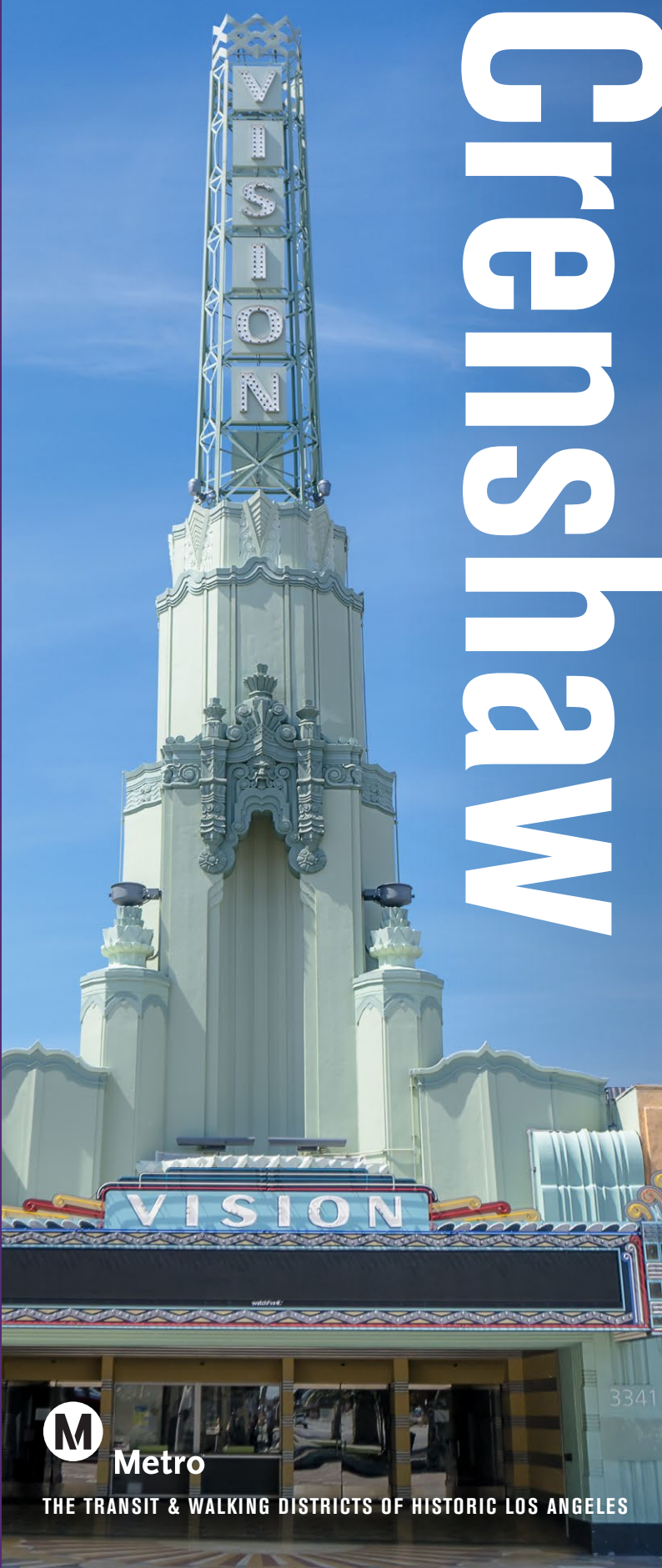




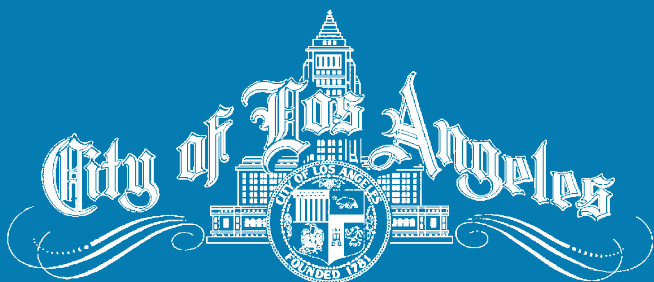
ANGELS WALK® LA
SELF-GUIDED HISTORIC TRAILS

Greenshaw



Metro

THE TRANSIT & WALKING DISTRICTS OF HISTORIC LOS ANGELES



FROM LOS ANGELES MAYOR

ERIC GARCETTI

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the City of Los Angeles, it is my pleasure to welcome everyone to Angels Walk Crenshaw.

Thousands of Angelenos and visitors alike have taken Angels Walks in Downtown, Chinatown, the Wilshire Corridor, and Hollywood to enhance their knowledge and appreciation of the diverse architecture, culture, and heritage of Los Angeles. Now it's time to celebrate the great neighborhood of Crenshaw.

The best way to immerse yourself in our great City is to explore our culturally rich neighborhoods by foot. Through this informative guidebook, both visitors and locals alike will come to know many of South L.A.'s treasures, such as the Holiday Bowl, Crenshaw Square, the Vision Theatre, and Leimert Park Plaza. Enjoy your walk, and thank you for celebrating the unique spirit of Los Angeles.

Best,

Eric Garcetti
Mayor of Los Angeles



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WELCOME

FROM CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT, HERB WESSON



As president of the Los Angeles City Council and on behalf of the residents of the 10th District in the City of Los Angeles, I would like to welcome you to the Angels Walk Crenshaw tour and thank Angels Walk LA for choosing part of my District to visit. On this tour, you will discover many of Council District 10's historic landmarks such as the Vision Theatre and Leimert Park Plaza, home to many local artisans.

Angels Walk LA has conducted walks through many Los Angeles communities including: Chinatown, Highland Park, and Hollywood. These neighborhood walks allow Los Angelenos and tourists to experience and appreciate first-hand the diversity of Los Angeles and encourage cross-cultural understanding and awareness of the multitude of cultures in and around Los Angeles.

Best wishes for a successful and memorable walk.

Sincerely,

Herb Wesson

Councilmember, Council District 10

FROM COUNCILMEMBER,
MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON

Crenshaw Boulevard, like Sunset, Wilshire, and other iconic Boulevards of Los Angeles, has played a significant role in shaping popular culture in our city and around the world. This guidebook offers just a taste of the cultural, musical, and architectural legacies and innovations that Crenshaw has to offer.

Our Angels Walk includes some treasures that we have lost over the years like the Holiday Bowl, Frank Holoman's Boulevard Cafe, and The Total Experience. Plus, it uplifts the long legacies that endure such as the *Sentinel*, Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, and the Vision Theatre. Importantly, Angeles Walk Crenshaw acknowledges some of the ways that race played a significant role in shaping Crenshaw and the City of Los Angeles. You will not want to miss a single piece of Crenshaw, including the story of our own Mayor Tom Bradley.

I am honored to represent the people of Crenshaw and South Los Angeles. We appreciate your visit.

With hope,

Marqueece Harris-Dawson

Councilmember, Council District 8

WELCOME TO ANGELS WALK CRENSHAW

Welcome to Angels Walk Crenshaw, our ninth self-guided walking tour! We hope to help illuminate and bring more appreciation to this commendable, historical stretch of Los Angeles. The walk consists of two elements: this user-friendly guidebook, and the on-street historical stanchions which feature the area's most notable people, places, and events.

This walk highlights the local heroes and important legacy of the Crenshaw Corridor, a neighborhood that is as impactful as it is diverse. An ever-burgeoning Los Angeles community, Crenshaw has established itself as an axis of culture, politics, and the arts—rich in history and community involvement. Its central location, equidistant from the Westside, Downtown, and Hollywood, makes it a crossroads Los Angeles scene—and a perfect location for an Angels Walk tour.

Get to know the individual pieces that make Crenshaw unique—Mayor Tom Bradley, the Nisei community, Lula Washington, Leimert Park Village, and the Urban League are just some of the gems that form this distinct district. See a common thread of community outreach and support that weaves its way through the history of so many establishments both past and present; most of the enterprises you'll encounter were founded with the goal of serving and positively impacting the immediate community around them.

As you explore, don't forget to stop for a bite at any of the various eateries along the walk. From vegan hotdogs, to Japanese-soul fusion, to authentic Caribbean dishes, your meal options are many.

Crenshaw has established its own identity as an important historical Los Angeles neighborhood and a hub of progress for diversity and activism. Residents and visitors alike can benefit from all the area has to offer, and Angels Walk LA is proud and privileged to celebrate this community!

Deanna Molloy

Deanna Spector Molloy
Founder, Angels Walk LA



GETTING THERE

Angels Walk Crenshaw is designed as a continuous self-guided walking trail that can be joined anywhere along its path; however, it is recommend that you begin at Stanchion #1: West Angeles Church. The main walk is approximately 1.6 miles long and depending on your pace should take you 2-3 hours to complete in its entirety.

There are three sections to the walk as well as two optional side strolls. Please refer to the map in the back of the guidebook for help planning your route.

WALK SMART!

Check local weather (90008) before heading to the walk and be sure to bring drinking water. Also, please use common sense and be aware of your surroundings.



Metro

Visit www.metro.net for detailed transit information and to help plan your trip. The Metro website has a trip planner including downloadable maps and timetables.

BY RAIL

Board any Metro Expo Line train and disembark at the Expo/Crenshaw station to begin the walk.

BY BUS

The Metro Orange Line 210 bus, and the Metro Rapid Lines 710 and 740 buses run up and down Crenshaw throughout the day. Check websites for maps, connecting lines, additional routes, and fare information.

