

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Overview of the Community Visioning Process**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the Community Visioning Process.

The main task can be summarized as the facilitation of a consensus-building process to define the economic development envisioned by the community for the City of Inglewood. The charrette consisted of three exercises designed to:

- Identify the types of economic development needed and locate them on a map of the city
- Develop a comprehensive vision for the economic development of Inglewood
- Identify strategies for achieving the vision of economic development

This document discusses the ideas presented by the forty-one community members who participated in the charrette and their vision for the future of Inglewood's development. The procedure of the charrette has been briefly described along with a comprehensive description of exercises undertaken in the charrette. The key findings have been summarized and the details from each exercise are attached for reference as appendices. This document would enable the reader to gain an understanding of the community's perspective on strengths and weakness, their vision, and the strategies that they find suitable for the development of Inglewood.

#### **COMMUNITY CHARRETTE**

The community charrette was held at Rogers Park, 400 Beach Avenue in Inglewood, on October 9, 2004 from 9am to 4pm. The Mayor and City Council members welcomed the participants at the beginning of the day followed by an overview of the day presented by the consultant team. A brief development update was provided by Hilda Kennedy and a comprehensive review of the previous community meetings was presented by the consultant team, stating the chief concerns and ideas of the residents.

This day-long session was divided into three sessions that included exercises, discussions, and voting on several issues. Participants were divided into four groups. Ground rules were set for each session and directions for each exercise were handed out and reviewed with the participants. To enhance the facilitation process, the team outlined the background and development issues pertinent to the city. All ideas contributed by the community members were given equal weight, and final consensus was always drawn by a majority vote. To facilitate maximum participation Spanish translators were present in the meeting to assist the Spanish speaking community members.

Below is a brief description of each exercise and the outcomes. The complete notes for each group from the charrette are available in Appendix II.

**Exercise #1: Define the Economic Development Need**

The first exercise focused on defining the economic development need starting with a brainstorming session. A list of needs were identified and classified as workforce development; business attraction in the form of retail, commercial and industrial; business development and entrepreneurship and miscellaneous including entertainment districts, cultural venues, schools, etc. Specific questions were asked (see Appendix III for Exercise #1 instructions) and a strategy of consensus measurement through voting was used to assess the economic development need (Exhibit 1).

**Exhibit 1: Economic Need Assessment through Voting**

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Total	%
Number of Participants	6	5	5	7	23	
Workforce development	5	4	5	6	20	87%
Business attraction						
Retail	5	4	5	7	21	91%
Commercial	5	3	5	7	20	87%
Industrial	3	1	5	7	16	70%
Business Development	5	-	5	-	10	43%

The majority of participants voted retail as the most significant economic development need, followed by workforce development and commercial development. Other ideas presented were to create an artist’s district, strengthen high school education, bring in career centers, and implement façade improvement programs.

The participants also felt that increasing education in technical fields was a key component of workforce development. Educational facilities focusing on multiple disciplines such as biochemistry, multi-media, entertainment, software, and graphic development that would train local residents for expanding industries like health, media, and information technology.

In the second part of the exercise, each group was asked to place the various economic development types they desired on a map of Inglewood. The following colors were assigned to the different types of development. Each group was provided with colored dots for placement on the map.

- Retail
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Cultural Venues
- Other

Each group selected a representative to make a presentation of their map to the entire group on the types of development for different areas of Inglewood and their reasons for selection.

The Market Street area was a main focus for all of the groups as a retail corridor and a cultural hub. Participants envisioned this street as an entertainment district with family attractions. Restaurants with patios for dining outside, apparel stores and other shopping/retail areas, artists' studios and workshops formed a part of this environment. Other areas that they wanted to see new retail were along the major corridors that bisect the city: Century, Prairie, Manchester, and La Brea. There was also interest in using some of the Hollywood Park site for cultural venues.

There was a preference for locating the commercial areas along the main transportation corridors with industrial areas to be located along the 405 freeway in the western part of the city or on or around the Hollywood Park site.

The collected comments are available in the meeting notes in Appendix II and the maps developed by each group are located in Appendix I.

### **Exercise #2: Vision for the future of Inglewood**

The second exercise asked the participants to develop a group vision for the future economic development of the city. The participants were provided with guidelines for framing their vision statements. They were asked to think in the spirit of the words of *Bennis and Nanus*:

"To choose a direction, a leader must first have developed a mental image of a possible and desirable future state of the organization. This image, which we call a *vision*, may be as vague as a dream or as precise as a goal or mission statement. The critical point is that a vision articulates a view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organization, a condition that is better in some important ways than what now exists."

The first step was to identify the values and goals of the participants. A series of questions were posed to the participants to help them articulate their values (see Appendix III for Exercise #2 instructions). By identifying their goals and values, each group was able to build a vision statement. The criteria for the vision statements were to:

- Set forth a description of a desirable future that would be better than the present or the past.
- Be achievable in a reasonable amount of time.
- Take advantage of opportunities that the future will afford.

The participants shared many things in common regarding education, job types, workforce training, shopping and business/entrepreneurship in their overall vision of the city. The

following vision statements were developed by the four groups and presented to the entire room at the end of the exercise:

Group I: Our vision for economic development is a thriving, diversified, environmentally friendly community that allows us to attract and retain good jobs and investors, while enhancing youth job development and educational standards, capitalizing on the unique location of the City of Inglewood, California.

