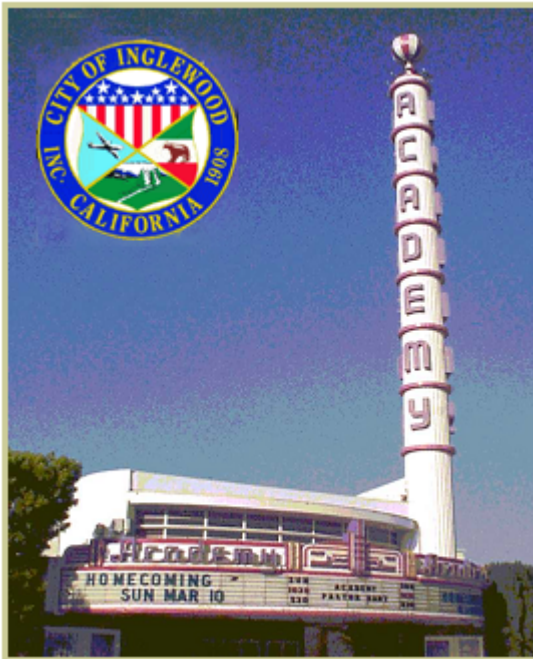


Morningside Park Economic Development Strategy

-Celebrating the Power of a Unique Community in the City of Inglewood



Prepared by:
Students participating in the
University of Southern California
Economic Development Laboratory

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Executive Summary

Morningside Park, a neighborhood in the City of Inglewood, is currently experiencing economic stagnation. The intent of the Morningside Park Economic Development Strategy (MPEDS) is to create a baseline understanding and blueprint for economic development in the area. The report contains an integrated analysis of Morningside Park's socio-demographic, economic, land use and transportation needs. Goals and recommendations have been developed to affect the area's business corridor, located on Manchester Boulevard.

MORNINGSIDE PARK TODAY

The Morningside Park project area is a commercial zone along the Manchester corridor with an essentially stable residential neighborhood just behind. Morningside Park is located in the 90305 zip code, in Council District I of the City

of Inglewood. Highlights of the information collected indicate the following:

- Morningside Park has a higher percentage of African-American residents than the City of Inglewood and Los Angeles County.
- The number of young people under 24 is almost 30 percent of the total population, while the population over 55 years of age is close to 28 percent.
- The area has a much higher percentage of householders living alone, especially those over the age of 65, than the City of Inglewood and Los Angeles County.
- Morningside Park and the City of Inglewood have similar percentages of female-headed households, which are significantly higher than the percentage in L.A. County.
- The 2001 estimated median household income for the Morningside Park four-tract census area is 13 percent

greater than for the City of Inglewood and the 2001 estimated average household income is 25 percent greater.

- Forty-three places of worship are located within 1 mile of the Morningside Park, 90305 zip code.
- 53 percent of the housing stock is single-family residences.
- In 1990, 75 percent of the homes in Morningside Park were valued between \$150,000 and \$299,999, compared to 47 percent of the homes in L.A. County

MORNINGSIDE PARK TOMORROW

In the next ten years, it is likely that Morningside Park will experience an increase in the number of Hispanic households and a decrease in the number of elderly residents. It is less likely, but possible, that the area will also undergo a drop in the number of homeowners and an increase in the number of renters.

Analysis of this data, and other research, suggests a number of conclusions for economic development in Morningside Park.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The following factors have a positive influence on the area:

- Residents of Morningside Park, with the highest income level in the City of Inglewood, have significant purchasing power.
- The surrounding residential neighborhood has a steady appeal, with a high home ownership rate and a nearly 100 percent overall occupancy rate.
- It is a strong family-oriented community; 62 percent of households are family households.
- Manchester Boulevard, running east and west, is a state highway (42) and carries 30,000+ vehicles per day through the Morningside Park area. Crenshaw Boulevard, running north and south through the center of the business corridor, also carries about 30,000+ vehicles per day.
- Opportunities exist for an expanded retail market, including electronics and appliance stores, clothing stores, building material and sporting goods/ hobby/book/music stores, which are particularly scarce in Inglewood.

BARRIERS TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Just as the features listed above positively contribute to the area, the following may have a negative effect:

- Crime and a perceived negative community image are prevalent.
- There is a current lack of interest in Morningside Park as a commercial or visitor destination.
- The commercial area shows limited business diversity.
- The area's workforce may be ill prepared to participate in the 21st century economy.
- Manchester Boulevard is perceived as an unfriendly environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Over 43 percent of buildings surveyed in the area have exposed wiring, 73 percent show conditions of defective design (primarily inadequate setbacks), and 48 percent do not provide adequate parking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given these opportunities and challenges, students developed overarching goals, recommendations and strategies

for economic development. The goals are prioritized according to the frequency each of the student groups proposed the idea. For example, actions that are considered a high priority were recommended by all three groups, actions that have a medium priority were recommended by two of the three groups, and actions given a low priority were only mentioned by one group. The MPEDS assumes that all recommendations were given the same critical thought, and does not include an assessment of the quality or feasibility of any specific activity.