Both DASH and Metro have mobile apps available.

DASH

Website: <http://ladotbus.com>

For real-time info, call 213-785-3858 or text “ladot #####” to 41411. ##### represents the actual stop number you need to enter; for example, “ladot 2746” (all lowercase with space between).

Metro

Website: www.metro.net

For bus line info, call 323-GO-METRO (323-466-3876)

M-F from 6:30 a.m - 7 p.m. and weekends from 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. For the hearing-impaired, use the California Relay Service, 711, then dial the number you need.

BY CAR

There is a free Metro parking lot on Crenshaw between Jefferson Boulevard and W 36th Street (closed Sundays), and two public lots on the south side of 43rd Street in Leimert Village. There is also street parking at many points along Crenshaw Boulevard. Please take note of posted hours and restrictions.

ACCESS



All public sidewalks on the walk have wheelchair access by ramps.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Emergency Fire, Paramedic, Police (24-hour dispatch): **911**
Non-Emergency Police (24-hour dispatch): **877-ASK-LAPD**

SECTION 1

ANGELS WALK CRENSHAW EXPOSITION » W 39TH

SITES

1 West Angeles North Campus

3045 CRENSHAW BLVD | WESTA.ORG

West Angeles is the granddaddy of the African American mega churches. Founded in 1943 by C.E. Church, Sr., West



Angeles Church of God in Christ first operated out of a small storefront on Vermont Avenue in the heart of South Los Angeles. It began its trek west by moving to 3501 Adams Boulevard in 1955; in 1981, with its membership growing exponentially, it moved to 3045 Crenshaw. Bishop Charles E. Blake took over West Angeles in 1969 as pastor and has presided over its rapid growth—its current congregation of 23,000 (approx.) makes it not only the largest COGIC denomination, but one of the largest Pentecostal congregation in the nation. The church's many operations and ministries include the West Angeles Christian Emporium bookstore, radio and television broadcasts, a theater, and community development projects. When West Angeles opened its new cathedral in 2001 down the block, this location remained the church's headquarters, also known as "North Campus."



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Return south on Crenshaw towards Exposition, stopping to read Stanchion #2: The Crenshaw Corridor. Then continue the walk, crossing Exposition...



DIRECTIONS

4 Expo/Crenshaw Metro Station

EXPOSITION AND CRENSHAW BLVD | METRO.NET

Originally a stop on the Los Angeles Independence and Pacific Electric railroads, the Exposition/Crenshaw station closed on September 30, 1953 and remained out of service until re-opening on April 28, 2012. The stop was originally part of the Santa Monica Air Line, a Pacific Electric streetcar, launched in

8 ANGELS WALK CRENSHAW

The information on this page will help you navigate the walk using this guidebook. Additionally, you should refer to the map in the back, as it shows the walk at a glance, including points of interest, stanchion locations, farther afield sites, and transportation information.

SECTIONS

Colored tabs at the top of each page divide the guidebook into smaller walking sections that are numbered.

1 SITES

These numbered icons indicate all the points of interest along the walk route.

➔ DIRECTIONS

Directional guidance along the walk is given throughout the text in the light yellow boxes with arrows.

FARTHER AFIELD

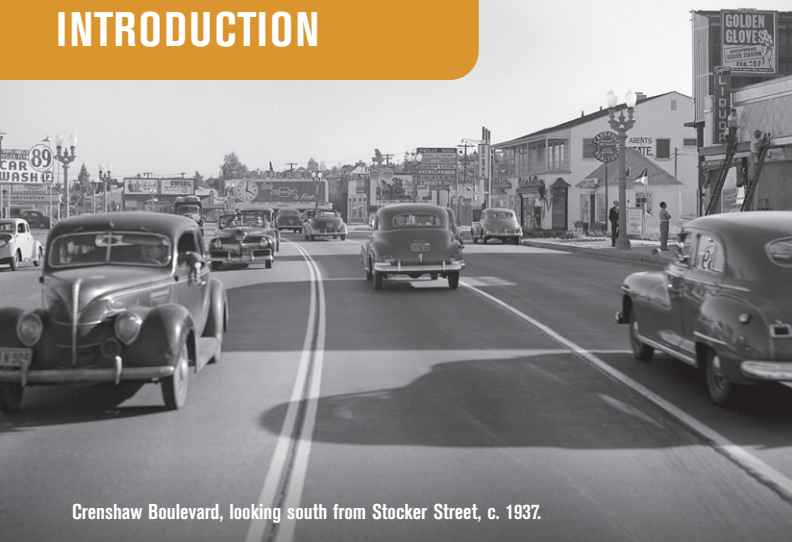
Farther afield sites are places of interest farther off the walk that may require travel by bus or car.



STANCHIONS

There are fifteen on-street historical markers, or stanchions, along the walk that will add to your enjoyment, provide additional historic perspective, and help guide you along the way.

INTRODUCTION



Crenshaw Boulevard, looking south from Stocker Street, c. 1937.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CRENSHAW DISTRICT

Crenshaw has a rich and varied history, one that's still evolving. Almost 24 miles long and spanning numerous cities, Crenshaw runs south from Wilshire and cuts through Koreatown, Mid-City, Inglewood, and Rancho Palos Verdes, to name a few places. But the place most associated with Crenshaw is the district also called Crenshaw, a collection of neighborhoods clustered around the boulevard roughly between Slauson Avenue and Jefferson Boulevard that's home to the largest and wealthiest African American population west of the Mississippi. This population developed after blacks began migrating west from previously segregated neighborhoods south of downtown in the 1940s and 50s; in the 60s, massive white flight following the Watts unrest in 1965 cemented the demographic change.

After World War II, many Japanese Americans settled in Crenshaw and grew their own community that comfortably intersected with the black community; for decades, one of the most popular spots on the boulevard was the Holiday Bowl, a coffee shop, bar, and bowling alley opened in 1958, where you could get Southern-style grits alongside suki-yaki. Though the Bowl survived into the 2000s, Crenshaw's Japanese American population did not. Today, it is all but gone, its legacy surviving in some architectural touches and a few remaining businesses.

The Crenshaw district's public image is complex. Over the years, despite being featured in films such as *Boyz in the Hood* that portray the grittier sides of urban life, Crenshaw has been equally famous for the character and look of a middle-to-upper class suburb, with its profusion of Spanish stucco and ranch-style houses, lush lawns and winding hills. Home to many of the city's black elite—former mayor Tom Bradley lived here—Crenshaw encompasses the neighborhoods of View Park, Windsor Hills, Baldwin Hills, and Leimert Park. Leimert Village has become famous as the center of black arts and culture in Los Angeles; its main drag of Degnan Boulevard is home to established shops like Sika and Gallery Plus, Eso Won Books, The World Stage, the California Jazz and Blues Museum, and also hosts many festivals that draw people from all over L.A. The addition of the new Metro Crenshaw/LAX line is certain to raise the profile of Crenshaw, even more.



1 West Angeles Cathedral

3600 CRENSHAW BLVD | WESTA.ORG

Eleven years in the making, the \$65-million West Angeles Cathedral opened in 2001 to house a congregation that had become one of the city's largest and most high-profile, the place of worship for any number of African American celebrities. Constructed of marble and stone, the cathedral is built in the shape of a semi-circle with a 108-foot-tall stained glass cross-tower that rises over Crenshaw Boulevard. It is among the tallest such towers in the world. The cathedral has a state-of-the-art sound system, is 105,000 square feet, and boasts a lobby that's 485 feet across. It seats 5,000—a significant growth upon Bishop Charles Blake's original flock of 50 when he took over the congregation in 1969.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:



Start at Stanchion #1: West Angeles Church, located near the corner of Crenshaw and W 36th Street (see map).

Continue the walk by heading south on Crenshaw, or take a Side Stroll north towards Jefferson to see...

2 West Angeles Performing Arts Theater

3020 CRENSHAW BLVD

West Angeles' live theater offers Christian-themed plays, concerts, comedy, and other attractions aimed not only at its congregants, but at the broader churchgoing population in



Los Angeles and beyond. The theater is formerly the Kokusai, one of several movie houses that catered to Japanese Americans, who were an integral part of Crenshaw life for decades. The Kokusai opened in the 1940s and screened its last movie, *Lost in the Wilderness*, in 1986, after it was sold to the rapidly expanding West Angeles

Church. Its closure marked the first time the city was without a Japanese-language movie theater since the 1920s, except during the World War II years. The pause was brief—the Kokusai was reopened as the Little Tokyo Cinema in Little Tokyo in 1987.

3 West Angeles North Campus

3045 CRENSHAW BLVD | WESTA.ORG

West Angeles is the granddaddy of the African American mega churches. Founded in 1943 by C.E. Church, Sr., West



Angeles Church of God in Christ first operated out of a small storefront on Vermont Avenue in the heart of South Los Angeles. It began its trek west by moving to 3501 Adams Boulevard in 1955; in 1981, with its membership growing exponentially, it moved to 3045 Crenshaw. Bishop Charles E. Blake took over West Angeles in 1969 as pastor and has presided over its rapid growth—its current congregation of 23,000 (approx.) makes it not only the largest COGIC denomination, but one of the largest Pentecostal congregation in the nation. The church's many operations and ministries include the West Angeles Christian Emporium bookstore, radio and television broadcasts, a theater, and community development projects. When West Angeles opened its new cathedral in 2001 down the block, this location remained the church's headquarters, also known as “North Campus.”



