

**City of Inglewood Annual State of the City Address delivered by
Councilman Ralph L. Franklin to the Inglewood/Airport Area
Chamber of Commerce
March 18, 2010**

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen.

Today, it is my pleasure and great honor, on behalf of the City of Inglewood, to present the 2010 Annual State of the City Address.

These are indeed challenging times; not only for our great city, but also for our county, state and nation. America is locked in a vise, one of the greatest economic calamities in this nation's history. The fiscal difficulties that confront individuals, businesses and cities throughout the United States have been rivaled only by the hardships endured by Americans during the Great Depression.

For the last several years, the City Council's leadership, with the knowledge we had, has done everything conceivably possible to limit the direct impact of this economic downturn on our community including reassessing the effectiveness of our executive administration, instituting a hiring freeze, hiring a Chief Financial Officer, and ordering a comprehensive audit of the City's finances. This included a long-term mission to reduce controllable expenses. Last year at this time, we thought we had a good handle on the situation. However, the completion of several critical financial audits, along with a review of departmental fiscal operations, and an analysis of the City's budgetary process and projected economic trends, have revealed the fact that the City is now confronted with serious fiscal challenges.

As we enter this new decade, and continue Inglewood's second century of existence, it is my duty to report to you that our nation, our state, and now our city must make difficult decisions that will impact how we move forward in charting safe passage through stormy waters.

Let me begin by stating the obvious. I'm not the same guy that's had the honor of presenting past State of the City addresses.

As everyone knows, earlier this year our mayor resigned from office. While I'm not going to belabor the point, I will say that this unfortunate outcome has removed a cloud that's hung over this community. Upon receiving notice of the resignation, the City Council acknowledged the former mayor's long history of public service and his commitment to this city and its residents. We did, as we do today, wish him and his family well.

The circumstances that we now face dictate that we focus our sights on the significant challenges that lie ahead. Our priority is to insure that the transition, as prescribed by the City Charter, proceeds seamlessly, and that City services continue to be delivered at the highest level possible without interruption. This is our challenge, this is our commitment, and this is our goal.

Today, everyone has heard about the budget difficulties that many other governmental agencies now face. The State of California is struggling with a nearly \$20 billion budget deficit. \$6.6 billion in the current fiscal year and \$13.3 billion in next year's budget. A combined double whammy of higher costs and lower than expected revenues has become a constant theme that many state and local governments must address.

The State has taken some well publicized steps to plug their own budget hole. They've issued mandatory furloughs for State employees and, as usual, have made several moves to take money from local governments.

The State of California also continues to search for ways to place the burden of fixing their budgetary crisis on the backs of cities. The Redevelopment Agency recently approved a payment of \$6 million as required by the State. This money is being taken by the State to meet their educational funding responsibilities.

The Governor recently signed a bill that will delay receipt of gas tax revenues that we justly deserve and desperately need. The State will "delay" those payments for a nine month period beginning in July 2010. This means that the City won't receive its gas tax allocations of about \$856,000 until April of 2011. This delay creates a cash flow problem for Inglewood and other cities to deal with.

The City of Los Angeles is facing a \$212 million budget deficit and has recently authorized a workforce reduction of up to 4,000 employees. This has occurred in an environment where, for various reasons, tax revenues have decreased and expenses have increased. Even the City of Torrance, in adopting their current fiscal year budget, had to confront a \$5.7 million deficit created as a result of declining sales taxes during this economic downturn.

Locally, our own school district is struggling to deal with today's economic challenges. It's been announced that the Inglewood Unified School District, like other school districts in the region, is considering budgetary measures such as workforce reductions, leaving vacancies unfilled and offering incentives for early retirement.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have to honestly tell you that, despite our best efforts, we can no longer avoid the impacts associated with today's economic whirlwind. This City Council approved the 2009-2010 City budget knowing that the projected expenditures for the current fiscal year would exceed revenues by about \$5.3 million. This \$5.3 million shortfall represents what is referred to as a "structural deficit." This means that we're not generating a sufficient amount of revenue to pay for expenditures associated with our current service levels.

Because of the belt tightening efforts taken in the past, the City's General Fund, the fund that provides funding for most common City services like libraries, public safety, tree trimming, parks and recreation and the like, began the current fiscal year with a "fund balance" of about \$7.3 million. You can equate this "fund balance" to having a positive balance in your savings account.

