



December 18, 2023

To: Mr. Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Chair
City of Los Angeles Planning and Land Use Management Committee

CC: Council Members Mr. John Lee, Ms. Katy Yaroslavsky, Ms. Imelda Padilla and Ms. Heather Hutt

Dear Councilmember Harris-Dawson:

One of the missions of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is to ensure that all of its schools have safe environments and safe walk-routes. To this end, LAUSD has significant concerns regarding Home Depot's (HD) proposed new store at the Granada Hills, North Hills Shopping Center (16830 West Devonshire St.). LAUSD believes that placing a light-industrial facility in close proximity to four public schools with students and their families crossing twice-daily through truck-centric traffic creates a potentially lethal point-specific problem that cannot be properly assessed using regional trip-balancing practices or by pointing out that the Balboa and Devonshire intersection has regulation crosswalks (part of HD's Traffic Assessment Report – TAR). It should be noted that Balboa and Devonshire is the 6th most dangerous intersection in the valley and is part of the city's High Injury Network (HIN).

We believe the only way to reduce the store's risk to pedestrians, including students, is to follow the example set by the City Councilmember Hal Bernson. In 1994, Home Depot announced its intention to build a store in the Southwest corner of the intersection of Zelzah St. and Chatsworth St. Its front door would be roughly 1,200 feet from Granada Hills High School (GHHS) and the store's traffic would use roads frequented by GHHS students.

When the Councilmember learned of the proposed store, he became so concerned he proposed that the location's zoning be changed (Ordinance 17404) to prevent any non-food related business from opening before 8 AM.¹ LAUSD believes that the proposed home improvement superstore presents an identical, if not greater risks due to its proximity to four adjacent schools and therefore, the same remedy should be applied to the HD proposed site at the North Hills Shopping Center.



We are available to discuss the proposed store and this risk-reduction step with you at the appropriate time in your deliberations.

Sincerely,

Scott M. Schmerelson
Board Vice President
Board Member, District 3

1 Ordinance 17404 amended Section 12.04 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code so that Article 2, Chapter 1, paragraph 5 read as follows:

“Section 5: The hours of operation of the subject facility, excepting restaurants and food sale facilities, shall not begin earlier than 8:00 a.m. unless otherwise permitted by the Zoning Administrator or through the Site Plan Review process.”

The change was accomplished via a zoning change for just the “Granada Hills” shopping center.