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:



Return south on Crenshaw towards Exposition, stopping to read Stanchion #2: The Crenshaw Corridor. Then continue the walk, crossing Exposition...

4 Expo/Crenshaw Metro Station

EXPOSITION AND CRENSHAW BLVD | METRO.NET

Originally a stop on the Los Angeles Independence and Pacific Electric railroads, the Exposition/Crenshaw station closed on September 30, 1953 and remained out of service until re-opening on April 28, 2012. The stop was originally part of the Santa Monica Air Line, a Pacific Electric streetcar, launched in



1909 for light freight and passenger service to the beach. The station was completely rebuilt for the opening of the Expo Line from little more than a station stop marker. Expo is the sixth line to open after the Blue Line kicked off modern light rail transit in Los Angeles

in 1990. Originally 11th Avenue station, the Expo/Crenshaw station's striking art was created by artist and activist Willie Middlebrook. The untitled work, one of his largest public installations, is a mosaic of 24 panels that uses manipulated photographs—what the artist called photographic paintings—to depict ethnically diverse populations interacting with the earth and the environment. Middlebrook, a former director of the Watts Towers Arts Center, developed a distinct method of photographic enhancement by brushing negatives with developing fluid; the result was faces peering “from beneath surfaces that suggest erosion, graffiti, peeling billboards, and, ultimately, a symbolic struggle for identity,” *Chicago Tribune* wrote in 1995. Sadly, Middlebrook died less than two weeks after the 2012 unveiling at the new Expo/Crenshaw station.

5 Family Savings and Loan (former site)

3685 CRENSHAW BLVD

Family Savings and Loan was the third largest black-owned financial institution in the country for decades. Founded by Earl Grant, a hog farmer from El Monte, it started out in 1949 as Watts Savings and Loan and later moved to the Crenshaw district into a high rise midcentury building. In the years



following the repeal of restrictive housing covenants that kept blacks out of white areas, Family filled an important community-building role in Crenshaw by offering home loans to black customers where larger banks would not. The institution survived the massive savings and loan failures of the 1980s, and even bounced back from the economic blow dealt to Crenshaw by the civil unrest in 1992. But the 2000s brought a wave of bank closures and consolidations that forced changes for small lenders like Family. In 2002, it was acquired by the Boston Bank of Commerce, which became One United Bank, a consolidation of several smaller black-owned banks that included Family and the nearby Founders National Bank.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

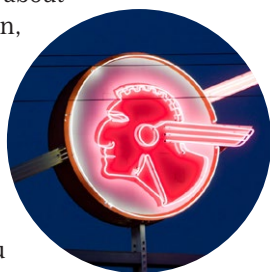
Stop to read Stanchion #3: Holiday Bowl, then continue south on Crenshaw...



6 Holiday Bowl (former site)

3730 CRENSHAW BLVD

Opened in 1958 by a group of Japanese American restaurateurs, the Holiday Bowl was a culinary and recreational nexus for Crenshaw's African American and Japanese American populations, and just about anyone else who came through for 40 years. Holiday was multifunctional—a coffee shop, bowling alley, bar, and lounge that served up food that could also be described the same way. At just about any hour, you could get grits and udon, yakisoba and salmon patties, don-buri and short ribs, and many other diverse items. With its angular facade and plate-glass windows that looked out onto Crenshaw, Holiday was a prime example of 1950s Googie architecture. The architect was Helen Liu Fong (Armet & Davis), who also designed Pann's on La Tijera and Johnie's on Wilshire and Fairfax. Despite valiant efforts to save the Bowl by city preservationists and community members, it was razed in 2003 to make way for a Starbucks and other retail outlets. Today, only its facade remains. The Majestic Pontiac car dealership which was next door—one of many dealerships that once thrived on the boulevard in the 50s and 60s—was also razed. A single remnant can still be seen: the neon Pontiac Indian head at the top of the sign.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:



Once you cross Coliseum, turn and cross to the west side of Crenshaw to read Stanchion #4: Community Builders...

7 Lula Washington Dance Theatre

3773 CRENSHAW BLVD | LULAWASHINGTON.ORG

Dancer/choreographer Lula Washington and her husband Erwin Washington brought one of the city's oldest and best-known black dance companies and community dance schools to Crenshaw in 2001. Originally called the Los Angeles Contemporary Dance Theatre when it was formed in 1980, the LWDT has since garnered much acclaim and performed all over the country, and the world—Kosovo, China, and Russia are just a few of the places where the company has

displayed its unique style developed by Washington, an early devotee of Alvin Ailey. She has also lent her talents to Hollywood as a choreographer and movement director for the James Cameron blockbuster, *Avatar*. How LWDT got to Crenshaw is itself a story worthy of telling on the stage: after the 1994 Northridge earthquake destroyed their previous studio on Adams, the company became homeless, but soldiered on with its work, fundraising on the side in the hopes of one day getting a new home. Purchasing the space on Crenshaw Boulevard, which Erwin Washington, Lula’s husband and business partner, has called the “Broadway” of the African American community in Los Angeles, was a dream come true.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Cross back to the east side of Crenshaw and continue the walk south towards W 39th, stopping to read Stanchion #5: Los Angeles Sentinel, Stanchion #6: Crenshaw Square, and Stanchion #7: Tom Bradley along the way...

8 Los Angeles Sentinel

3800 CRENSHAW BLVD | LASENTINEL.NET

The *Los Angeles Sentinel*, the largest black newspaper west of the Mississippi, was founded in 1933 by Colonel Leon Washington. A native of Kansas City, Washington had worked as an ad salesman for the *California Eagle*, the West’s oldest black newspaper, published by legendary activist and journal-



ist Charlotta Bass. The upstart *Sentinel* wasted no time following in Bass’ agitator footsteps: in 1934, Washington launched a protest and boycott against Zerg’s Furniture Store, a white-owned estab-

lishment that, like many establishments that served blacks, would not hire them. After erecting a “Don’t Spend Where You Can’t Work” sign outside Zerg’s on Central Avenue and 43rd Street, the young publisher was promptly arrested for violating the city picketing ordinance.

The *Sentinel* opened its first offices in 1945 on Central Avenue. The paper was successfully run by Washington and his wife Ruth for the next five decades. After Leon died in 1974, Ruth ran the *Los Angeles Sentinel* until her own death in 1990. Washington’s attorney, Kenneth L. Thomas, took the reins as publisher. In 1993, citing the migration of blacks in the city from east to west, Thomas relocated the paper to Crenshaw. In 2004, developer and activist Danny Bakewell—himself a frequent subject of *Sentinel* news stories—became publisher.



9 Crenshaw Square

3870 CRENSHAW BLVD

This airy, courtyard-style shopping center was originally conceived as the Little Tokyo of Crenshaw. Besides typical mall offerings like a grocery store, Crenshaw Square boasted many Japanese shops, restaurants, and services, includ-



ing Sumitomo Bank and Cren-Star Realty, owned by Crenshaw Square developer Yo Takagaki. The center also had its own Obon Festival and carnival. The iconic sign, described by some as the neighborhood's Eiffel Tower, was remade and replaced in 2007, after years of deterioration. The Japanese influence

extends to the streets behind Crenshaw Square, evident in the bonsai-style landscaping that marks the apartments and homes that were once rented and owned by Japanese American families. Today, the once-formidable Nisei presence in Crenshaw is almost entirely gone, but locals still gather to eat and catch up at Tak's, an intimate Japanese-style diner tucked in the back of Crenshaw Square.

10 Earle's

3864 CRENSHAW BLVD | CRENSHAW SQUARE | EARLESRESTAURANT.COM

What began as a humble hotdog cart over thirty years ago, has evolved into the Crenshaw community staple that is Earle's. Brothers Duane and Cary Earle together operated the unassuming hotdog cart along Crenshaw in the 1980s, and their services soon came to require a more permanent and more prominent presence. They originally opened their family restaurant near the corner of Exposition and Crenshaw, but they had to relocate once construction began on the Crenshaw/LAX Metro line. They pride themselves on being an inclusive hub, where meat-lovers and veggie-lovers alike can enjoy a tasty meal from their gourmet hotdog menu.



11 Tak's Coffee Shop

3870 CRENSHAW BLVD | CRENSHAW SQUARE

The Holiday Bowl's legacy in the Crenshaw community is Tak's Coffee Shop, located in the back of Crenshaw Square. This tucked-away community hotspot serves to carry on the iconic culture of the Holiday Bowl, whose menu was as diverse as its patrons. Tak's opened in 1996 and the original owner



eventually sold the restaurant to some of his employees who had started out as cooks and dishwashers. It continues to be family-owned and consistently serves up tasty cuisine inspired by African American, Asian, and Hawaiian cultures. Stop in and experience its one-of-a-kind take on the Loco Moco, and unique mash-ups of other classic diner staples.

