



The No Home Depot Coalition – Northeast Los Angeles
3516 Eagle Rock Blvd., Glassell Park, CA 90065
www.nohomedepot.org

CONTACT:

Luis Lopez, 323-665-0166
luisalbertolopez@sbcglobal.net

Dear Neighbors:

We are the **No Home Depot Coalition – Northeast Los Angeles**. We believe that a Home Depot located at the former Kmart site at San Fernando Rd. and Fletcher Dr. in Glassell Park is not in the best interest of all the neighborhoods of Northeast Los Angeles. The coalition's mission is to rally local residents, businesses and city government to stop Home Depot from locating at this site and secondarily to encourage development that is consistent with the community's desires. Those desires are for a mixed-use development that might include housing, a variety of pedestrian-friendly commercial services and retail such as quality restaurants, bookstores, specialty retail chains, and/or a grocery store, etc.

We are asking for your support by joining our coalition and allowing us to add your organization to our roster of those opposed to another Home Depot. Enclosed or attached you will find the following materials to mobilize your organization to aid in this effort:

1. A fact sheet covering the issues and history of the site in order to inform your membership.
2. A sample survey for your membership to measure their support in joining our cause.
3. A petition to circulate among members to quantify opposition to a Home Depot.
4. Two sample letters of support to send to City Council President Eric Garcetti (CD13).
5. An outreach letter to businesses in your area.
6. A L.A. Times article on how Northridge stopped a Wal-Mart from locating there and an article on the Kmart/Home Depot situation from the Glassell Park Improvement Association's newsletter.

Your support is critical to stopping Home Depot from building a third store on San Fernando Road. Two Home Depot stores already exist a mile or two in either direction – in Cypress Park and Glendale. While Home Depot has signed a long-term lease for this site with its owners; Home Depot cannot build the store they want to build because of a temporary Interim Control Ordinance passed by the L.A. City Council. The ICO prohibits commercial entities from demolishing existing large structures in the Fletcher/San Fernando area.

The ICO expires in June of 2006, with one final, six-month extension possible. During this time period, it is critical to demonstrate to Home Depot and to City Council that we do NOT want a Home Depot here. In past years, our community opposed a McDonald's at 3901 Eagle Rock Blvd. and won. The Coalition to Save Van De Kamp's saved a landmark façade from being bulldozed to make way for a Home Base. Let's work together to build something of lasting value for all residents of Northeast Los Angeles to enjoy at Fletcher Square.

The **No Home Depot Coalition – Northeast Los Angeles**, will do four things:

1. Quantify community opposition to Home Depot by gathering as many signatures on our **No Home Depot – Northeast Los Angeles** petition as possible.
2. Outreach to community organizations and businesses and ask them to send letters opposing this Home Depot and letters urging Council President Garcetti to extend the time period of the Fletcher Square ICO.
3. Outreach to the community at large by staging demonstrations at or near the former Kmart site to increase awareness of the issue to passing motorists.
4. Work with Council District 13 to advocate for the community’s best interests at this site and possibly sponsor a community forum or two to solicit community input for a better development at the site.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Contact Luis Lopez and add your organization’s name to our roster of supporting organizations (323-665-0166 or luisalbertolopez@sbcglobal.net).
2. Gather names on our petition and mail them to: **No Home Depot Coalition – Northeast Los Angeles**, 3516 Eagle Rock Blvd., Glassell Park, CA 90065.
3. Volunteer to outreach with us.
4. Donate materials such as paper, printing services, stamps, etc.
5. Visit our Web Site at www.nohomedepot.org to stay informed.

Thank you for your consideration. We can and will realize something better than another Home Depot in our Community at the former Kmart site.

Yours in solidarity,

No Home Depot Coalition – Northeast Los Angeles

The founding members of this coalition are:

George Brauckman	President, Glassell Park Improvement Association
Cosmo Delazari	Owner, Cosmo Auto Parts, 3332 Eagle Rock Blvd., Glassell Park
Tony Delazari	Owner, Tony’s Auto Care, 4057 Eagle Rock Blvd., Glassell Park
Mike Gealer	Glassell Park Neighborhood Council, GPIA
Laura Gutierrez	Glassell Park Neighborhood Council, GPIA
Judy Kagan	Glassell Park Neighborhood Council, GPIA
Luis Lopez	Friends of Atwater Village
Ed Rauen	Owner, Verdugo Hardware, 3516 Eagle Rock Blvd., a Glassell Park family-owned Business since 1923



FACT SHEET:

**The NO HOME DEPOT Coalition – Northeast Los Angeles
3516 Eagle Rock Blvd., Glassell Park, CA 90065
www.nohomedepot.org**

OUR MISSION:

The No Home Depot Coalition – Northeast Los Angeles is a grass roots organization of concerned local residents, businesses and community groups opposed to locating a Home Depot Store at Fletcher Drive and San Fernando Road in Glassell Park. We believe that a third Home Depot on a four-mile stretch of San Fernando Road is not in the best interest of the community. We further believe a Home Depot in this location is contrary to the spirit and intent of the Northeast Community Plan and the initial language of the proposed Community Design Overlay Zone being prepared by the L.A. Planning Department.