The City Council adopted the current fiscal year budget last September. This budget was balanced and paid all budgeted expenditures from the combination of anticipated revenues and the projected "fund balance." In our case, this year's General Fund expenditure budget is about \$88.1 million while anticipated revenues were budgeted at about \$82.8 million. The difference, as you can see, is about \$5.3 million, which represents the aforementioned "structural deficit."

Although the City Council was aware of this shortfall, we were able to adopt a “balanced” budget by utilizing \$5.3 million from the General Fund’s projected “fund balance.” This is the money that I referred to earlier as our “savings account,” which provided a means to “balance” the gap between our budgeted revenues and budgeted expenditures.

In recognizing the need for greater expertise in overseeing our municipal finances, the City Council hired a Chief Financial Officer. The City’s new Chief Financial Officer is Mr. Jeff Muir. Actually, Mr. Muir is a former Inglewood Assistant City Administrator who took a hiatus from the City of Inglewood to work a few years as the Chief Financial Officer for the City of Culver City. He’s now back in Inglewood with the responsibility for carefully reviewing, tracking, scrutinizing and managing all aspects of the City’s fiscal operations.

The City Council directed the Chief Financial Officer to immediately perform a comprehensive analysis of our City’s budgetary position. His analysis revealed several facts that we didn’t know at the time that we adopted this year’s budget. We learned that the last fiscal year’s actual revenues fell well short of projections. We now also know that the revenues for this year will be less than projected and that we were not as financially secure or “in the black” as we once thought.

The first look at our quarterly financial picture indicates that current year revenues are down by about \$3 million. This includes lower receipts for sales and utility users’ taxes. These taxes are some of the City’s primary revenue sources. Additionally, it has been determined that certain expenditure assumptions in the budget are unlikely to be realized, and that costs will be higher than anticipated in this year’s adopted budget. This flood of bad economic news has resulted in a projection that the City could have a year-end budget short fall of approximately \$13 million dollars.

Anyone watching the news or reading the newspapers cannot be oblivious to the financial conditions impacting, not only the State government, but many counties and municipal governments throughout California, including our great city. Realistically, it was

unlikely that, despite our best efforts, Inglewood could go through this unprecedented economic storm completely unscathed.

As the State of California continues to respond to its budgetary crisis at the expense of cities like Inglewood, we have taken appropriate action to, where possible, protect the City's financial interests. One example of this involves our response to actions by the State that would have compelled the City into a "forced loan" of its property tax revenue. Had this "forced loan" occurred, we would have lost an additional \$1.5 million during the current fiscal year. This didn't occur because of the City Council's prompt action to enroll the City in a special Proposition 1A Securitization Program. This quick action protected a substantial amount of revenue from being taken from our General Fund. We also have managed to complete several financial audits that have resulted in an upgrade of our bond credit rating.

Earlier this year, the City Council approved an initiative I sponsored in support of the proposed Local Taxpayer, Public Safety and Transportation Act of 2010. If the Act is approved by the voters, it would close legal loopholes to prevent the State from taking local government revenues to fix their budget problems. The State's current budget takes approximately \$5 billion away from cities, counties, and special districts.

The City's substantial cost reduction efforts have been overwhelmed by a combination of substantially lower revenues, increased expenditures (including rising healthcare and retirement costs) and revenue grabs by the State. In light of this new reality, we must be determined to respond with action that is realistic yet responsive to the present economic challenges.

The City has attempted to balance the competing interests of maintaining current service levels, fostering a positive economic development environment, and keeping our commitments to our hard working city employees. However, we now face unprecedented challenges to the financial health of our community. It appears that we must contemplate a prescription of bitter medicine to ensure that our city regains the strength and vitality needed for optimum fiscal health.

A fee study will be conducted in various departments to provide the City Council with information and options to adjust various City fees. The fact is that many of our current fees have not been adjusted in decades. Because of the current economic climate, it is imperative that the fees we assess “at least” equal the costs incurred to provide a given service.

We have to be very careful with every dollar we spend or contemplate spending. I want you to know that I and my colleagues are confident that we will be able to responsibly manage these fiscal challenges.

Like many other cities across the nation, we must make significant changes in our organization to be in concert with the current economic realities. We must live within our present means. This is the same situation that your businesses and many families deal with on a daily basis.

Our major objective must be to confront our structural deficit, while protecting and expanding our revenue base. This is the only way we can safeguard and strengthen our fiscal health. I can assure you that this City Council is united to accomplish this crucial goal.