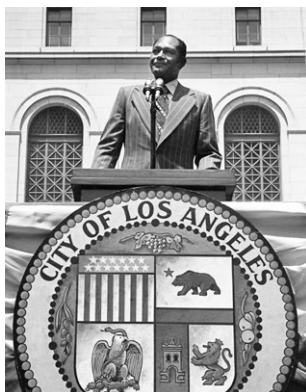
12 Tom Bradley Post Office

3894 CRENSHAW BLVD

In 2010, the U.S. Postal Service, in conjunction with Congresswoman Diane Watson and the City of Los Angeles, honored Tom Bradley, the first African American Mayor of Los Angeles, by naming the post office after him. Bradley spearheaded a period of enormous growth in Los Angeles. He brought the 1984 Olympic Games to the city, and the initiation of a much-needed subway and light rail



system. The post office is located in the City's 10th district, in which Bradley served as Los Angeles City Councilman from 1963 to 1972, before being elected mayor. Bradley was born in 1917 in Texas, the son of a sharecropper and the grandson of former slaves. In 1924, his family moved to Los Angeles. He became a member of the Los Angeles Police Department in 1940 and went on to serve as a five-term mayor of Los Angeles



from 1973 to 1993. His 20 years in office mark the longest tenure by any mayor in the city's history. His 1973 election made him only the second African American elected to head a major U.S. city and the first black mayor elected in a city without a black majority.

Tom Bradley speaking at his 1973 inauguration in front of City Hall.

Photo courtesy of the Harry Adams Archive.

**WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:**

Once you cross W 39th Street, turn right and cross Crenshaw to read Stanchion #8: Angelus Funeral Home...

**13 Angelus Funeral Home**

3875 CRENSHAW BLVD | ANGELUSFUNERALHOME.COM

Family-owned since its founding in 1925, Angelus Funeral Home has always been more than a mortuary—it's been a touchstone of black life and progress in Los Angeles. The original trio of Angelus directors included Louis George Robinson, Lorenzo Bowdoin, and John Lamar Hill Sr. In addition to being the first black business to be incorporated by the state in 1925, it became the first black-owned property on Crenshaw Boulevard in 1968 when it moved west from its old location on Jefferson in the heart of the Central Avenue corridor. Both the Jefferson and Crenshaw buildings were designed by the renowned black architect Paul Williams. After returning from military duty in World War II, John Lamar Hill Jr. joined his father at Angelus. In 1968, after Hill Sr.'s untimely death, Hill Jr. set aside his personal dreams of becoming an aeronautical engineer and became fully committed to the success of Angelus. Hill Jr. made media history in the 1960s when he bought a radio station, Long Beach-based KFOX-FM, making it the first black-owned radio station west of the Mississippi. Hill developed it into KJLH; the station broadcasted to communities of color and became the premier black radio station in the city.

**WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:**

Continue the walk, heading south on the west side of Crenshaw towards Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, stop and read Stanchion #9: Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, then look across the street to see...

14 Department of Water and Power

4030 CRENSHAW BLVD

The midcentury modern DWP customer service building at Crenshaw and King Boulevards has long been the spot—often a hotspot—for social gatherings and community forums. The DWP has long offered the meeting space free of charge to locals, and



locals have taken advantage; during the aftermath of the civil unrest in 1992, many community organizations, CEOs, and politicians met up there for passionate debates about the future of redevelopment in Crenshaw. After being closed for renovations for two years, the DWP auditorium reopened in 2007—just in time for more redevelopment debates.

15 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard



In 1983, the name of Santa Barbara Avenue was changed to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to honor the slain civil rights leader and to acknowledge Crenshaw as the center of African American politics and culture in the city. Though it runs roughly six miles from Rodeo Road east to Central Avenue, it's the west end that intersects with Crenshaw Boulevard and borders Leimert Park that has the highest pro-

file; every January, the Kingdom Day Parade celebrates the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday by proceeding down this stretch of road. The street also honors another black leader: a bronze bust of Celes King III (no relation), a lifetime Los Angeles activist and a cofounder of the state chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), stands on the southwest corner of Crenshaw and King. It is the work of Tina Allen, a sculptor known for her beautiful renderings of notable black figures.



Celes King III outside his Bail Bonds office on Santa Barbara Avenue (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.)

Photo courtesy of the *Los Angeles Times* Photographic Archives.

16 Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza

3650 W MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD | BALDWINHILLSCRENSHAWPLAZA.COM

This two-block-long plaza opened its doors in 1947 as the Broadway-Crenshaw Center, an outdoor shopping mall that



was the first of its kind in the nation. The plaza was mostly torn down and enclosed in 1988 by developer Alexander Hagen, but touches of the original Art Deco design remain, including the ball-topped spire and curved facade of the former May Co. Today, the plaza is anchored by Macy's, and until 2015 it had the nation's only three-story Walmart. After redevelopment in the 1990s, the mall evolved into a focal point of black community and culture. The Museum of African American Art, the Debbie Allen Dance Academy, the Pan African Film + Arts Festival (paff.org), the annual Leimert Park

Village Book Fair (leimertparkbookfair.com), a weekly farmers market, and other events all maintain a presence at the plaza, and serve to bring the community together.

17 Museum of African American Art

3RD FLOOR OF MACY'S | LIMITED PUBLIC HOURS | MAAALA.ORG

In 1976, artist and art historian Dr. Samella Lewis, along with a group of academic, artistic, business, and community leaders founded The Museum of African American Art with the goal to increase public awareness of and education in the culture, heritage, and art of Leimert Park's residents. Exhibits and programs at the museum allow artists and their work to provoke thought about issues, as well as offering to the public an educationally and culturally enriching experience.



18 Certified Crenshaw Farmer's Market

OUTDOOR PROMENADE | SATURDAYS 10-3



The Crenshaw Farmer's Market runs every Saturday and is hosted on the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza outdoor promenade. The market is produced by SEELA, a nonprofit dedicated to both bringing accessible healthy

food to low-income residents, and supporting local farmers and vendors. The market features a dozen local farmers and over two dozen food and artisan vendors every week, and offers monthly community events including cooking demonstrations, tastings, and children's activities.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

You have just about hit the halfway point. You may continue the walk by heading south on Crenshaw (skip to site 25).

Or you can take a Side Stroll (approx. .75 miles) by heading west on the south side of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. When you get to Marilton Avenue, cross then turn left and proceed south on Marilton to see...

19 Santa Barbara Plaza / Marilton Square

3700 W MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD

The Santa Barbara Plaza was the sister shopping center of the original Crenshaw mall—a sprawling, 22-acre outdoor plaza opened in the 1950s with 230 businesses, shops, and services of every kind imaginable, many of them locally owned and operated. The rows of shops and flagstone facades



wrapped around a massive parking lot giving the plaza a self-contained feel that sat well with regulars at the Boulevard Café, a popular soul food joint and political hangout, and the Black Gallery, the city's only gallery dedicated to exhibiting and promoting work by black photographers. The plaza did not share the mall's fortunes, however, with some attempts by developers—including Magic Johnson—to build a new and improved plaza (renamed Marilton Square) never taking root.

20 Jerry's Flying Fox (former site)

3700 W MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD



Opened in the 1950s and taken over by Jerry Edwards in 1969, Jerry's Flying Fox was a key venue in the vibrant R&B club scene of the 1960s and 1970s. Billy Preston played there, as did many other acts who gained national recognition. Famous for its Friday night gumbo, Jerry's was among the most enduring businesses in the sprawling Santa Barbara Plaza, a beloved gathering place and entertainment spot for over 50 years.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Continuing south on Marilton towards Santa Rosalia Drive, look right to see...



21 Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Hills-Crenshaw

3782 W MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD

Opened in September 2017, the 100,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art, LEED Gold certified, Kaiser Permanente medical offices are intended to serve the community with access to convenient, high-quality medical care. Dr. Enrique Emel, MD, himself a local Crenshaw resident (born and raised), is the Physician in Charge at this branch of Kaiser, has a background of philanthropic medical outreach work, and is dedicated to servicing the various health needs of the diverse community he knows so well. Complete with outdoor workout equipment, 2.5-acres of open green space, and a two-mile walk path, the entire facility serves the community's needs in a wide variety of ways.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:



After you cross Santa Rosalia, turn left towards Stocker Street to continue the walk...

22 Crenshaw Family YMCA

3820 SANTA ROSALIA DRIVE

Nestled at the foot of Baldwin Hills, the Crenshaw Family YMCA provides local families with much-needed sports programs, after-school care, and other amenities. The facility is approximately 36,000 square feet, and features a basketball court, classrooms, 19 information technology computer labs, and seven community childcare sites. It's been in operation since about 2000.



23 Debbie Allen Dance Academy

3791 SANTA ROSALIA DRIVE | DEBBIEALLENDANCEACADEMY.COM

After spending nine years in nearby Culver City, the Debbie Allen Dance Academy (DADA) relocated to the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza in 2009. The renowned actor, dancer, and choreographer, known for her work in the television series *Fame* and for years of Academy Awards broadcasts, Allen became even better known for the classes and intense training



her academy offers to young people who aspire to work in the entertainment industry. DADA offers instruction in a dozen different types of dance, including ballet, hip-hop, tap, and Dunham, as well as a myriad of outreach offerings to the community and local schools.

24 Crenshaw Medical Arts Centre

3756 SANTA ROSALIA DRIVE

This facility has been serving the health needs of the Crenshaw community since the 1950s (note the mosaic tile at the entry-



way and generous plate glass). A full-service pharmacy is on the first floor, and besides housing health professionals, the building is home to community-based, medically minded nonprofits. Like other buildings along Santa Rosalia, it affords sweeping

views of downtown and the mountains to the east and south, and Baldwin Hills to the west.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Turn left on Stocker, and when you get to Crenshaw turn right. Continue the walk, heading south on the west side of Crenshaw, stopping to read Stanchion #10: Crenshaw Music Scene...