Group II: Our vision for economic development is to train and educate youth, provide social entertainment, promote business development and marketing in Inglewood, and provide a safe community for youth, seniors, businesses, and tourists. Improving the quality of life and traffic flow at no cost to the general fund and development of vacant land in compliance with current open space element that facilitates the development of retail without city subsidies, redevelopment agency funds, or general funds.

Group III: Our Vision for Economic Development:

1. To encourage, develop and sustain diverse economic opportunities;
2. To ensure workforce, education and job training opportunities for all residents of the community;
3. To foster an atmosphere of social responsibility within the business community;
4. To support established businesses that generate stable revenue;
5. To encourage new technological Industries;
6. And to provide a diverse range of recreational and cultural activities.

Group IV: Inglewood will be a forward-looking City, maximizing on the strategic location to support economic growth and development. We will celebrate the cultural diversity of the community & balance successful business development between indigenous & commercial business interest. We support developing an atmosphere that perpetuates advanced education that allow our youth to get involved and compete in growth industries, encouraging them to stay and be invested in our communities. Take a regional perspective of our city, partnering with the neighboring cities to support a long term viable economic strategy.

### **Exercise #3: Identify and Apply Economic Development Strategies**

The third exercise was designed to identify and apply economic development strategies. The participants were asked to identify Inglewood's strengths and then to choose the economic development strategies that would implement the participants' visions. Each group then applied the strategies and mapped the resulting development in the target areas identified on the Economic Development Map (see Appendix III for Exercise #3 instructions and Map).

Each team marked their strategies and developments by placing colored dots and bars on the large map provided and labeling them. The color codes followed were:

-   Retail
-   Industrial
-   Commercial
-   Cultural Venues
-   Other

Each group selected a new representative to make a presentation of their final map to the entire group on their choice of strategies and types of development for different areas of Inglewood.

In this exercise (#3), all the participants were asked to focus on ten key project areas for the city of Inglewood that were identified by the Kosmont Business Partners as the potential areas for development. The following section summarizes the groups' development strategies for the project areas. Due to time constraints, some of the groups could focus only on few project areas as per their discretion and consensus within the group. Below is the description of the results according to the ten project areas:

**Century Boulevard Corridor:**

Community participants viewed the Century Corridor, in close proximity to the 405 freeway, as ripe for new development. Two types of uses dominated the discussion, hotels and restaurants which would capture LAX traffic as well as serving the community of Inglewood, and large-scale business park, commercial, and high-tech industrial uses. One group identified a visitor center at the Century Boulevard entrance to the city as a way to capitalize on the LAX visitor flow and introduce people to the attractions in the city. Another group wanted to locate a training center adjacent to a business park to link the training of local residents to jobs there.

**Prairie Avenue Corridor:**

Two groups had ideas for this corridor. One group wanted to see a cultural attraction or monument and mixed-use development, the other group wanted more job intensive uses such as a business park with offices, and a training center with technical and entrepreneurship classes.

**90th street at Hollywood Park including the Hollywood Park and Casino:**

Each group had ideas for development of the Hollywood Park race track and Casino site, and most included some form of mixed-use development. One group envisioned mixed-use development with homes, high-end restaurants, and a cultural center. Another group envisioned a convention center with hotel and sit-down restaurants. A third group wanted mixed-use development with restaurants and retail at one end and a high-tech industrial park with information technology and studio space at the other. A fourth group visualized a cultural center with a performing arts center, movie theatres, sit-down restaurants, a book store and mixed-use development as well as an elementary school to accommodate children from new residential development in the city.

**Morningside Park Corridor:**

There was a strong preference for new retail development on the east end of this corridor. Mixed-use development was proposed by one group as a strategy to revitalize the area. Another group wanted to make sure new restaurants would locate here, they also felt this would area would be a good location to attract small businesses, and professional buildings with tenants such as doctors.

**Arbor Vitae Corridor:**

The Arbor Vitae Corridor west of La Cienega was discussed by two of the groups. One Group wanted to expand the industrial uses with an international high-tech industrial park while the other envisioned an aviation training center, high rise office buildings with professional offices and expanded commercial business space east of La Cienega.

**Downtown Market Street:**

This area was envisioned as a cultural and artistic entertainment hub of the city. One group envisioned mixed-use and a performing arts venue. Another group wanted a hotel and mixed-use with offices. A third group also wanted a hotel and a cultural use. A fourth group wanted restaurants and retail.

**D-3 Retail Project Area:**

The City Council is currently considering proposals from developers for this site.

**La Cienega Corridor:**

This area contains primarily industrial and office uses along with the AutoNation dealership. One group felt this area was a good location for a technology training center, they also want to expand the auto mall. Another group wants to see transit brought to this area. A third group expressed the desire to maintain the University campus and to expand industrial and commercial uses in the area. A fourth group also wants to expand retail uses, auto dealerships, and the aviation-related industry and to add a technology training center.

**Crenshaw and Imperial Business District:**

One group wanted to see a nice grocery store like Trader Joe's in this location along with a technology training center. Another group envisioned it as a restaurant hub. A third group envisioned high-end retail, a hotel, and mixed-use.

**North La Brea:**

The participants envision retail expansion in this project area. One group envisioned new retail, restaurants, and a cultural center. Another group envisioned upscale retail at the northern end and a community center, business park, and new retail at the southern end.