The coalition's mission is to rally local residents, businesses and city government to stop Home Depot from locating at this site and secondarily to encourage development that is consistent with the community's desires. Those desires call for a mixed-use development, that might include housing, office space and a variety of pedestrian-friendly commercial services and retail such as quality restaurants, bookstores, a gym, and specialty retail chains.

OUR REASONS:

We believe that there are compelling reasons to fight the Home Depot planned for this site. They are:

1. **INCREASE IN TRAFFIC:** Our first and foremost concern is the increase in traffic to an already congested intersection that a Mega-retailer like Home Depot would bring with it. Frequent deliveries from eighteen-wheeled trucks and customers' cars and trucks would be constant. When the Los Angeles City College Northeast Campus is built across Fletcher Drive from this site, that will add additional traffic as well. At least that traffic will provide the benefit of an education.
2. **SQUANDERED OPPORTUNITY:** Another Home Depot would squander an opportunity to develop something that the community really needs and wants. We don't need another Home Depot here when one exists two miles in either direction on San Fernando Rd.
3. **INCOMPATIBILITY:** A development here needs to be compatible with the new Northeast Campus of Los Angeles City College being built across Fletcher Dr. at the old Van De Kamp's Bakery. Our community needs to urge the city to court a developer who is willing to design and plan a project that makes total sense for this area. Perhaps a mixed-use development that takes into account the traffic problems; the student population at LACC; the proximity to the metro rail line; and the need for affordable housing and services that residents really need: a decent restaurant, a few retail shops, a fitness club, a movie theater. Why should the residents of Mt. Washington, Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Silver Lake and Atwater Village always have to go to Glendale, Pasadena or Burbank to shop and dine? It would be great to have some of those things, on a smaller scale, here in Northeast Los Angeles, as long as the traffic flow could be re-engineered effectively.

4. **SQUEEZING THE LITTLE GUY:** Home Depot, like Wal-Mart, can have a drastic effect on small and family businesses and often forces them to close. Home Depot offers contracting services that will put the squeeze on flooring businesses, general contractors, plumbers, etc. Local suppliers of window blinds, sprinkler/irrigation, electrical, tile, carpeting, marble, glass, screen, windows, doors, etc., will all be hurt by another Home Depot in the area.
5. **CRIME:** The Northeast Police Division has continually listed the Home Depot store in Cypress Park as a hot bed of criminal activity. Break-ins and auto thefts have been high. Home Depot has not addressed the high incidence of crime with any effective increase in security. Why should we believe the situation would be different in a Glassell Park location?

HISTORY:

1973 - Kmart opened it's doors in Glassell Park offering a variety of goods and services for our communities.

January 2002 - Kmart files for Bankruptcy and announces that stores with low profit earnings will be closed.

Summer 2004 – After financial turnaround, Kmart buys Sears, states it will keep certain Kmart stores open, introduce Sears merchandise and liquidate stores that are leased like the one on San Fernando Road and Fletcher Drive. Home Depot agrees to buy between 13 and 18 Kmart stores on sites Kmart/Sears no longer wants.

Fall 2004 - It is announced that Glassell Park's Kmart will close its doors in December 2004. Community activists attempt to contact Kmart's corporate office in hopes of working with either Kmart or developers to bring something the community wants and needs to the site.

December 2004 - Home Depot signs a 27-year lease with Kmart property's owners. Kmart is closed.

December 2004 - Fletcher Square Interim Control Ordinance introduced by Councilmember Eric Garcetti to the City Council and passed. This Ordinance restricts developers to dramatically change any structures in the Fletcher Square area bordered by Delay Drive to the North, the Glendale border to the West, the 2 Freeway to the East, and the Railroad tracks to the South. Council District 13 has recognized the potential for a vibrant community center in this area with the new City College campus being built; its proximity to the L.A. River, and possibilities for a mass transit stop here. The ICO was introduced as a way to slow down any radical changes in commercial buildings here. Council Districts 13 and 1 (Ed Reyes) were already working with City Planning on a Community Design Overlay Zone for Glassell Park and Cypress Park. The CDO would create design guidelines for our communities, and would promote pedestrian-friendly retail and mixed-use developments.