High Priority

- Develop a single, independent economic development organization.
- Create opportunities for minority-owned business.
- Improve Morningside Park's physical environment.
- Improve the pedestrian environment.
- Improve parking options.

Medium Priority

- Increase the population of daytime workers in the area.
- Celebrate historic elements.

Low Priority

- Develop opportunities for arts and cultural events.
- Develop catalyst projects.
- Improve general accessibility.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MPEDS

Chapters One and Two of the MPEDS introduce and summarize Morningside Park's existing conditions. Chapters Three, Four and Five suggest goals and recommendations using three broad themes; business, visitor and retail and infrastructure development. Chapter Six summarizes key points and provides an action plan. Then, following the MPEDS concluding chapter, appendices describe significant resources for implementation and more information.

Introduction

In recent years, the City of Inglewood has experienced increased economic growth as a result of the development of Hollywood Park Market Place (Home Depot and Target), the Carmax auto dealership and the new 24-hour, drive-through Walgreen's at La Brea Avenue. However, not all of the communities within the City have experienced this economic boom or turnaround. Morningside Park, a distinct neighborhood within Inglewood, is currently experiencing economic stagnation. Prior redevelopment efforts have included a study conducted by the Vermont Slauson Economic Development Corporation in 1995, and a commercial area revitalization study conducted in 1974. However, strategies suggested in these studies have not effectively mitigated a trend of general decline. In recent years, Morningside Park has undergone many land use transitions that have altered the business environment of the area from one, which catered primarily to local residents, to one that under-serves residents and the City in general.

The intent of the Morningside Park Economic Development Strategy (MPEDS) is to create a baseline understanding and blueprint for the economic health of the Morningside Park area. The report contains an integrated analysis of Morningside Park's socio-demographic, economic, aesthetic, land use and transportation needs. Chapters One and Two introduce and summarize Morningside Park's existing conditions. Chapters Three, Four and Five suggest goals and recommendations using three broad themes; business, visitor and retail and infrastructure development. Chapter Six summarizes key points and provides an action plan. Appendices describe significant resources for implementation and more information. Results of the MPEDS are intended for members of the Inglewood City Council, Planning and Community Development Department, and interested community leaders. Although the immediate purpose of the MPEDS is to develop a plan for Morningside Park, a secondary objective is to engage stakeholder groups within the area who

will provide stewardship for on-going community development.

Research Methodology

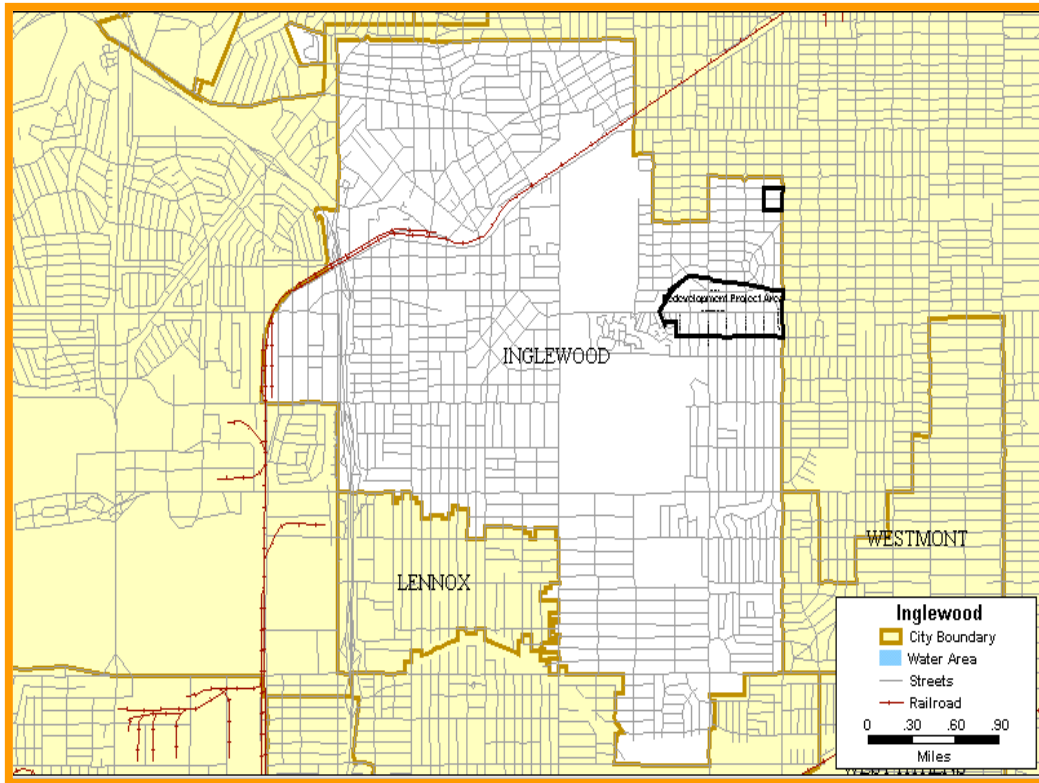
The MPEDS is a summary of work completed by graduate students enrolled in the University of Southern California's, School of Policy, Planning, and Development, Spring 2002 Community Economic Development Laboratory. Professor Leonard Mitchell and Professor Deepak Bahl of the USC Center for Economic Development oversaw the lab's activities. The lab's purpose was to establish a process that will help create jobs, foster a more stable and diversified economy, and improve business conditions in Morningside Park. During the 15-week semester, students were asked to study the area and make recommendations on how to improve its ability to compete economically. Students learned about ways to stimulate private investment in targeted economic sectors, using tools that help organize and carry out a revitalization strategy. They also learned how to expand the

