Fredy Torres at fredy.torres@lacity.org or 213-485-7616.
Students met with Councilmember Harris-Dawson, LA Sanitation and LAPD to learn how they can take an active role in making their community clean and safe. They submitted nearly 1,000 requests to 311 using the mobile application in one day!
Homelessness is affecting every area of our City and as Chair of the Homelessness and Poverty Committee, I am focusing our efforts on serving the most vulnerable members of our community. My office has produced *Homelessness in South Los Angeles* to shed light on a striking demographic trend that we see among the homeless population in Los Angeles: race. For the entire city, the odds of being homeless in Los Angeles are 1 in 221. For Black men, the odds are 1 in 28. For Black women, the odds are 1 in 88. In general, Black residents of Los Angeles are nine times more likely to be homeless than others.

The current homelessness crisis is decades in the making. For nearly 60 years, policies at every level of government have contributed to a disappearing social safety net: the loss of affordable housing, the reduction of middle class jobs, and the destruction of public mental health care. Discrimination, both overt and systematic, has limited opportunities for good jobs, adequate housing, and building financial security. All of these conditions have disproportionately affected Black people resulting in a higher concentration of homelessness. Please take the time to read this document and share your thoughts on how we can rebuild a safety net for people living on the brink of poverty.

In conjunction with our position paper on South Los Angeles, the City has created a Comprehensive Strategic plan to ameliorate the multitude of issues affecting Angelenos living on the streets. We need to increase financial stability and job opportunities as well as provide better integration of services throughout the City and County to ensure people have the support they need to get back on their feet. Our housing stock needs to grow considerably in all areas, especially for the low and moderate income levels.

The County of Los Angeles includes 88 cities and unincorporated neighborhoods and provides the lion share of supportive services to Angelenos. As such, we are working closely with the County to coordinate services and strategies to best serve our homeless population.

Most importantly, our service providers are the front-line workers and house a wealth of knowledge on the issues and obstacles homeless people struggle with on a day-to-day basis. By strengthening our relationship with them as well as with faith based institutions and non-profits, we will be able to ensure a smart and cohesive regional approach to combatting homelessness.

*Read the Homelessness in South Los Angeles position paper here.*
The Crenshaw Metro line, which will connect to LAX, is slated to open in 2019. In Council District 8, an above ground station has been designated at Crenshaw and Slauson and will be the gateway for commuters traveling to LAX. Councilmember Harris-Dawson’s vision for the station is to be a landmark that is culturally and architecturally representative of the Crenshaw Community and African-American experience. Our office is working with MTA to create amenities such as art work, decorative street lighting, pedestrian safety features, and attractive signage that is reflective of the Crenshaw District.

Council District 8 and MTA aim to support a number of transit oriented district policy goals which include fostering economic development and job creation, improving urban design and walkability, encouraging transit ridership and expanding mobility options, and providing and maintaining housing for a wide range of income levels. We welcome your feedback on the Crenshaw line and public transportation issues in your community.

Please share your concerns by calling our City Hall Office at 213-473-7008 or emailing Joanne Kim at joanne.kim@lacity.org.
Councilmember Harris-Dawson has hosted a series of town halls throughout the Eighth District to engage residents on the issues most important to them. He’s held a total of 8 meetings with residents and community organizations in King Estates, Hyde Park, Vermont Vista, Green Meadows and the Crenshaw District. The series has given residents an opportunity to share their concerns about neighborhood and citywide issues. Councilmember Harris-Dawson is committed to empowering residents to lead and bring about real neighborhood change. We must work together to bring great results to the district!

For more information on upcoming Listening Tours please call our District Office at 213-485-7616.

Special thanks to the community organizations that worked to successfully organize these events, including: Community Coalition, Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE), the Los Angeles Black Workers Center, Alliance of Californians for Community Engagement (ACCE), Brotherhood Crusade, Trust LA, LA Neighborhood Land Trust, T.R.U.S.T South LA & Free Lo(t)s Angeles.

Neighborhood Issues CD8 Residents are Concerned About:

- City Services
- Street and Sidewalk Repairs
- Tree Trimmings and Graffiti Removal
- Illegal Dumping and Bulky Items
- Vacant Lots
- Economic Development and Job Creation
- Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project
- Marijuana Dispensaries
- Homelessness in South LA

What neighborhood issues concern you the most? Call 213-485-7616 or email councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org.
Councilmember Harris-Dawson joined City leaders for the opening ceremony at City Hall on February 3rd to celebrate African-American Heritage Month. As part of a month-long series, the City recognized esteemed African-Americans who have made significant contributions to the cultural, educational and political landscape in the City of Los Angeles.

Singer and songwriter Lionel Ritchie was presented with the Living Legends award, and three other leaders were presented the Hall of Fame Awards. The recipients included the Honorable Audrey Collins, who has been appointed to the California Court of Appeals; Dr. Willie J. Hagan, President of California State University, Dominguez Hills; and the Honorable Jerome E. Horton, Chairman of the California Board of Equalization.

The City also presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to Our Authors Study Club, the City's co-sponsor of African-American Heritage Month, and one of 53 branches of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson.