While safeguarding our financial house is important, it’s just as important to safeguard our actual homes, businesses, and physical well-being. I’m proud of the fact that the men and women of the Inglewood Police Department are here, as their motto says, “Making the Difference.” Let’s give them all a round of applause.

We have worked extremely hard to improve the effectiveness of our police department. We have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars to train our uniform police officers and command staff. A part of this effort included an aggressive management reorganization and training program for all officers as it relates to the potential use of force. In 2008, we enlisted the assistance of the Los Angeles County Office of Independent Review to do a thorough assessment of the Department’s policies, practices and procedures. The report has been completed, and the City Council, City Administration, and Police

Department are moving toward full compliance with the recommendations.

Additionally, the Department is also fully cooperating with the investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice. We welcome this inquiry and view their feedback as beneficial to improve the Department's performance. We are working to reform the Department in a manner consistent with the Department of Justice recommendations. In fact, a significant number of their recommendations have either already been implemented or are slated for implementation. Now, while I'm talking about our police department, let me take a moment to publicly acknowledge the phenomenal work of our Chief of Police, Chief Jacqueline Seabrooks.

She's had to manage a broad range of issues during her tenure and she exemplifies the highest level of professionalism. The Department and our community are very fortunate to have her in charge. Please join me in giving her a round of applause.

Because of Chief Seabrooks' strong leadership, we can proudly say that all of our sworn personnel have completed 120 hours of "impact training," with an additional 40 hours for command officers. Impact training addresses the use of force in the field. It is our expectation that this training will result in a decrease of deadly force incidents and the use of less lethal weapons, when necessary.

In 2009, the overall crime rate in the city rose slightly by 1% percent. There are those who might say that, given the state of the economy and the pressures on individuals and families, this slight uptick could be expected. While last year's crime rate was the 5th lowest in 30 years, the leadership of this City won't be satisfied until we see crime reductions year after year after year.

An example of the Department's continued dedication to making our community and your businesses safer is this year's preliminary crime statistics. I'm proud to announce that, although the year is young, overall crime is down nearly 17 percent when compared with the same period in 2009. Now I think that's some really good news.

Our police department has been proactive about getting guns and other dangerous items off the street. Last fall, they conducted a very successful “Gifts for Guns” program which handed out \$100 American Express gift cards in exchange for people turning in weapons of any kind, no questions asked. They received more than 100 guns in the first hour and someone even turned in a live hand grenade. And yes, we had to call the bomb squad in to safely dispose of that item.

Police officers routinely make arrests of individuals in possession of loaded guns and other deadly weapons. By confronting armed suspects, they place themselves in harms way for our public safety. Let’s give the police officers a hand.

Another bright spot regarding our police department was the receipt of nearly \$3 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. These funds are commonly referred to as “stimulus funds.” This money has allowed us to fund salaries and benefits for 10 additional police officer positions. Stimulus money will certainly benefit us as we struggle with our budget issues.

Our police department is also doing everything it can to improve and increase its outreach to the community. Whether it’s making the rounds at block club functions, providing information at neighborhood watch meetings or taking bad guys off of the street, you will see a police department that is better trained and more acutely aware of its responsibility to enforce the law in a positive fashion. In a way that combines both justice and compassion. I’ve actually seen their positive efforts in my own district as the police department was instrumental in closing down troublesome bars and made significant progress in the fight against prostitution, drugs, and gang activity.

Our police officers do a lot of good things everyday that the public is typically unaware of. It was Inglewood police officers who recently saved a 3 year old girl from drowning. It was Inglewood police officers who located a confused senior citizen who had become lost. It was Inglewood police officers who came to the rescue of senior citizens during a major fire in a high-rise residential complex. And, it’s our Inglewood police officers who will be recognized by a grateful South Bay community during the upcoming

medal of valor awards ceremony. Again, let's give our police department a round of applause.

We know that times are hard, very hard. Hard for individuals, hard for businesses, and hard for our city. But we also know that in order to survive these hard times, we have to continue along a road that has served us well in recent years. And that road, is the road of economic development.

Today, resources for business assistance are not as readily available as in the past. But we are committed to providing whatever support we can to help businesses and developers achieve their objectives. This year Sheldon Curry, Assistant City Administrator – Chief Development Officer has advanced many projects that have been on the drawing board for years. And, with the resignation of our City Administrator, Mr. Curry will assume the role of Acting City Administrator.