capacity of public organizations to work effectively with business and how to enable communities to coordinate and encourage the development of innovative public/private approaches to economic structuring and revitalization. As part of three teams, students described problems, opportunities and needs; reviewed available and potential resources; interfaced with public officials, and community based organizations; developed recommendations for implementation and set strategic direction for an action plan. Each team was assigned a set of research and writing tasks to be completed over the ten-week period. Team members researched the historical, political, economic, social and business forces that influence the regional conditions for economic development opportunities, constraints and problems.

Study Area

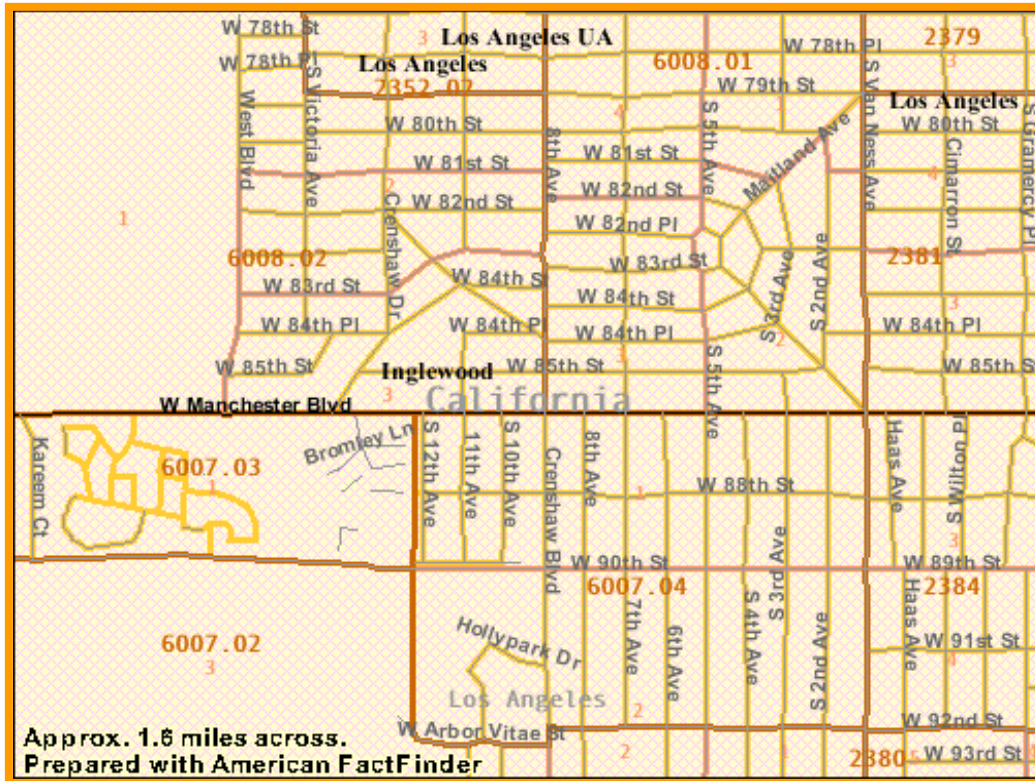
The study area is located in the 90305 zip code, in Council District I of the City of Inglewood. MPEDS recommendations are proposed for the business corridor, located on Manchester Boulevard. The business corridor runs approximately a mile and a quarter between Crenshaw Drive to the west and Van Ness Avenue to the east. A small part of Crenshaw Boulevard and the west side of Van Ness Avenue, just to the north and south of Manchester, is also included. For local demographic analysis, the MPEDS used the four adjacent census tract areas nearest the corridor: 6007.03, 6007.04, 6008.01 and 6008.02. Morningside Park has a large portion of land along either side of Manchester Avenue zoned by the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) as a redevelopment area. Map 1 on page 4, shows Morningside Park in the context of the City of Inglewood. Map 2 on page 5 identifies the four census tracts that make up the Morningside Park community.

Map 1: Morningside Park in the Inglewood Context



Source: City of Inglewood

Map 2: MPEDS Census Tracts



Source: US Census. <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/HiddenPageServlet>