March 7, 2005 - Home Depot submits plans for permits with Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety to build a new store.

June 2005 - Home Depot Representatives request to address the Glassell Park Neighborhood Council Land Use and Planning Committee about their plans to build a new store. At the committee meeting, Richard W. Green, Real Estate Manager, stated intentions to put a Home Depot at the vacant Kmart lot. If the city would not let them demolish the current building and construct a bigger building, they would use the existing building.

July 2005 -Home Depot presents their plans for the Kmart site at Atwater Village Neighborhood Council's Planning and Land Use Committee, to a boisterous audience. The message was clear; Atwater Village does not want a Home Depot on this site.

November 29, 2005 - Glassell Park and Atwater Village Neighborhood Councils hold a joint forum with Home Depot at the Glassell Park Community/Senior Center. Home Depot presents plans for a much larger big-box store, plus a mixed-use residential/retail complex. Apartments and small retail stores would face San Fernando Road, with a parking lot structure in the middle, and Home Depot store in the back. Except for 2 people out of nearly 100, the message was clear, the community does not want a Home Depot on this site. Our community deserves better.

January 2006 – L.A. City Council votes to extend the Fletcher Square ICO for another six months

January 2006 - Residents and business owners from the communities of Glassell Park and Atwater Village form the No Home Depot – Northeast L.A. Coalition. The coalition is formed to give voice to residents and business owners who feel that another Home Depot in our neighborhood would be highly detrimental to our existing businesses, to our quality of life and a missed opportunity of tragic proportions to develop something of lasting value on the site.

January 2006 –Citizens To Protect Northridge defeat a proposed Wal-Mart at an already congested area by hiring an attorney and forcing Wal-Mart to pay for a full environmental and economic impact study. Wal-Mart walks away from the deal saying the study would delay the project and be too costly. We can do the same with Home Depot.



The No Home Depot Coalition – Northeast Los Angeles
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www.nohomedepot.org
(323) 665-0166 (ask for Luis)

Petition to oppose Home Depot in Glassell Park

We the undersigned, oppose another Home Depot for San Fernando Road. Furthermore, we support the Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) currently in place for the Fletcher Square area and an incoming Community Design Overlay Zone which limit BIG BOX development and encourage other use along this corridor. We support the spirit and intent of the Northeast Community Plan, which guides all development toward the creation of pedestrian friendly shopping areas, and community based design standards that reinforce unique identities of said neighborhoods. A third Home Depot within a few miles of each other, flies in the face of that objective.

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SAMPLE LETTER SUPPORTING THE ICO AT FLETCHER SQUARE

Honorable Eric Garcetti, City Council President
200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 470 – Attn. Alison Becker
Los Angeles, CA 90012

(Insert Date, 2006)

Dear Councilmember Garcetti,

This letter is written in support of continuing the City Council's Interim Control Ordinance for the Fletcher Square area of Glassell Park. The executive board of **(insert your organization name here)**, representing over **(XX)** members, urges that future development in this neighborhood be thoughtful and in alignment with the spirit and intent of the Northeast Community Plan and the future Community Design Overlay Zone. The **(insert your organization name here)**, agrees with the City Council and CD 13 that a slower approach to development as provided in the ICO is appropriate for this area.

Any increase in traffic resulting from new development in this area, which will soon house the Northeast campus of LACC, is of great concern. Response time for the Northeast Division of the LAPD is directly impacted by traffic congestion on San Fernando Road. Any further development here combined with the new LACC and the freeway on ramps in close proximity could impede the LAPD and the LAFD from responding to crimes and emergencies in our neighborhood. Careful studies must be made as to how this increase in traffic will best be mitigated.

In November of 2005, about one hundred residents from the communities of Atwater Village and Glassell Park met with a panel of Home Depot representatives to discuss plans for the Fletcher Square site. In addition to the traffic concerns, many people spoke about the problem of crime at the Home Depot in nearby Cypress Park and voiced concerns about unmanaged day laborers there. When asked how they would resolve these issues and concerns at a new store in Glassell Park, Home Depot had no satisfactory answers.

For these aforementioned reasons we support continuation of the Interim Control Ordinance for the Fletcher Square area until satisfactory plans for mitigating the foreseeable negative effects of development here are presented to our community.