PATH Villas is an affordable housing project that will result in the construction of 20 new rental units on Osage Avenue. This is an extremely beneficial project that will improve the quality of life for those in need of affordable housing opportunities. It's an excellent example of what I call "a public/non-profit partnership" that is a win-win development for everyone involved. Not only will the development include eight one-bedroom, six two-bedroom, and six three-bedroom units, but will also include a children's play area and a community room for residents.

Elimination of blight and increasing Inglewood's supply of affordable housing are constant goals of our city. As with PATH, Inglewood is also in partnership with developers on a number of other significant projects, including the Regency Towers and the Westside II housing projects.

Regency Towers is a 104-unit senior housing complex that was recently acquired by Thomas Safran & Associates. Safran and Associates is implementing an ambitious plan to renovate and improve the facility. They recently purchased and renovated two other senior housing facilities in Inglewood; both to the delight of hundreds of residents.

Like the Regency Towers, we are please to be supportive of the Westside II project. This project is planned for the US Vets site in Inglewood and consists of the construction of a five story 196-unit building that will serve as a vital resource for those who are homeless and in need of help.

And, we have encouraged developers in the Regency Towers Project and other developments to aid in the creation and development of a specialized job recruitment and training program to provide employment opportunities to Inglewood residents. We also have encouraged developers to, where possible, purchase goods and services here locally in Inglewood. This action is representative of this City Council's desire to bring jobs to our community through economic development.

In addition to large projects, the City of Inglewood supports projects that are just as important, but on a smaller scale. Projects like the development of nine single-family homes located in the vicinity of Yukon Avenue and 118th Street. These homes will be sold to moderate-income families. In fact, it's my understanding that families have already been qualified and pre-approved to purchase three of the homes, so I urge everyone to tell their friends that good, affordable homes are available in Inglewood.

Now, before I move on, I'd like to say a few words about our Locust Street Senior Center & Senior Residence Project. As you know, this is a project that would result in a new, state-of-the-art senior center and senior residence project, complete with a high-tech central kitchen, and 58 housing units for seniors. This project has been under consideration for several years. Last year, we received and opened bids for the shoring and excavation portion of the project and the City Council upheld a Planning Commission decision approving the Preliminary Planned Assembly Development for a special use permit for the project. In some form or fashion, this project has been active since 2001.

For the last several years, Inglewood senior citizens have used the Veterans Building at Vincent Park for their social and recreational gatherings pending construction of the new senior center. It's my

understanding that the development portion of this project is 95% complete and we have spent over \$5 million to bring this project into reality. If we delay or halt this development, there is a real possibility that we would have to return millions of dollars that we have either already spent or committed to the project.

Let me make my position crystal clear. I believe that all senior citizens, that means every senior citizen in America, have a right to enjoy their golden years in comfort, security, and dignity. I think that seniors deserve to be able to enjoy an Inglewood facility for which they have waited so long. And, they deserve to be able to do this in THEIR lifetime!

For years, this project has been analyzed, scrutinized, reviewed, reshaped and improved. It has received input from the public at the former senior center, the Planning Commission and the City Council. Most importantly, it was developed with substantial input and opinions from Inglewood senior citizens themselves. Finally, a majority of the Inglewood City Council has agreed with the decision of the Planning Commission that the project should be approved.

The time has come for senior citizens to enjoy what will be the premier senior citizens center and residential housing complex in the region! It's time to get it done and it would be unconscionable to delay this project any longer. In fact, to further delay this project would jeopardize the potential existence of any senior citizens center to be in the city.

One of the largest ongoing bright spots for our community is the much anticipated Hollywood Park Development Project. With all of the economic and financial challenges that confront the City, there is HOPE. Hope for new jobs, good paying jobs. Hope for an expanded opportunity for new revenues. Hope for shopping and housing opportunities unlike any that have ever been manifested in Inglewood. That hope is represented by Hollywood Park Tomorrow.