Later in the month, Councilmember Harris-Dawson also hosted a Council presentation to honor the longest-running syndicated television show, Soul Train. The Councilmember individually recognized the original Soul Train dancers that performed on the hit television series from the 1970’s through the 1990’s. We had a blast recognizing the many contributions these individuals made in the music and dance arenas, leaving an incredible legacy for American popular culture.
In celebration of the 31st Kingdom Day Parade, we honored Dr. King’s legacy by bringing the community together in the name of freedom, justice and unity. Councilmember Harris-Dawson and Council President Herb Wesson co-hosted the Martin Luther King Jr. Festival & Freedom Fair on January 18th at the Leimert Park Village.

The community event drew thousands of residents with entertainers on three outdoor entertainment stages. Throughout Leimert Park there were food trucks, veteran and employment services as well as counseling on health and wellness issues. The Freedom Fair featured different City departments and community organizations that offered free resources and services.

Councilmember Harris-Dawson Hosts Tom Bradley Film Screening

In celebration of African-American Heritage Month at City Hall, Councilmember Harris-Dawson hosted a film screening of “Bridging the Divide: Tom Bradley and the Politics of Race” at City Hall. The event drew hundreds of community members who came to commemorate the legacy of Tom Bradley, the first African-American to serve on the L.A. City Council and as Mayor in Los Angeles.

After the film screening, Lorraine Bradley, Tom Bradley’s daughter, and Robert Farrell, former Councilmember of the Eighth District, described Tom Bradley’s vision and his significance in the national political landscape.

Bradley is the longest-serving mayor in the City’s history, holding office from 1973 to 1993. He is largely credited with transforming Los Angeles into a world-class city by bringing the Summer Olympics to Los Angeles in 1984, developing the modern downtown, and giving the city a world-class international airport and mass transportation system.

“Mayor Tom Bradley was a man who represented hope and courage, and transcended the barriers of race.” said Councilmember Harris-Dawson. “He ambitiously transformed Los Angeles into world-class city and pushed us to be innovative and forward-looking with our economy.”

MLK Festival and Freedom Fair

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Councilmember Harris-Dawson Ushered in the Holiday Season!

During the holidays, the 8th Council District partnered with community groups to bring holiday joy and cheer to deserving families. For Thanksgiving, the office provided turkeys to families, churches and food pantries that feed the homeless in the district.

On December 12th, Councilmember Harris-Dawson co-hosted a community holiday celebration with Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza for local children and families. The festive event featured a toy giveaway and a winter wonderland, which included sledding, snow angel making and even a few snowball fights. Nearly 800 children attended the event and received gifts donated by local merchants and event sponsors.
Councilmember Harris-Dawson Hosts 100th Day in Office Celebration!

Councilmember Harris-Dawson hosted a community celebration at Crenshaw High School on Oct. 10 to celebrate his first 100 days in office. Councilmember Harris-Dawson detailed his recent key actions, shared his goals for the Eighth District and asked for community input on how to rebuild South Los Angeles.

At the event, residents participated in a community resource fair with city departments and community organizations to learn about free services in the city and to sign up for civil service employment testing dates. Festivities included a play area for children, games, music and entertainment.

The community event drew a diverse crowd of 500 residents with a mariachi band, dancers, an Afro-Cuban salsa group and El Compa Negro, an African-American artist who sings corrido — a Mexican musical tradition. U.S. Rep. Karen Bass, City Council President Herb Wesson, Assemblyman Reggie Jones-Sawyer, City Council colleagues Curren Price and David Ryu and Los Angeles school board member George McKenna, were in attendance.
Key Legislative Updates

Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson serves as the Chair of the Homelessness and Poverty Committee and the Vice-Chair of the Planning Land Use and Management Committee. Councilmember Harris-Dawson also serves on the Housing; Economic Development; Personnel and Animal Welfare; and Rules, Elections, Intergovernmental Relations and Neighborhoods Committees.

Motions

• In response to the surge in homicides in South LA, Councilmember Harris-Dawson has called for the LAPD, GRYD, City Attorney, Recreation and Parks, and LAFD to work together in creating a thorough short and long term approach to ending the violence. Councilmember Harris-Dawson also called upon social media companies to stop the sharing of graphic photos of crime scenes out of respect for families and to also stop any threat of retaliation.

• Councilmember Harris-Dawson has researched best practices and created a comprehensive approaches to the many issues facing our homeless population and how to best handle the issue of encampments for our residents.

• Councilmember Harris-Dawson has introduced several pieces of legislation supporting maternity leave, universal access to affordable broadband, as well as strengthening the Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Upcoming Events

Jobs for LA Hiring Fair
March 12, 2016
9am to 2pm
Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza
3650 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90008
Upper parking lot, entrance near Stocker Ave.

Manchester Green Space Ribbon Cutting
March 17, 2016
3pm to 4:30pm
Manchester and Figueroa

South LA Day of Action
Saturday, March 19, 2016
9am to 3pm
Community Coalition
8101 S. Vermont Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90044
Join us for a community clean-up and 311 training. To sign up, email Fredy.Torres@lacity.org.

California Arbor Day Celebration
Community Resource Fair and Tree Planting Service Event
March 12, 2016
8:30am to 1pm
Loren Miller Elementary
830 W. 77th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90044
To participate, please email rachel.oleary@lacity.org.

Call the CD8 District Office at 213-485-7176 for more information.