25 “The Elixir” Mural

4225 CRENSHAW BLVD

Crenshaw’s iconic mural, “The Elixir” was painted by Los Angeles artist Patrick Henry Johnson in 2011. It depicts a woman he was previously in a relationship with. “All the fondness and love that I had for her, I had to release her and I released it all in the painting,” Johnson explains. After working on it for two months, it became one of his most famous pieces. In 2015, the mural was vandalized, and has since been restored by the artist. The scroll at the bottom of the mural reads: “Have we forgotten that we are spiritual beings having a human experience? In a universe created in harmony, conflict is a creation of your own mind. You have all that you need within. What are you waiting for? FREE... YOUR... MIND!”





26 **Maverick's Flat**

4225 CRENSHAW BLVD | CURRENTLY CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

In the 1960s and 70s, Maverick's Flat definitely lived up to its tagline, "Where It's At." One of several nightclubs along Crenshaw that opened up as the Central Avenue jazz scene was officially dying out, Maverick's was an outta-sight soul-music hub that attracted such headline acts as the Temptations, Ike and Tina Turner Revue, Earth Wind & Fire, and the Commodores. Celebrities and music lovers came from all over the city—on any given Saturday night you could spot Steve McQueen, Muhammad Ali, or members of the Mamas & Papas. Maverick's Flat owner John Daniels was something of a maverick himself, a former sheriff's deputy and magazine publisher who turned the former Arthur Murray's Dance Studio into a premier black music venue and gathering spot. It didn't even serve liquor in the early days—patrons got by on a spiked punch recipe called Zambezi. In 2000, Maverick's was declared a historical landmark by the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission. Thanks to the efforts of real estate developer and Crenshaw resident Curtis Fralin, Maverick's was renovated and reopened in 2012 and operated for several years as an upscale jazz club.



27 **Right Choice Caribbean Market**

4233 CRENSHAW BLVD



Opened in 2000, Right Choice Caribbean Market is a family-owned market offering up a variety of products representing Caribbean nations and cultures, including Honduras, Jamaica, and Haiti. Authentic Caribbean spices, fresh plantains, tamarind pods, coconut, yams, prepared foods, and dried medicinal and culinary herbs can all be found in the aisles of this unique establishment.

**WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:**

When you cross Homeland Drive turn left and cross Crenshaw. Homeland becomes W 43rd Street. About a block and a half down W 43rd, stop to read Stanchion #11: Leimert Park Living. When you get to Degnan Boulevard, look across the intersection to see...

28 Youth 'N Motion Academy3403 W 43RD STREET | YOUTHNMOTION.ORG

Youth 'N Motion Academy, Inc. was co-founded in 2005 by Kenpo Karate Black Belt and Guinness World Record holder (1979) Lindsay “Abdul Latif” Ferguson. As a resource to the community’s at-risk youth, they provide an accessible path towards a better future for both kids and the community as a whole. Through the instruction of martial arts, YNMA leadership not only teach self-defense skills and mastery, but they instill core character values like self discipline and a respect for others.

**29 Fernando Pullum Community Arts Center**3351 W 43RD STREET | PULLUMCENTER.ORG

The Fernando Pullum Community Arts Center is a nonprofit organization seeking to enhance and positively influence the lives of underserved youth in Los Angeles through performing arts programs. The Center aims to develop technical performance and artistic skills, as well as reinforce positive personal qualities like responsibility, self esteem, and academic commitment.

30 Regency West / Comedy Act Theatre (former site)

3339 W 43RD STREET

The Regency West Theater was the L.A. home of the Comedy Act Theatre, the hugely successful black comedy club launched by comedy impresario Michael Williams in 1985. CAT’s weekly lineup became a virtual who’s who in black comedy: the Wayans Brothers, Eddie Murphy, LaWanda Paige, Robert Townsend, Jamie Foxx, Sinbad, Martin Lawrence, Chris Tucker, D.L. Hughley, and the inimitable master of audience insult, Robin Harris. The theater helped fuel an explosion in the popularity of black comedy across the country, and in the culture; Russell Simmons’ *Def Comedy Jam* became a household phrase, and many stand ups who cut their teeth at CAT went on to enjoy film and television careers. After the civil unrest and the recession dealt a severe blow to the Crenshaw economy, CAT went dark in 1997, and Regency West came to function as a full-service event space.





WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Continue the walk by heading south on the west side of Degnan. Stop to read Stanchion #12: Leimert Park Village...



Opening night at Brockman Gallery, 1967.

Photo courtesy of the Brockman Gallery Archive.

31 Degnan Boulevard & Leimert Park Village

The short stretch of Degnan between 43rd Street and 43rd Place may be the most economically diverse and culturally dense block in the city. Originally built as the sleepy little main drag of Leimert Park Village, Degnan started emerging as a mecca of black art and commerce in the late 1960s when artist and impresario Alonzo Davis opened Brockman Gallery. Through the 1970s and 1980s, it attracted more artists and entrepreneurs, including Museum in Black, Africa by the Yard fabric store, Bak Tu Jua (now Sika), a handmade jewelry and clothing shop, and the performance space, The World Stage. Degnan and adjoining Leimert Plaza Park are the site of many community festivals held during the year.

32 Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center

4305 DEGNAN BLVD | BARBARAMORRISON.COM

Founded in 2009 by renowned Jazz singer and musical educator Barbara Morrison, the Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center works to create outlets for artistic expression and practice, as well as providing the public with exposure to artistic practices through concerts, plays, spoken word performances, readings, and more. Down the block, Morrison also opened the California Jazz and Blues Museum in 2017.



33 Sankofa Passage

ALONG DEGNAN BLVD

In 2007, Degnan Boulevard welcomed its own walk of fame, the Sankofa Passage. Just south of 43rd, the sidewalk on the west side of the block is embedded with thirty-two African motif plaques memorializing iconic black community members who have contributed to the cultural renaissance of



Leimert Park and to the cultural life of black Los Angeles. Sankofa refers to a phoenix-like bird of Ghanaian mythology that looks backward over its shoulder while flying forward—a metaphor for remembering the past in order to inform the future. Honorees include Richard Fulton, Billy Higgins, Horace Tapscott, Alma Hightower, Dexter Gordon,

Marla Gibbs, Cecil Ferguson, and others who have significantly impacted the Leimert neighborhood.

34 **Ackee Bamboo Jamaican Restaurant**

4305 DEGNAN BLVD | ACKEEBAMBOOJACUISINE.COM

Ackee Bamboo was established in 2001 and is a local favorite in Leimert Park for an authentic Jamaican dining experience. Specialties include Oxtail, Jerk Chicken, and a variety of curry dishes, all freshly prepared with quality Caribbean herbs and spices.



35 **Community Build, Inc.**

4305 DEGNAN BLVD | COMMUNITYBUILD.ORG

Built on the former site of a neighborhood market that burned to the ground in 1992, Community Build is the creation of Maxine Waters, the longtime congresswoman who represents Crenshaw and South Los Angeles. The



nonprofit economic development corporation formed in 1992 as one of the more high-profile efforts to help revitalize riot-affected areas. Part of its vision of economic development is youth development, which Community Build does through a variety of educational, occupational, and support services targeted at at-risk, foster, gang-involved, and first-generation college-aspiring young people. Community Build

fits right in with the artsy aesthetic of Degnan—the two-story structure’s spacious inner courtyard and adjacent drought-resistant park hosts many local receptions, and cultural and community events.

36 **California Jazz and Blues Museum**

4317 DEGNAN BLVD | CALIFORNIAJAZZANDBLUESMUSEUM.COM

Barbara Morrison’s brainchild, the California Jazz and Blues Museum provides an education in jazz and blues legends, showcasing art, photos, and history of the greats along the walls of the gallery, and offering live music



events for the public. Morrison saw what she considered to be a lack of jazz and blues education and celebration in her community, so she officially opened the museum in April of 2017, during Jazz Appreciation Month.

37 Ride On! Bike Shop & Co-Op

4319 DEGNAN BLVD | RIDEONBIKESHOP.COM

In 2014, this up-and-coming community resource was started by Adé Neff, a local Leimert Park bicyclist and advocate for better transit infrastructures in low income communities. When Neff noticed that many of his neighbors relied on bikes for transportation, but didn't know how to repair their bikes, he was motivated to begin a volunteer-run bike repair education co-op in the heart of Leimert Park Village. Before this, the nearest such resource was located 8 miles away, in Mar Vista. Neff's mission is to create a community of self-sustained cyclists who are educated in how to maintain their bikes, while also conducting safety workshops and holding forums on bicycle infrastructure equity in Los Angeles. Since opening, Ride On has evolved into a full-service bike shop, while running the repair co-op on an appointment basis.



38 The World Stage

4321 DEGNAN BLVD | THEWORLDSTAGE.ORG



The World Stage was founded by poet and community arts activist Kamau Daaood and the late, famed, jazz drummer Billy Higgins in 1989 as an artist collective and performance space. Ever since, the Stage has been the musical lifeblood of the Village, cultivating local jazz talent and showcasing greats like Higgins, Harold Land Jr., and Horace Tapscott. The place is famous for its unpretentious, bare-bones atmosphere—no drinks or food—

and for its jam sessions and spontaneous exchange of musical ideas that simply don't happen in more upscale jazz clubs in other parts of the city. Almost every night of the week, there is dynamic mentorship and creative expression going on with drum workshops and circles, jazz vocal workshops, and writing workshops. True to its identity as a performance gallery, The World Stage also hosts readings, spoken word performances, and fiction and poetry workshops.