The project area consists of the entire 238 acre Hollywood Park site and will include such things as a 620,000 square foot retail center; 75,000 square feet of office/commercial space; a 25-acre park

system and 4-acres provided to the City of Inglewood for civic use. Inglewood took a major step toward its future when the City Council and the City's Redevelopment Agency held several public hearings and a super majority of the Council/Agency members approved the specific plan, environmental impact report, and eight other related entitlement requests for the project. Now, we are well on the way to creating one of the most illustrious developments in the region. Oh, and by the way, we expect about 17,000 construction jobs to come our way as well. This promises to be a fantastic project. We just have to hold on for a few more months until we begin to put shovels in the ground. If all goes as planned, we should be able to do that sometime next year.

Now that I've hit you with a cold dose of the economic realities facing our City, I want to take you through an overview of the steady accomplishments that our City has made through the hard work of both our elected leadership and the City staff in several important areas over the past year.

While its become increasingly difficult to attract and retain outstanding talent to join our executive team and help lead us through the difficulties the City now faces, in 2009 the City was successful in recruiting two individuals who are already producing a tremendous return for the City.

I have already mentioned how pleased the Council is with the return of Jeff Muir who has assumed the role of Chief Financial Officer for our City at this critical time. Another key hire is Bruce Johnson, Library Director, who has assumed the difficult task of administering our large library operation. We were fortunate to entice Bruce to come from San Diego where he was the Deputy Director of their library for many years. Both of these gentlemen have hit the ground running and are putting the City on the right track with solid managerial skills.

The City benefitted from several partnerships on the employment front last year that yielded great results. One was our ongoing relationship with our friends at the South Bay Workforce Investment Board which allowed us to create opportunities for young and mature workers alike with programs like "Yes We Can," a

summer employment program which allowed us to use Federal Recovery Act (stimulus) funds to hire young people from 14 to 24 years of age at little or no cost to the City. A total of 140 young people enjoyed the dignity of a good paying job while the City benefitted from their work efforts in a wide array of jobs.

The City faced, and will continue to face, a number of workforce/labor relations issues last year as the City finds itself negotiating with six separate bargaining groups. On one hand, employees are in desire of salary increases and on the other, the City is searching for ways to reduce costs. These negotiations are difficult but crucial for the City to continue to thrive. I believe that the key to these negotiations will be cooperation on both sides for a positive working environment. During the negotiations last year the City successfully negotiated a soft cap on health insurance for three of the City's six bargaining groups.

I have already mentioned the City's use of stimulus funds, which have become an important tool for our municipal government that allows us to continue making progress in important areas--especially in a tight economy.

In addition to using stimulus funds last year to fund ten additional police officers in Inglewood, other dramatic uses of these funds can be seen on major streets. The \$3.2 million Manchester Boulevard Infrastructure Improvement Project includes street resurfacing, sidewalk repair, and ADA ramp installations for the entire length of roadway between Ash Avenue and Van Ness Avenue. The project will also include refurbished gateway signs and new landscaping in the medians removing the unsightly broken concrete.

The City will also begin a \$3.6 million design and engineering project, in the next few months, for much needed improvements to Century Blvd. This year we will begin the \$7.1 million Phase II La Brea Ave Roadway improvements. In addition, we will begin the \$1.02 million improvements to the La Cienega/La Tijera/Centinela intersection, \$2.2 million for resurfacing Imperial Highway, and \$1.5 million for the resurfacing of Arbor Vitae. Your call for investment in the City's infrastructure has been heard.

These stimulus and other state and Federal funds directly benefit every resident and business in Inglewood by making our City not just more attractive, but desirable to the business community and your customers. Inglewood is rapidly building the infrastructure necessary to support the coming wave of economic expansion that is headed our way!

Southern California media has reported many stories about water main breaks throughout the area. I am pleased to report that while Inglewood had 14 water main breaks in 2009, City staff responded promptly to every event and as a result kept the level of inconvenience to the public and business community to a minimum. 14 is considered a low number for a city this size and is indicative of the great job that our staff is doing with regard to monitoring and maintaining our water system.

Water is an extremely important issue for our City because the City provides water to 86% of the residences and businesses here. The remaining areas of the city have their water supplied by two other companies, Golden State Water and Cal American Water. We must all work together to conserve and recycle this precious resource. Because water is so valuable and important in our community, I believe that its time for us to investigate ideas like automatic shut offs on water hoses and new ways to capture the runoff from fire hydrants.

Most residents and businesses in this community are unaware of the remarkable achievements our City has made with regard to Green initiatives. Most departments of our City are making a conscious effort to pursue green options wherever feasible and we are becoming recognized as an environmental leader in our region. For instance:

- \$12,200 award from West Basin Municipal Water District to renovate and retrofit the Hardy Slope Center Median with drought resistant plants which conserve a large amount of water.