Sincerely,

(your name, organization's name, etc.)

SAMPLE LETTER OPPOSING HOME DEPOT AT FLETCHER SQUARE:

Honorable Eric Garcetti, City Council President
200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 470 – Attn: Alison Becker
Los Angeles, CA 90012

(Insert Date)

Dear Councilmember Garcetti,

The **(your organization's name here)** representing **(XX)** households is writing you to let you know that our membership overwhelmingly disapproves of locating another Home Depot Store at 3150 San Fernando Road in Glassell Park.

The resulting increase in traffic will be a safety hazard for the many pedestrians in this area which will only increase once the Northeast campus of the Los Angeles City College is built across Fletcher Dr. from the proposed Home Depot site. The increased traffic will further imperil the surrounding communities by impeding response time by the Northeast Division of the LAPD, located across San Fernando Road from the proposed Home Depot site. The police at this station are already struggling with traffic congestion on San Fernando Road, and a Home Depot here will make it worse.

Furthermore we see a Home Depot as being incompatible with the kind of community we are striving to create in the immediate area surrounding the new LACC campus. We support your efforts to encourage development in Fletcher Square that would be complimentary to the Northeast Campus of LACC. We have surveyed our membership and they oppose building another Home Depot in our community. They overwhelmingly support a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly complex that would offer affordable housing for students and seniors; a variety of retail, dining and/or services compatible with the student population such as a health and fitness club; movie theater; bookstore and coffee house.

Sincerely,

(your name, organization's name, etc.)

SURVEY ON PROPOSED HOME DEPOT AT FLETCHER SQUARE

Introduction: At the former site of Kmart (Fletcher & San Fernando Rd.), Home Depot has signed a lease for the property plans to demolish the Kmart and build a new structure there. According to company representatives, they would continue operating existing Home Depots on San Fernando Road in Glendale and Cypress Park.

Areas of Concern: Because the proposed store would be substantially larger than the old Kmart and involve larger vehicles making more frequent deliveries, the GPIA Board is concerned that:

- 1) Traffic-related safety issues would significantly increase
- 2) Additional traffic on San Fernando Road would impact the LAPD and LAFD response time, already a problem in the congested Fletcher/San Fernando Rd. area
- 3) Long-standing smaller businesses in the vicinity will be negatively impacted
- 4) A big box retailer is incompatible with the needs of the community college being built across the street at the Van De Kamp property.
- 5) The Northeast Division of LAPD continually cites the Cypress Park Home Depot as a hot spot for crime and similar problems might occur at a store in Glassell Park

We want to know what you think.

#1. Do you want to see a Home Depot located at the vacant Kmart site?

Yes

No

#2. Would you rather see a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly retail/housing/office space complex that might offer a bookstore, gym, movie theater and restaurants on the vacant Kmart site?

Yes

No

#3. Would you like to see a metrorail/metrolink stop at the Los Angeles City College Northeast Campus to help alleviate traffic around the Fletcher Square Area?

Yes

No

Tuesday, January 17th, 2006

Wal-Mart Pulls the Plug on Valley Site

Steve Hymon/Los Angeles Times

Retail behemoth Wal-Mart has dropped its plans to open a store in Northridge after deciding it did not want to conduct a lengthy environmental impact report demanded by neighbors and city officials.

Arkansas-based Wal-Mart Stores Inc. has been trying for a year to open a store in an existing building at Nordhoff Street and Tampa Avenue. Officials said that an environmental study for the more than 150,000-square-foot store in the San Fernando Valley would have been too costly and would have delayed the project by at least several months.

"The time it took to do the environmental impact report added to the time it would take to start construction and the economics of maintaining the land while going through this process was a factor," said Kevin McCall, spokesman for Wal-Mart in Southern California.

Two other Wal-Mart stores, in West Hills and Porter Ranch, are within several miles of the site. McCall said the purpose of the new store was to alleviate long lines at those two locations.

But the plan met with strong resistance from nearby residents and Los Angeles City Councilman Greig Smith, whose 12th District includes Northridge.

Wal-Mart "explained to me through their intermediary that as they analyzed this further, it wasn't worth it for them to go forward," Smith said. "It was surprising. I thought it was a foregone conclusion."

Residents and activists, who sometimes sparred with Smith over his commitment to opposing the project, applauded the retailer's decision.

"I'm not surprised that we won, I'm just surprised that Wal-Mart went this fast," said Jim Alger, president of the Northridge West Neighborhood Council. "This is what I think it came down to: The environment impact report had to include alternative uses for the property that have a less significant impact on the community."

