



CITY OF INGLEWOOD GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW SUMMARY

As part of the ongoing Inglewood General Plan Update, over a three-day period in August 2006, EIP conducted a series of stakeholder interviews to provide key community stakeholder groups and individuals the opportunity to share their thoughts on issues and opportunities within the community. Stakeholders also were invited to suggest ideas and approaches to address the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities available in the City. In addition to members of the general public selected by the Mayor and City Council members, Representatives from the following stakeholder groups were interviewed:

- Inglewood Chamber of Commerce, Executive Committee
- Inglewood Unified School District
- Inglewood Partners for Progress
- Inglewood Mayor and City Council members
- Inglewood Planning Commissioners

During each interview, participants were asked a series of questions related to key areas that the General Plan will cover. These questions included topics related to community character, public services, economic vitality and employment, new housing opportunities, traffic and parking conditions, as well as open space, parks, and recreational opportunities within the community. A complete list of the questions and responses received from the interviews is summarized below.

The input received from these interviews will help guide the preparation of Inglewood's General Plan update. The updated General Plan will guide growth and development in the City over the next 20 – 25 years by providing a collective community vision to address the issues and concerns identified in this phase of the update process. The results from these interviews will be combined with feedback from a number of other sources including but not limited to City staff, the General Plan Technical Background Report, and Community Visioning Workshops conducted in mid-November 2006, as well as elected and appointed City officials.

Interview Questions and Stakeholder Response Summary

1. What do you consider to be Inglewood’s most significant assets/strengths—those things that make the community a desirable place to live, work, and play?

Most stakeholders indicated numerous assets and strengths related to Inglewood’s strategic location within the greater Los Angeles area. These benefits include easy access to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), good climate, close freeway access, and proximity to nearby regional centers. Other community strengths include high-quality neighborhoods, medical facilities, diversity of residents, and the City’s suburban setting.

- Climate
- Location
- Freeway access
- Proximity to LAX /other major areas
- Developable land
- Housing quality/neighborhoods
- Leading business “core”
- Good size (manageable)
- Diversity and multi-cultural population
- Stable/rising property values
- Desire to grow
- Suburban living in the city
- Large lots and older homes
- Neighborhoods and property owners respect each other
- Willingness to fight
- Opportunities—jobs, land value
- Good medical facilities
- Forum and Hollywood Park Casino

2. What do you consider to be the most significant issues or problems that threaten the ability of the City to sustain these assets/strengths?

A range of problems were identified by stakeholders as challenges the City must face to sustain the quality of life in the community. These ranged from the political environment, concerns about public safety, deteriorating quality of schools, lack of affordable housing, aging infrastructure, lack of employment opportunities, traffic congestion, and various impacts related to LAX.

- Political environment
- Public safety (crime)
- Negative perception/image of the community
- Quality of schools is poor
- Lack of a current general plan
- No adherence to existing general plan
- Perception of not being business friendly (permitting timeline)
- Lack of adequate/affordable housing
- Lack of a business division
- Government/citizen communication
- Lack of child/youth-centered activities
- Lack of organized recreational opportunities
- Ability to attract/retain large businesses/employers
- Limited industrial uses
- Lack of well-paying/professional jobs

- Need to improve downtown and major streets/corridors
- Traffic congestion and mobility
- Lack of parking
- Infrastructure age/condition
- Inadequate lighting in some areas
- High-tension wires in the La Cienega/La Tijera area
- Sidewalks in poor condition in some areas
- Lack regular street cleaning/sweeping
- Infrastructure backup during heavy rains
- Population growth is faster than the City can handle
- Services have not grown with the City, especially traffic
- Noise level from LAX flights
- Lack of adequate shopping/entertainment
- LAX deteriorates the quality of life
- Intelligentsia/variety of professionals reside in the City, i.e. educators, artists, professionals, etc.