Interior of the original World Stage space at 4344 Degnan.

39 Eso Won Books

4327 DEGNAN BLVD | ESOWONBOOKSTORE.COM

The city's premier black bookstore began in the 1980s in a cramped, nondescript upstairs space on Slauson Avenue just west of Crenshaw. Co-owners and bibliophiles James Fugate and Tom Hamilton had managed the campus bookstore at Compton College, and decided to branch out from academia to the broader community; they dubbed their new venture Eso Won, Amharic for "water over rocks." As business and word of mouth increased, and after a few relocations, they settled on Degnan in 2006, and Leimert Park's literary scene grew exponentially overnight. Many black authors of note have read or lectured at Eso Won, from social critic Michael Eric Dyson, to celebrity memoirist Pam Grier, as well as Presidents Clinton and Obama. Though it hosts big names, Eso Won is as well known for supporting local authors and providing personal customer service. The mural of black history painted on the south side of the building predates the bookstore's move to Degnan, but it perfectly advertises Eso Won and its philosophy of self-enlightenment and discovery.



40 "The Last Stand: Unite" Mural

4327 DEGNAN BLVD | ALONG ALLEY WALL

Painted in 2001 by artist Carla Carr, "The Last Stand: Unite" was commissioned by the Social and Public Art Resource Center as a part of their program Great Walls Unlimited: Neighborhood Pride. It features a portrait of Los Angeles jazz saxophonist Eric Dolphy, Congolese independence leader and Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, and a number of unidentified faces and characters. The mural also includes



a number of quotes, the first being, “The good of the village outweighs the good of the individual,” which speaks to the community’s sense of civic responsibility.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Look across the street to see...



41 Sika

4330 DEGNAN BLVD

Sika, this shop’s owner and namesake, crafts dramatic African-style jewelry from silver, cowrie shells, turquoise, bone, amber, and other materials. His dim, high-ceilinged shop has the incense-rich smell and feel of an African bazaar, with a variety of goods to match: West African clothing for the whole family, sandals, shoes, masks, sculptures, drums, furniture, and beauty products.



Sika was also a founder of the long-running three-day Leimert Park Village African Music and Arts Festival, which early on, was staged in the parking lot adjacent to his shop. The Leimert Park legends—Richard Fulton, Horace Tapscott, Billy Higgins—depicted in the Michael Massenberg mural that adorns the building next to Sika, provided a fitting backdrop for the event and other cultural celebrations.

42 Zambezi Bazaar (former site)

4334 DEGNAN BLVD | ZAMBEZIBAZAAR.COM

Zambezi Bazaar was started by the Kimbrough family, and enjoyed a longtime presence in Leimert for over 20 years. When the shop first opened, it was called Kongo Square—named after the historic plaza in New Orleans where slaves were allowed to practice their African traditions one day a week. The colorful shop was packed with an impressive collection of African jewelry, clothing, crafts and artifacts and the store’s iconic life-sized zebra could always be found outside, welcoming you into this unique and energetic space.

Zambezi Bazaar’s original location at 4334 Degnan.





43 Gallery Plus

4333 DEGNAN BLVD

Like Eso Won, Gallery Plus relocated to Degnan in the 1990s from a Slauson Avenue address in nearby Windsor Hills. Owner Laura Hendrix quickly became a fixture with a multitude of offerings that starts with framing and includes handcrafted dolls, black collectibles, specialty books, African goods, and limited and open edition prints by artists such as the late Varnette Honeywood, Annie Lee, William Tolliver, and Charles Bibbs.

44 Sisters' Marketplace

4339 DEGNAN BLVD

The Sisters' Marketplace is a distinct shop that serves to contribute to the endurance of African and African American culture in Leimert Park. The shop's offerings include African and African American memorabilia, antiques, and collectibles—as well as traditional garb, art, and decor.



45 Art + Practice

EXHIBITION SPACE - 3401 W 43RD PLACE | ARTANDPRACTICE.ORG

Founded by artist Mark Bradford, philanthropist and collector Eileen Harris Norton, and community activist Allan DiCastro, Art + Practice (A+P) is a private operating 501 (c)3 foundation. A+P encourages education and culture by providing free museum-curated art exhibitions and free moderated art lectures as well as supporting services to foster youth predominantly living in South Los Angeles via its collaboration with First Place for Youth (FPFY). A+P occupies a nearly 20,000 square-foot campus from which it directs its programs and activities.



**WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:****Turn left on W 43rd Place to continue the walk...****46 5th Street Dick's (former site)**

3349 W 43RD PLACE



When Richard Fulton opened 5th Street Dick's jazz coffee-house in 1992, it became an instant legend. Opening just days before the civil unrest, Fulton and his fellow merchants beat back the flames with garden hoses and set the tone for a 1990s renaissance of arts and jazz that followed in the years after. A former alcoholic who'd lived on Skid Row—hence the name of his business—Fulton single-handedly revived the street life in Leimert by playing jazz through speakers he put out on the sidewalk and encouraging a chess-playing scene in the park. As his business grew, he moved his operation a few doors down to 3335 W 43rd. Regrettably, Fulton died of throat cancer in 2000. His former business partner opened another 5th Street Dick's around the corner on Degnan in 2005, but it closed four years later.

**WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:****Stop to read Stanchion #13: Vision Theatre...****47 Vision Theatre**

3341 W 43RD PLACE

The Leimert Theatre was originally a movie house that opened in 1930, a joint venture between developer Walter H. Leimert and Howard Hughes. A grand place in its day, with seats for nearly 1,100, it eventually fell into decline and was later bought by Jehovah's Witnesses before being bought by television-actress-turned-arts-impre-sario Marla Gibbs in 1990. Gibbs renamed it The Vision

to reflect her plan of bringing first-rate theater and arts education to Leimert Park and the heart of the black community. Gibbs fulfilled her dream admirably for many years, but lost the property to foreclosure in 1997. Now city-owned, the Vision continues to undergo renovations and hosts special community events.





WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Walk to the corner of Leimert Boulevard and then continue the walk by turning left...

48 LA Commons

4343 LEIMERT BLVD | LACOMMONS.ORG

LA Commons was founded in 2003 as a project of Community Partners and is devoted to connecting various communities with their environments and histories through public art projects. The organization puts together groups of local neighborhood artists, and facilitates the creation of highly visible public art that depicts local narratives, addresses local issues, and ultimately creates a better, stronger sense of community kinship and belonging. LA Commons also produces other programs, including Trekking L.A. and Found L.A., which both introduce tourists and locals alike to the public art, authentic food, music, and culture of often overlooked neighborhoods.



49 KAOS Network

4343 LEIMERT BLVD | [FACEBOOK.COM/KAOSNETWORK](https://facebook.com/KAOSNETWORK)

Founded in 1991 by Ben Caldwell, a UCLA film school grad who interned at the Brockman Gallery when he was a student, the KAOS Network was conceived as a place where young people could learn film, video, and new media technology. KAOS quickly became a popular hangout spot for young people, the Leimert Village destination for Generation X. It's become most famous for Project Blowed, an open-mic workshop for young rap, hip-hop, and graffiti artists that produced such acclaimed acts as Medusa and Jurassic Five. Furthermore, Caldwell and KAOS have gained acclaim founding the Leimert Park Art Walk, a community art event that takes place on the last Sunday of every month, started in 2010. True to the spirit of the Village, Caldwell's vision for the KAOS Network is to foster a place for people to come learn, express, and connect with the Leimert community at large.



50 Babe & Ricky's Inn (former site)

4339 LEIMERT BLVD

Babe & Ricky's, one of the city's most loved blues clubs, moved from its original Central Avenue location to Leimert Boulevard in 1997, augmenting Leimert's music scene that, until that point, was almost exclusively jazz. Owner and Mississippi native Laura Mae Gross worked the door of this intimate, juke-joint style place, serving up free fried chicken plates on Mondays along with rocking performances by regular acts like Mickey Champion. Renowned blues artists from Albert King to Little Esther Phillips have all come through Babe & Ricky's.



Laura Mae Gross

51 First Place For Youth

4337 LEIMERT BLVD



First Place for Youth is a community outreach organization, founded in 1998 as a means of addressing the common and unfortunate trajectory of many foster youth transitioning from the foster system into adult life. First Place seeks to break cycles of poverty, homelessness, lack of education, and unemployment through hands-on work with current and former foster youth, as well as impacting public policy to create a better system and more opportunities.

52 Phillip's BBQ

4307 LEIMERT BLVD

Phillip's opened in Leimert Park in 1980 and is legendary for the wood-burning smoke that rises from the modest strip mall where it sits around the corner from the park. It's tiny and strictly takeout—essentially one window where you order and another outside where you pick up—a fact that only increases its stature in barbecue lore.

Phillip's is more than just a restaurant, it's a community place that was one of many black-owned businesses to pointedly keep its doors open during the chaotic days of the 1992 civil unrest, when a sense of normalcy was in short supply. In 2004, Phillip's significantly expanded its presence when it took over the old Leo's Barbecue at 2617 Crenshaw Boulevard, just south of the 10 Freeway.

**WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:****Return back to W 43rd Place to continue the walk...**



53 Leimert Park Village Plaza - People St

3341 W 43RD PLACE

In 2015, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation, in partnership with Leimert Park Village's 20|20 Initiative, and KAOS Network, converted the underused street in front of the Vision Theatre into a public community space. The street was renovated and painted with a pattern of circles—each with a different Adinkra symbol, originated from the Akan Ghanaian people. The most prominent symbol depicted is the Sankofa bird, which has come to be an emblem of the Leimert community, representing the concept of learning from the past in order to build a strong future. The space is dedicated to public gatherings, concerts, dance classes, and festivals.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Continue walking west on W 43rd Place. Pass the theater and cross Degnan, stopping to read Stanchion #14: Leimert Plaza Park...

54 Leimert Plaza Park

Built in 1928 by the Olmsted Brothers, the landscape architectural firm that designed all of Leimert Park, this small but significant city park is the “front door” of the Village. The layout is Spanish-Islamic, symmetrically built around a central fountain. While the look hasn't changed since the 1920s, the culture certainly has: for the last forty years, the park has been the site of just about every major black festival and event in the city. Drum circles are often held around the fountain and the park has served as an impromptu stage for rallies, discussions, performances, and public remembrances of all kinds.





A panoramic view of the Mesa Vernon Market located at the corner of Mesa (now Crenshaw) and 43rd Place, c. 1933. In addition to selling fruits, vegetables, meats, and groceries, the market included a delicatessen, pharmacy, and fountain cafe. Photo courtesy of the Huntington Digital Library.

55 Mesa Vernon Market (former site)

4344 CRENSHAW BLVD

This corner marketplace was built by the Walter Leimert Co. in 1928 and designed by George Adams, the architect who also designed Aliso Village and Ramona Gardens in Lincoln Heights. Mesa Vernon was one of many amenities built for the residents of Leimert Park so they wouldn't have to travel far from home for basic goods and services.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Walk through the park or take Crenshaw south across Vernon Avenue, cross to the west side of Crenshaw and stop to read Stanchion #15: Gateway to the Hills...

56 Chase Bank

4401 CRENSHAW BLVD

One of the more unique buildings in the Crenshaw area, the vented exterior of this sculptural, mid-century building resembles rows of pipes in a church organ. *Los Angeles Sentinel* publisher and commercial developer Danny Bakewell owns the building and has dubbed it the “Bakewell Building.”



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Continue the walk by heading west on Vernon to see...

57 Urban League of Los Angeles

3450 MOUNT VERNON DRIVE | LAUL.ORG

The Los Angeles Urban League was born in 1921 when the Tuskegee Industrial Welfare League, an organization founded to help blacks participate economically and socially in the still-emerging city of Los Angeles, joined forces with the National Urban League. The LAUL headquarters location on Mount Vernon Drive at the foot of the “hills”—Windsor Hills, Baldwin Hills, and View Park—accurately reflects those aspirations. The LAUL offers job training, literacy programs, and newer initiatives, such as the Greater Crenshaw Educational

Partnership, an ambitious effort to improve local public education at nearby Crenshaw High School. After the unrest in 1992, LAUL partnered with Toyota to open an automotive training center—a high-tech school for mechanics—on Crenshaw near 39th Street.



58 View Park-Windsor Hills

NOTE: VIEW PARK AND WINDSOR HILLS ARE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS BEST EXPLORED BY CAR. PLEASE RESPECT THE PRIVACY OF RESIDENTS WHEN VISITING THE AREA.

Rising west of Crenshaw between Slauson and Angeles Vista are View Park and Windsor Hills. View Park was developed in the 1920s—around the same time as Leimert Park—as an upper-middle-class neighborhood in the mold of Cheviot



Hills, Brentwood, and Studio City. Both areas boast an abundance of Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean style homes, most of which have been preserved and meticulously maintained. Windsor Hills was developed in the late 1930s, the first subdivision in Southern California to obtain mortgage insurance from the newly created Federal Housing Administration. African Americans were barred from living in either area until the Supreme Court struck down racial covenants in 1948 in the landmark *Shelley v. Kramer* decision. After blacks began moving in (as whites moved out) in the 1960s, View Park, Windsor Hills, and their environs became known as the “black Beverly Hills.” Some famous residents include singer Ray Charles, Ike and Tina Turner, and actress Regina King.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE:

Congratulations! You have completed Angels Walk Crenshaw. We hope you have enjoyed learning about both the past and present of this remarkable community.

You may return to the start of the walk on foot or by taking a Metro/DASH bus, or the Metro Crenshaw/LAX train (coming 2019) back up Crenshaw.

Please note that there are a number of additional sites to explore in the area. These are listed next in the “Farther Afield” section. Most sites will require transportation via bus or car.

A Tavis Smiley Foundation

4434 CRENSHAW BLVD | YOUTHTOLEADERS.ORG

Founded in 1999, the foundation created by the veteran television personality, radio host, and author Tavis Smiley works to develop and mentor future leaders. Over the years, the foundation has mentored and trained over 6,000 youths at leadership training workshops and conferences. It stays active in the community and continuously gives back by participating in educational events. With the help of Microsoft, the foundation created the technology lab at Compton High School.

B Harrison-Ross Mortuary

4601 CRENSHAW BLVD

Established in 1948 and occupying a beautiful Spanish Colonial revival building, family-owned-and-operated Harrison-Ross is notable for its pioneering service and leadership in the Crenshaw community.

**C Crenshaw Carpet Center**

4611 CRENSHAW BLVD

Family-owned since 1927, Crenshaw Carpet Center is one of the oldest and longest-running businesses on Crenshaw—as old as Leimert Park itself. The hangar-sized store and showroom offer a variety of carpets and flooring, and the staff is trilingual—English, Spanish, and Japanese. When the city proposed changing the name of Crenshaw Boulevard to Tom



Bradley Boulevard back in 2003 to memorialize the former mayor, Crenshaw Carpet owner Bruce Barnett was among many locals who voiced strenuous opposition—Bradley Carpet Center just didn't have the same ring or historical import.

D Dulan's on Crenshaw

4859 CRENSHAW BLVD | DULANSONCRENSHAW.COM

For years, Dulan's was the reigning soul food spot on the boulevard, offering not only a menu of hearty down-home Southern dishes, but an airy, patio-dominated restaurant frequented by politicians and other notable locals. It was run by Greg Dulan, son of Adolph Dulan, a restaurateur whose various culinary enterprises included Aunt Kizzie's Back Porch in Marina del Rey (now closed). In the 2000s, Dulan's downsized to a catering operation before reopening in 2012 as Dulan's on Crenshaw, a more casual dine-in place with a trimmed-down menu that still offers the same great core items: fried chicken, baked fish, mac and cheese, greens, which earned it its reputation.

E Crenshaw Wall Mural

5100 CRENSHAW BLVD

Located at the foot of View Park between Westmount Avenue and 52nd Street along the west side of Crenshaw, this block-long mural was started in the 1980s by artist Tony Riddle, who scribbled down a bit of poetry on the wall as a first con-



tribution. It was expanded over the years by other artists into a striking visual narrative (with additional words) of black history and progress; some of the chapters along its length include slaves in chains, Martin Luther King Jr., and Malcolm X. Musicians, orators, and everyday people are also celebrated in this landmark work, which is enough of a local icon to remain remarkably unscathed by vandals.

F Angeles Mesa Library

2700 W 52ND STREET

Named for one of the original residential developments in Baldwin Hills, Angeles Mesa, this branch library of the Los Angeles Public Library system was designed by architect Royal Dana and opened in 1929. In 1987, the Angeles Mesa Branch, along with several other branches in LAPL that together housed the first library system in the city, were added to the National Register of Historic Places because of the notable architecture of their period revival styles.



G African American Cultural Center

3018 W 48TH STREET | AFRICANAMERICANCULTURALCENTER-LA.ORG

The African American Cultural Center is the headquarters for the Us Organization, the black nationalist and cultural advocacy group founded by Dr. Maulana Karenga in September 1965 in the aftermath of the Watts unrest. Famously rivals of the Black Panthers—though not as feared by law enforcement—Us was involved in many of the racial and social justice organizations that started in the 60s and 70s. But Karenga, a longtime professor at California State University Long Beach, is best known for creating the African American holiday of Kwanzaa in 1966. A week-long winter celebration of seven African principles of community-building called Nguzo Saba, a principle is recognized and celebrated each day of the week.



H Transfiguration Catholic Church

2515 W MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD

Located at the eastern edge of Leimert Park, Transfiguration—“Transfig” for short—has long been an important religious and cultural institution for Creole migrants from New Orleans and other parts of Louisiana who settled in the area starting in the 1940s. The church opened its doors in 1923, making it one of the oldest institutions in the area.

**I Rancho Cienega O’Paso de la Tijera Adobe**

3725 DON FELIPE DRIVE | NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

What is now the address of the Consolidated Realty Board is the site of a historic adobe and rancho that spread east from Baldwin Hills into the Crenshaw district. The adobe is believed to have been built in the late 1700s, making it the oldest surviving building in the city limits. It was part of a much larger rancho granted to Vicente Sanchez, former mayor of Los Angeles, in 1843; the long-winded name of the rancho refers to the marshland (“cienega”) that once dominated the topography and to the scissor-shaped pass (“tijera”) that ran through Baldwin Hills. The Consolidated Realty Board, an association of African American realtors, bought the property in 1972. The city declared the remaining adobe structure a historical monument in 1990 after the Board proposed razing the property to make way for a five-story office building.