Wal-Mart has had its share of success in Southern California, operating five stores in Los Angeles. But increasingly it has run into opposition from communities whose concerns about the company include its salary and benefit plans for employees and its effect on local businesses.

The Northridge project was unusual because Wal-Mart was moving into an existing building already zoned for large retail purposes. Also, Wal-Mart was not proposing to turn the store into a so-called supercenter, which sells groceries.

But the new store would have been surrounded by other businesses. Northridge Fashion Center is across the street and restaurants and retail strip centers abound.

That, combined with the store's location at an already busy intersection, was apparently the tipping point.

"I'm very pro-business, but for me, it was the wrong business in the wrong place" because of traffic, Smith said.

One city report suggested that a Wal-Mart store would have put an extra 5,000 cars on nearby streets each day.

McCall, the Wal-Mart spokesman, said his company would continue to seek potential sites in Los Angeles.

"We are always looking on how to best serve the community," he said. "We believe the Valley is a wonderful opportunity for retail, and we're always looking."

HOME DEPOT: TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S A CROWD

By *George Brauckman*

In the summer of 2004, Home Depot signed a long term lease with the owners of the property at San Fernando Road and Fletcher Drive, formerly leased by Kmart. The do-it-yourself, home repair superstore wants to tear down the Kmart building and build a larger and taller big-box structure on the site. This would be the third Home Depot store built on a four-mile stretch of San Fernando Road.

On November 29th, the Glassell Park and Atwater Village Neighborhood Councils held a public forum at the Glassell Park Community Center. At the forum residents voiced their opinions about a third Home Depot in their neighborhood to company representatives. Home Depot says it needs to build the additional store in Glassell Park to lessen customer traffic at its other two stores in the area, and thus improve customer service at Glendale and Cypress Park. They may also remodel the Glendale store when the Glassell Park store opens.

This was not the first time Home Depot met with the community on this issue. However at this meeting they presented a fresh design plan that includes a mixed-use complex of apartments and retail fronting San Fernando Road with the new Home Depot structure in the back.

It is safe to say the crowd was underwhelmed by the proposal with one person asking, "Who would want to live above a Home Depot parking lot?" To be fair, Home Depot was only trying to come up designs that might somehow live up to the Northeast Community plan which calls for "pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development."

Throughout the evening residents voiced concerns about the increased traffic and crime that they felt a new Home Depot would attract. The Northeast LAPD continually cites the Home Depot in Cypress Park as a hot spot for criminal activity. Senior Lead Officer Red Falconer was at the meeting and was also concerned about traffic and crime. According to Falconer existing traffic on San Fernando Road makes it difficult for Police vehicles to swiftly exit the immediate area and he wondered how much worse things would get with the traffic a Home Depot and the new L.A. City College will add. Several people complained that

Home Depot does not have a satisfactory policy on day laborers who congregate at their stores. Many people said in plain English that they did not want a Home Depot at the site. Numerous people voiced frustration with poorly stocked stores and poor-to-abysmal customer service.

Readers may wonder why construction hasn't begun at the Kmart site, if Home Depot signed the lease a year-and-a-half ago. It so happens that Councilmen Ed Reyes and Eric Garcetti have long been concerned about development along the San Fernando Road corridor and the L.A. River. Since 2002 the two have been working with the City Planning department to create a Community Design Overlay Zone in Cypress Park and Glassell Park. The CDO would create common design standards for the two adjacent areas so that hopefully future generations will enjoy a more attractive, well-designed community.

With the CDO languishing in the Planning department for the past three years, Garcetti drafted an Interim Control Ordinance that would protect the area from commercial development that runs contrary to the spirit and intent of the nascent CDO. A year ago the L.A. City Council signed off on the year-long ICO as a stop-gap measure until the CDO is finalized by City Planning. Among other restrictions, the ICO does not allow commercial buildings larger than 50,000 square feet to be demolished or built. Hence, Home Depot cannot build a different structure on the Kmart site until the ICO expires. City council recently voted to extend the ICO for 180 days and it can be extended for a final 180 day period after that.

So, if the community can urge the City Planning Department to finish the Community Design Overlay Zone plan before the ICO runs out, community advocacy groups like the GPIA, Friends of Atwater Village; neighborhood councils; and residents themselves might gain more leverage to urge Home Depot to resolve some, if not all, of the community's concerns about this proposed development.



Sad site: The abandoned Kmart on San Fernando Road