3. *How can the City sustain the qualities that distinguish it within the context of impacts from the larger metro area of which it is located?*

Stakeholders suggested a variety of methods or strategies that Inglewood could pursue to distinguish itself from adjacent communities. These included capitalizing on the community's close location to LAX, improving commercial development, enhancing streetscapes in major corridors, creating new mixed-use (commercial use on the ground floor with residential units on the floors above) and entertainment uses, preserving key landmarks and working with other jurisdictions. Other suggestions included techniques to better promote the City including creating cultural community events and festivals and promotional activities such as publications, banners, and the City's website.

4. *Inglewood is a built out urban area with a small town feel in many areas of the City outside of Downtown. How would you characterize the City and what are the important elements (land use, physical, social, other) that contribute to this character?*

Important elements that distinguish Inglewood as a unique community identified by stakeholders included Inglewood's medical facilities and services, the Downtown area, community diversity, the long residency and personal investment of many residents and families, sense of community, lack of gated neighborhoods, and responsiveness of the City to resident's needs.

- City has to define a new "theme" for its identity
- Medical service facilities
- City is clean
- City is responsive to resident's need; accountable
- Small town feeling in the many neighborhoods

- Cultural makeup with deep roots (Black and Brown)
- A community of families
- Elected officials sensitivity/ cultural adjustment as city changes
- Mediterranean climate, neighborliness
- Small number of gated communities
- Relaxed atmosphere
- Gang activity

5. *What would need to be done to Downtown to make it viable as a destination location for residents and visitors?*

Developing appropriate strategies to improve the Downtown area is a key issue to address as part of the General Plan update. Suggestions made by stakeholders included reinventing the Downtown by creating more active uses such as mixed use, more upscale retail and entertainment uses, and encouraging evening activities. Other suggestions include promoting the City’s history and architecture, creating festivals and farmers markets, improving various design elements such as lighting, design, and landscaping.

- Reinvent downtown
 - More upscale retail
 - Evening uses
 - Mixed use/residential
 - Major anchor stores
 - Entertainment uses
 - Tourist services
- Celebrate city’s history/architecture
- Create a parking district
- Create a Business Improvement District (BID)
- Extensive rebuilding/rehabilitation
- Provide incentives for new development
- Allow higher density
- Reconsider the boundaries of downtown (expand)
- Activities in downtown
 - Festivals
 - Farmer’s market
 - Music performances/talent shows
 - Youth-friendly activities
- More desirable uses like outdoor restaurants and theatres
- Improve the aesthetics and street design focused on pedestrians
- Improved lighting
- Eliminate large swap meets
- Enhance economic pride—spend locally
- Provide housing in downtown (loft and mixed-use)

6. There are a number of vacant and/or poorly maintained properties along the City's commercial corridors. These properties are a result of economic conditions, but they detract from the image of the City as an attractive and inviting place to do business. What can the City do to enhance the appearance of businesses along its major commercial corridors?

Key suggestions that participants identified to improve the appearance and use of businesses along commercial corridors varied considerably. Ideas included assembling and acquiring various parcels or businesses, improving the design of corridors, creating parks on vacant properties, areas to create more viable uses, providing beautification incentives, and demolishing deteriorated businesses.

- Redesign Prairie, Century, Manchester, and Imperial Blvds.
- Upgrade landscaping and lighting
- Consider light rail
- Acquire assemble parcels for redevelopment
- Create streetscape design "themes" for major corridors
- Use vacant city owned properties as temporary open space
- City owned properties should be well-maintained
- Enforce property maintenance regulations
- Remove abandoned cars
- Provide incentives or recognition for good property maintenance
- Be more development-friendly
- Relocate non-viable businesses
- Rezone corridors to attract viable business
 - Business/Research parks
 - Freight forwarding
 - Security operations
 - Showrooms
 - Consolidated car rental facility
- Demolish deteriorated buildings
- Attract regional commercial uses:
 - Furniture stores
 - Bookstore
 - Music stores
 - Theatres
 - Performing arts center
- Provide economic incentives to maintain mom/pop operations
- Establish better sign standards
- Provide grants for redevelopment
- Public/private partnerships
- Beautification awards
- Better promotion of the City
- Capitalize on proximity to LAX
- Attract hospital-related businesses
- Streetscape theme for La Brea like in Lawndale
- Preserve landmarks: Forum, Hollywood Park Racetrack and Casino
- Maintain partnerships with adjacent jurisdictions
- Join with adjacent cities to pursue noise mitigation from LAX
- Prohibit auto repair uses on major corridors.
- Wise use of historic preservation
- Annex Lennox Area

7. Do you feel that there is adequate neighborhood-serving retail in the City or your neighborhood? If not, what types of retail and services should be attracted?