- Received a \$107,000 grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund which will provide partial funding for the installation of artificial turf fields at Edward Vincent Park.
- Received a \$143,000 Water Resources Development Act grant which was used to complete construction documents for the Sanford M. Anderson Treatment Plant.
- Received a \$1,039,000 (Federal Stimulus) Energy Block Grant for a solar demonstration project at Roger's Park, for new LED signal lights, and building lighting retrofit throughout the City of Inglewood.
- City won the first Environmental Leadership Award sponsored by Government Fleet Magazine.
- City was winner of the Green Fleet Award in the Truck and Equipment Category at the National Administrators Fleet Association Conference.
- Our Fleet Superintendent, Rick Longobart, was a finalist for Fleet Manager of the Year.
- I want to acknowledge all of the businesses in our city, many of which are in this room, that participated in the Campus Beautification Program last year which provided assistance to schools throughout our City in providing green plantings. I think this was one of the best examples of our community working together to improve our environment.
- Through a partnership with Southern California Edison's 2010 Direct Install program we are able to offer free programmable thermostats, motion sensor devices, solar film for windows, and other energy saving devices to area businesses. Eligible businesses must have ceilings that are no higher than twelve feet.

The City formed a partnership with the U.S. Census last year to avoid the problem we had in 2000 with a severe undercount. The

Council unanimously approved for me to head the Inglewood “Complete Count Committee” so that we could get the most complete and accurate count of individuals who live in our city. A complete count in our city will assure that decisions related to healthcare, transportation, education, housing, social services and employment will be made accurately for our community.

Why is this important? For every person who is not counted the City loses more than \$1,000 per year. Since a census is only taken once every 10 years, that loss is greater than \$10,000 over a 10 year period for every person who is not counted.

I am please to report that we have military veterans working with homeless organizations to get everyone counted in our city. We have all of the IUSD schools actively involved in reaching parents. We have persuaded the U.S. Census to open an office in our city and we have obtained employment for hundreds of Inglewood residents who are working today to assure that our City has a complete count. We are focused on the hard to count groups in our community and we want to thank the business community and clergy in churches which have been getting the message out that we want every man woman and child counted this time.

In fact today, I ask that you take a Census poster back to your place of business and proudly display your support for the Census in your window as the U.S. Census has already sent surveys, and this week questionnaires for the census count are being provided to our homes.

In 1989, the City of Inglewood organized a group of employees, citizens and business leaders to compete for the prestigious All-America City Award—an award that many compare to the Oscar for cities. In 1989 to the surprise of many, we won. Last year, on the 20th anniversary of that wonderful victory, we formed a team in a similar manner. Many of the local businesses here today along with City staff and active members of the Inglewood community formed our team.

Our team went to Tampa, Florida and presented a simple yet compelling story about an American city that is not without challenges, but continues to enjoy the unified efforts of the business

community, community organizations, and a dedicated staff of City workers to accomplish great things together. Whether our community is confronting the problem of jet noise from our nearby airport, a lack of retail shopping options, a need for jobs for our young people, or housing for our seniors, our City pulls together like few others to make this a fantastic place for all of us to live, work and play. We are making great strides in each of these areas in spite of a difficult market.

This award belongs to everyone in this room. I encourage you to reference it in your business signs, your organization's letterhead and in your conversations with others who are considering coming here to do business. There is no city in America that is more American than Inglewood and I encourage you to spread the word.

Let me close by sharing a story that, to me, illustrates what the All-America character of our city truly is. Near my home in the 4th District there is a park called Center Park. Over time it has fallen into disrepair and has actually become something of an eyesore to the community. Our citizens, business people and an incredible team of workers from Parks & Recreation and other City agencies, will join forces next week in a project called KaBOOM. Next Friday, over 200 parents, business executives, teachers, off duty police officers, and celebrities will descend on Center Park. In a single day, they will transform that dilapidated playground into one of the most beautiful parks in our city for kids and their families to enjoy. The new playground has been redesigned by the children and neighbors who live in the neighborhood and together we will install brand new, state-of-the-art playground equipment that the community has selected and will jointly build in a one day event.

This is the All-America spirit of Inglewood, and this is the spirit that will keep our City moving forward into this new century.

Thank you for allowing me to visit with you this morning and share our All-America story.