

Readers React

Letters to the editor and readers' opinions.

Readers React Downtown L.A. could use some 'gentrification'

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To the editor: Delighted to see an article about development that acknowledges the current run-down state of affairs and cheers the potential for revival without a single word about "gentrification." But the backlash will come soon. ("L.A.'s Broadway poised for a major revival," Feb. 5)

What about all those small trinket merchants on Broadway in downtown L.A. who will be displaced? What about the locals who won't be able to afford the planned Harrods-like food hall in the building that once housed a May Co. store?

The contrast between this article and an earlier one about the Villa Carlotta development in Hollywood is stark. That story ignores real property ownership rights, whereas this seems to extol them — and rightly so.

"Gentrification" wrongly has become pejorative, but it simply means improvement. If we are not improving our neighborhoods, we can't expect to help improve our neighbors' lot in life either. Preservation is great, but not when overwrought concerns about it retard growth, improvement, renovation and the economic expansion they encourage.

Jeffrey C. Briggs, Hollywood

To the editor: The Broadway Revival is exciting news. There are many architectural gems in that area.

The story mentions 200,000 square feet of retail, 500,000 square feet of office space, 200 hotel rooms, a food court to match Harrods in London, a roof garden, pools, a Turkish bath, thousands of apartments under construction, the cool Ace Hotel and the possible "bookend" to the north in the form of the redeveloped Tribune Co. building that houses The Times.

These are wonderful developments all. Our city will be better for them.

Does this mean I can run our sprinklers everyday? Pray tell, where is the water coming from?

Noel Anenberg, Encino

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