Suggestions for new neighborhood serving retail uses included a variety of new entertainment activities such as theatres, ice skating rink, bowling, restaurants, performing arts venues, museums and golf courses. Other stakeholders suggested new types of retail businesses such as bookstores, electronics, furniture stores, and major department stores. Some respondents indicated that services such as health care, educational, legal and aviation-related businesses and employment opportunities are important new services to attract. The development of mixed-use development in key areas such as Imperial Highway and La Brea and Imperial Highway and Prairie Avenue were also identified as ways to attract and stimulate new retail businesses and services.

- Need the following uses, services, or establishments
 - Bookstores
 - Major retailers
 - Department stores
 - Sit-down restaurants (high end)
 - Theatres
 - Performance arts venues
 - Golf course
- Child-oriented museum
- Child care services
- Emergency clinics
- Furniture/appliances
- Electronics
- Movie theatres
- Entertainment
- Recreation (ice-skating/bowling)

8. Are there other important businesses that should be attracted to the City? If so, what types of businesses and why?

New businesses that will serve residents and visitors as well as create new jobs were identified by stakeholders as important. Suggestions for new businesses included electronics stores, movie theatres, hotel and conference centers, engineering companies, and corporate headquarters.

- Need car dealerships
- Fortune 500/Corporate offices
- Car dealers
- Hotels/conference center
- Brokerage firms
- Need job-creating companies like Marvin Engineering
- Business that complement LAX
- Major shopping area like Third Street Promenade or Citywalk
- High-tech business parks
- Public safety/security industry jobs
- Paralegals
- Entertainment industry jobs

9. Job creation in general, and particularly in the higher wage/professional sectors, has been identified as needed to strengthen and diversify the City's employment base, resulting in an improvement in the community's ability to purchase homes and other goods and services. What types of businesses do you foresee locating in Inglewood to provide additional jobs including higher paying jobs? What can the City do to attract businesses that enhance the employment base, especially in higher end jobs?

Stakeholders identified a variety of new employment opportunities that would create high-paying jobs and stimulate the local economy. These jobs included professional occupations in the health care industry, accounting, bio-medical, aerospace, research and development, electronics manufacturing, government occupations, and media firms. Some participants also suggested other strategies to stimulate high-paying occupations and employees such as limiting affordable housing, capping housing densities in new mixed-use development, and providing assistance for renters to become homeowners.

- Engineering/Aerospace
- Bio-tech/bio-medical firms
- Light manufacturing (non-polluting)
- Accounting firms
- Property management firms
- Health care
- Talent Agencies
- Limited density in mixed-used developments
- A range of housing including affordable housing
- Use CDBG funds for First-time homeowner programs
- Provide home ownership incentives for teachers
- City programs for homeowners
- Assist tenants to become homeowners
- More governmental agencies/operations
- Cargo logistics/movement (freight)
- Import/export showrooms
- Electronics manufacturing/assembly
- Research technology firms
- Smart buildings (wifi)
- Become a green city
- Media firms
- Incentives to attract high-paying jobs—with set aside for residents
- Use Herbal life building

10. Where should Inglewood allow additional residential development, recognizing that new housing may result in increased traffic and additional demand for community services?

- a. *Should the City accommodate more mixed-use development that integrates housing with retail commercial or office uses? If so, where should mixed use be located?*
- b. *If not, what other approaches do you suggest be used to increase housing opportunities in the City?*
- c. *What should the City do to make housing more affordable?*
- d. *The City would like to encourage homeownership as a means to enhance the quality of its neighborhoods and increase investment in the City. Do you think this is a good idea? If not, why? If so, would you support City programs to make housing more affordable for prospective homeowners?*

Most stakeholders were supportive of the development of mixed-use development within Inglewood within key areas. Some areas that were appropriate for mixed-use included the Downtown, Centinela corridor, other corridors, Hollywood Park, Morningside Park, 85th Street, Manchester Avenue, and various infill sites.