J Harold and Belle’s

2920 W JEFFERSON BLVD | HAROLDANDBELLESRESTAURANT.COM



Harold Legeaux Sr. and his wife Belle opened this landmark Creole restaurant in 1969 as a small billiards and bar joint where New Orleans natives like themselves could eat, chat, and socialize. It wasn’t Harold’s first venture—he owned a bicycle shop and another eatery, Hungry Harold’s, on Slauson Avenue near Crenshaw. While Hungry Harold’s is essentially a burger stand, Harold & Belle’s evolved into a white-tablecloth establishment, serving New Orleans transplants and other lovers of Creole cuisine.

K “To Protect and Serve” Mural

W JEFFERSON BLVD & 11TH AVENUE

Conceived in the years after the 1992 civil unrest and completed in 1996, Noni Olabisi’s vivid depiction of the legacy of the Black Panthers and their fight against police brutality and racial oppression still resonates powerfully today. On the right side of the mural, the Ku Klux Klan looms above an image of Panther Bobby Seale bound and gagged as he was during the trial of the Chicago 7 in late 1969. The right side of the mural focuses on the social programs and community uplift that was part of the Panthers’ agenda, including its famous free breakfast program. In the middle is an iconic, unsmiling image of Panther founder Huey Newton toting a gun—not to visit violence on the police, but to protect black



people from police violence. The mural was originally part of the “Great Walls Unlimited: Neighborhood Pride” project sponsored by the city-funded Social and Public Arts Resource Center (SPARC), but after the mural’s content was repeatedly opposed by the Cultural Affairs department and some city officials, it was dropped from the Neighborhood Pride project. It became an independent endeavor that SPARC helped to support with fundraising. In 2015, SPARC helped to restore the mural after 20 years of sun damage.

L Dorsey High School

3537 FARMDALE AVENUE

Dorsey High, one of the last predominantly African American high schools in the city (cross-neighborhood rival Crenshaw High is another), is named for



the first female superintendent of the L.A. school system, Susan Miller Dorsey. Dorsey broke the glass ceiling early, in 1920. The campus opened in 1937, evident in such Art Deco architectural flourishes as the main building’s rounded edges and steel lettering. Dorsey is known for its football; in its 73-year history, the Dons (female athletes are called Donnas) have won five city titles and sent dozens of players to the NFL. Famous alumni include soul singer Billy Preston, Dodger outfielder Derrell Thomas, and Beach Boy Mike Love.

M Village Green

5300 RODEO ROAD

Baldwin Hills Village, later renamed Village Green, was hailed as a model of progressive idealism in urban planning when it opened in 1942. It was envisioned as a safe, affordable, and beautiful alternative to L.A.’s interminable and isolating sprawl. Architects Reginald Johnson and Clarence Stein worked together to realize an ideal called the Radburn Plan; the result is a 64-acre village of apartments framed by park space and a breathtaking variety of trees. A central green connects to many smaller garden courts that are the village’s most distinguishing characteristic. Though the demographics of Village Green are quite diverse today, it initially only rented to whites. That changed in 1972, when the property owners applied to turn the units into condos and were obliged to follow fair housing

laws. Village Green was designated a cultural monument by the city in 1977. In 1993, it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2001, it achieved National Historic Landmark status.



RESTAURANTS + MORE

CRENSHAW BOULEVARD

(listed in the order they are encountered along the walk)

Domino's Pizza 3631 Crenshaw Blvd #113 *pizza***Starbucks** 3722 Crenshaw Blvd *coffee***Ramona's Mexican Food** 3728 Crenshaw Blvd *mexican***Denny's** 3740 Crenshaw Blvd *diner/coffee shop***Weinerschnitzel** 3789 Crenshaw Blvd *fast food***Wingstop** 3825 Crenshaw Blvd *chicken wings***Kim's Restaurant** 3860 Crenshaw Blvd #105 *chinese*

CRENSHAW SQUARE

Earle's 3864 Crenshaw Blvd *fast food***Tak's Coffee Shop** 3870 Crenshaw Blvd #101 *diner***Crenshaw Live Bar & Grill** 3888 Crenshaw Blvd *sushi grill***Orleans & York** *deli*

BALDWIN HILLS CRENSHAW PLAZA - MACY'S LOT

(in addition to what's listed here, there are numerous eateries inside the mall)

Chipotle 3939 Crenshaw Blvd *fast casual mexican***Yogurtland** 3939 Crenshaw Blvd *frozen yogurt***Subway** 3939 Crenshaw Blvd *sandwiches***Buffalo Wild Wings** 3939 Crenshaw Blvd *chicken wings*

ACROSS FROM THE MALL ON CRENSHAW

Krispy Kreme 4034 Crenshaw Blvd *donuts***Louisiana Fried Chicken** 4050 Crenshaw Blvd *soul fusion***Tasty China Bowl Express** 4134 Crenshaw Blvd *chinese takeout*

BALDWIN HILLS CRENSHAW PLAZA - MARLTON LOT

Taco Bell 4050 Marlton Ave *fast food***Michelle's Country Diner** 4070 Marlton Ave *diner***Post & Beam** 3767 Santa Rosalia Dr *contemporary southern***Baskin-Robbins** 4066 S Victoria Ave *ice cream*

ON CRENSHAW

IHOP 3625 Stocker St *coffee shop***Jack in the Box** 4210 Crenshaw Blvd *fast food***Mr. J's Louisiana Kitchen** 4213 Crenshaw Blvd *southern***Melissa's Catering** 4236 Crenshaw Blvd *mexican***Top Taste Caribbean Restaurant** 4279 Crenshaw Blvd *caribbean***Daddy Dave's with Big Momma Cooking** 4287 Crenshaw Blvd *bbq***McDonald's** 4292 Crenshaw Blvd *fast food*

LEIMERT VILLAGE

Ackee Bamboo Jamaican Cuisine 4305 Degnan Blvd *jamaican***Adassa's Breakfast Café** 4305 Degnan Blvd #103 *cafe, juice/smoothies***Philip's BBQ** 4307 Leimert Blvd *BBQ*

BEYOND

El Pollo Loco 3350 Vernon Ave *fast food***Happy's Pizza** 4731A Crenshaw Blvd *pizza***Delicious Southern Cuisine** 4371 Crenshaw Blvd *bbq*



Earle's

LOCAL EVENTS

Crenshaw Certified Farmers Market *Saturdays 10-3*

Leimert Park Art Walk *last Sundays*

Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Kingdom Day Parade *January*

Juneteenth Heritage Festival *June*

Festival of Masks *last Sunday in June*

Cool Down Jazz Summer Series *Wednesdays in June, July, August*

African Art & Music Festival *Labor Day weekend*

A Taste of Soul *October*

Leimert Park Unity Festival *August/September*

Kwanzaa Celebrations *December*

MORE INFORMATION

Council District 10 – District Office

1819 S. Western Avenue • (323)733-8233

Council District 8 – Constituent Service Center

8475 S. Vermont Ave • (213)485-7616

20/20 Vision Initiative www.leimertparkvillage.org

Leimert Park Beat www.leimertparkbeat.com

Leimert Park Village/Crenshaw Corridor Business

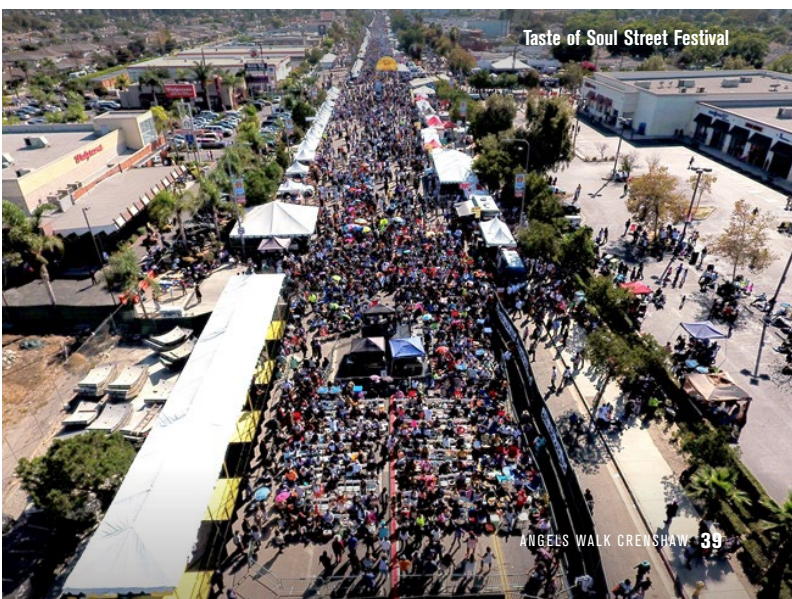
Improvement District www.villagecorridorbid.org

Empowerment Congress West Area Neighborhood

Development Council (ECWANDC) www.ecwandc.org

Los Angeles Sentinel <https://lasentinel.net>

Vision Theatre facebook.com/friendsofthevisiontheatre



Taste of Soul Street Festival

ANGELS WALK CRENSHAW

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Angels Walk LA is a 501(c)(3) public benefit organization devoted to enhancing the pedestrian environments of Los Angeles by developing self-guided walking trails that commemorate the history, architecture and culture of our city's neighborhoods. Angels Walks encourage pedestrians to explore and discover Los Angeles by connecting directly with major transit and rail lines.

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The White House Millennium Council designates as a Millennium Trail, Angels Walk Urban Trails.

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