Mixed Use or Infill Housing

- Support mixed-use (retail on the ground floor with residential above) in the following locations:
 - Downtown
 - Centinela Boulevard
 - Hollywood Park
 - Century/Prairie
 - Major corridors
 - Morningside Park
 - The Forum
 - Infill sites
 - Manchester (Crenshaw to Van Ness)
 - Prairie Avenue from Imperial Avenue to 104th Street
- Imperial/Crenshaw (SW corner)
- 85th Street
- Imperial/Prairie
- Florence/La Brea
- Outside the LAX “noise footprint”
- Housing subsidies/tax credits
- Inclusionary zoning
- Explore federal/private funding sources
- City should encourage homeownership w/o subsidizing
- Need more market rate and senior housing

Home Ownership

- Subsidies for first-time home owners, single parents
- Support / subsidies for affordable housing
- Moderate building codes to lower construction costs
- Use CRA set aside funds
- Write down land—to facilitate housing development
- Provide incentives for ownership of rental property

Improving the Commercial-Residential Interface

11. Physically, there will always be places in the City where housing and commercial uses abut one another. Some techniques already in use to manage this edge in order to avoid or reduce potential impacts and maintain land use compatibility include building setbacks, restrictions on the hours of business operation, and use of parking as an intermediary uses. What other techniques should the City consider for improving the commercial-residential interface and which of these should be a priority for implementation?

Suggestions to provide more effective methods to reduce impacts of incompatible land uses include use of green buffers, site directed lighting, walls, requiring adequate on-site parking, building orientation to enhance privacy, and providing adequate setbacks. Other suggestions including limiting or removing incompatible land uses and providing roadway improvements and higher standards for building maintenance.

- Use of green space
- Lot size/setback requirements
- Prohibit incompatible uses (adult uses, nightclubs, alcoholic beverage establishments)
- Buy out/relocate adult uses
- Provide noise barriers
- Site-directed lighting
- Require adequate on-site parking
- Stabilize residential areas
 - One-way streets
 - Cul-de-sacs
- Use separation barriers-masonry walls
- Foliage to deter graffiti
- Roadway design to deter commercial traffic on local streets
- Require building and site maintenance standards
- Permit parking in residential areas
- Building orientation / design for privacy i.e. balconies, windows; window placement, landscape buffers, lighting direction/illumination
- Solar or photovoltaic powered air-filter systems
- Limit alcohol sales

Improving Traffic Conditions

Local traffic is aggravated by the City's location on roadways that provide access to LAX and adjacent freeways. Some people favor measures to eliminate or slow traffic on residential streets. These range from speed bumps or "chokers" that reduce the width of the street at intersections, to more drastic changes such as street closures.

12. What are some appropriate techniques that the City could implement to reduce traffic congestion? What about other traffic issues?

Many stakeholders commented on the lack of adequate parking the community in certain residential areas and need for improved traffic flow on key arterial roads. Specific comments included the need for improved signal synchronization particular in the morning peak hour periods, better traffic violation enforcement, improved traffic flow and safety around schools, and need to widen streets to improve movement of traffic.

- Provide adequate parking/security
- Require property owners to maintain property (trash, remove graffiti, sidewalk cleaning)
- Signal synchronization (a.m. peak)
- Reverse flow lanes
- Increase traffic enforcement
- More use of photo-tickets
- Traffic and parking enforcement around schools
- Consider one-way streets in some areas
- Flashing lights around school
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (Signal synchronization)
- Address parking in residential areas
- Remove restrictions on parking around the Forum
- Shuttle service for commercial areas
- No support for density bonus for parking
- Street widths should be increased (narrower sidewalks)
- Set aside for assessment- for widening
- Congestion pricing

Parking Conditions

It is generally felt that there are parking deficiencies in the City and there is a need for additional off-street parking opportunities, particularly near business districts.

14. What should be the City's priority—to provide more parking along the commercial corridors or in residential neighborhoods?

15. Some have suggested that density bonuses be provided for new housing developments that provide additional parking above their code requirements. Do you think that this is a good idea? What other incentives should be considered to increase the parking supply in areas where parking is limited?

Stakeholders were divided in terms of prioritizing whether more parking should be provided within residential or commercial areas. Most agreed that lack of parking is an important issue in both commercial centers and residential areas. While some stakeholders did not agree with providing density bonuses for additional parking spaces, some participants indicated that that it might be appropriate in specific areas such as within mixed-use developments.

- Parking in residential is more important
- Commercial areas should be a priority
- Support density to provide parking in commercial/mixed use areas
- Adaptive reuse as a tool to provide more parking
- Assure adequate parking standards in new development
- Increase residential and commercial parking standards
- Use vacant lots for parking
- City should build more parking structures
- Do not support density bonuses to provide additional parking
- School operations should not reduce parking on residential streets

Preserving the City's Cultural Heritage

16. Should the City provide financial assistance to the owners of historic properties who agree to maintain their buildings with their historic design and materials? What other incentives should be considered to protecting historic resources?

The majority of participants supported the use of the City providing financial assistance to the owners of historic properties that agree to maintain their buildings with historic design and materials. Most stakeholders believed that there were limited historical properties remaining in Inglewood and it was important to maintain historical resources.

- Supports city subsidies only when the building or site is open to the public
- Supports city subsidies of historic properties but it is not a high priority

Open Space and Parks

17. Do you believe that there is a shortage of open space and parklands in the City? If so, in what general locations?

The majority of stakeholders believed that there was a significant shortage of parkland and open space within the community.

- Northwest Inglewood
- South of Century Boulevard
- South of Imperial Highway
- Central City
- Southeast area

18. Some people indicated that the City should acquire lands to develop entirely new parks, while some indicated that priority should be placed on the expansion of existing parks. What do you think should be done to increase parklands in the City?

Stakeholder groups were divided whether to create new parks or upgrade/expand existing parks. Most agreed both were appropriate depending on the area.

- Utilize vacant sites that are city owned as parks
- New pocket parks
- Require open space on major new development projects
- Use public/private partnerships to provide parks
- Some existing parks are underused
- Use City-owned land for housing not parks
- Control utilization of parks
- Address crime in the parks
- Address the aesthetic issues that affect the City's image (prostitution/pan handling)
- Develop clean up and maintenance programs
- Increase park programming to meet community needs
- Need programs for the space after school/programs
- Increase joint uses of school district facilities and playfields

19. Would you be willing to pay additional taxes that would be specifically allocated for the acquisition and development of new parklands and, if so, how much would you be willing to pay annually? Nothing, \$50, \$100, \$200, \$500, or more.

A range of amounts was provided by respondents as indicated below. Other suggestions included the provision of sales taxes not just property taxes that should be earmarked for open space development.

- None
- 0–\$50 per year
- \$100
- \$200
- More than \$200, if others pay
- Consider sales tax—not just property tax

20. Are there areas that we didn't address that you think should be addressed in the General Plan update process? If so, what are they?

Other areas suggested that needed to be addressed in the General Plan ranged considerably. These issues included better community within city government, addressing energy conservation and minimizing effects of pollutants, better education, safety concerns, and methods to encourage new businesses and commercial development.

- Better communication between business and City Council
- Provide public parking lots
- Retain good staff at the City
- Crime and safety should be addressed/focus on youth crime
- Public/private partnerships to address crime
- Renters don't bear fair share of City costs
- Build in incentives for energy conservation
- Too many alcohol establishments
- Be more business friendly
- Work with the School District to enhance education
- Better access to public transportation
- Better policing plan—hire more officers
- Build a new police station
- Provide bi-lingual presentations
- Improve air quality in flight paths and study the effect of pollutants
- Strengthen laws on graffiti and trash removal
- Enhance energy conservation / reduce greenhouse gases
- Establish green building strategies for new development

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