

**CHAPTER 1****INTRODUCTION**

This environmental impact report (EIR) has been prepared by the City of Inglewood (“City” or “Inglewood”) as the Lead Agency in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq.*) and CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15000 *et seq.*). This EIR has been prepared to identify, analyze, and mitigate the significant environmental effects of a proposed Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Plan, including a General Plan Amendment, Concept Plans, Transit Oriented Development Zoning, and Design Guidelines for the Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights planning areas within the City of Inglewood (Figure 1.1). The project, as articulated in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, involves plans and programs to revitalize the Downtown and Fairview Heights areas and to maximize use of transit along Metro’s Crenshaw/LAX Line, which is currently under construction.

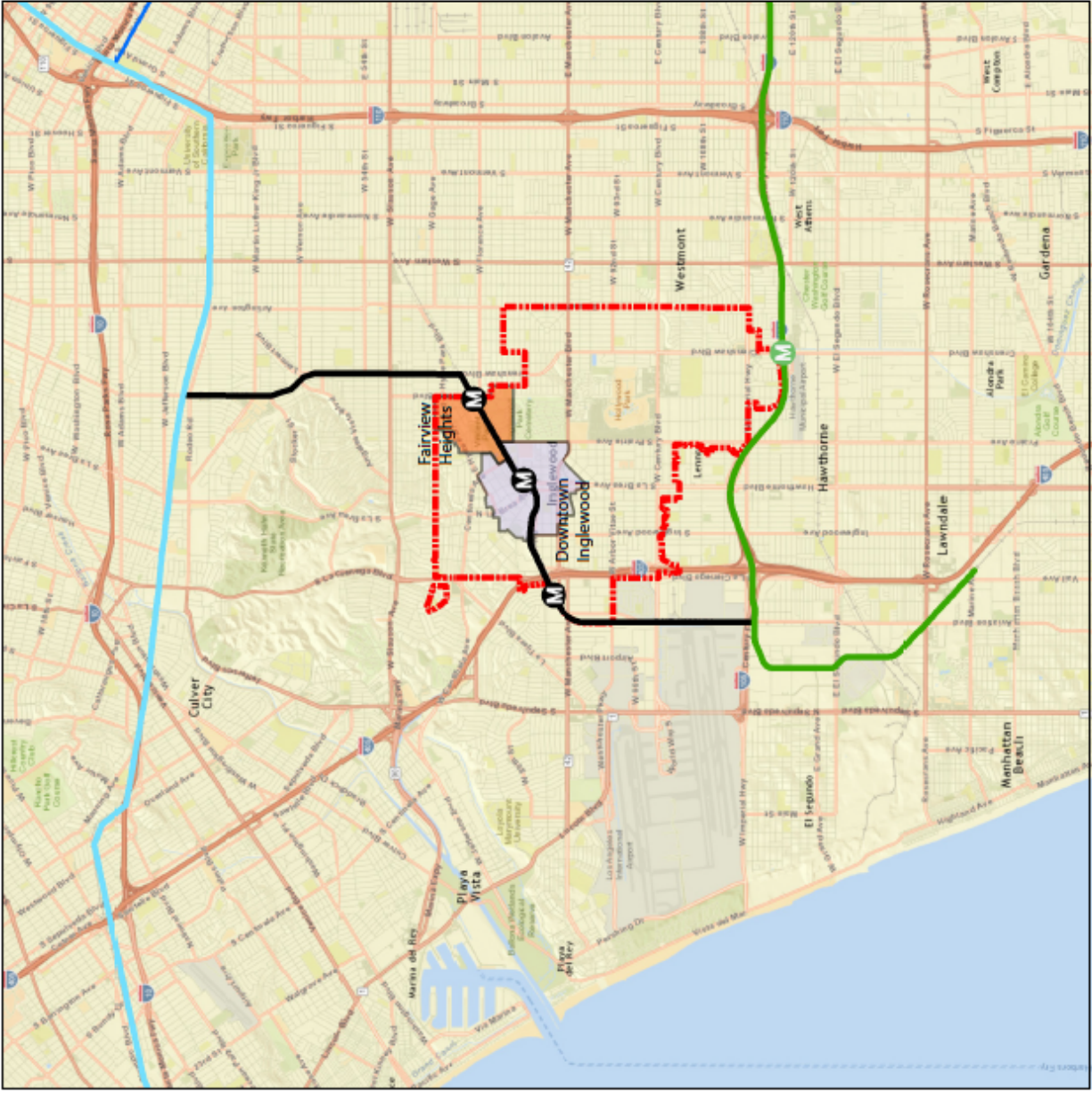
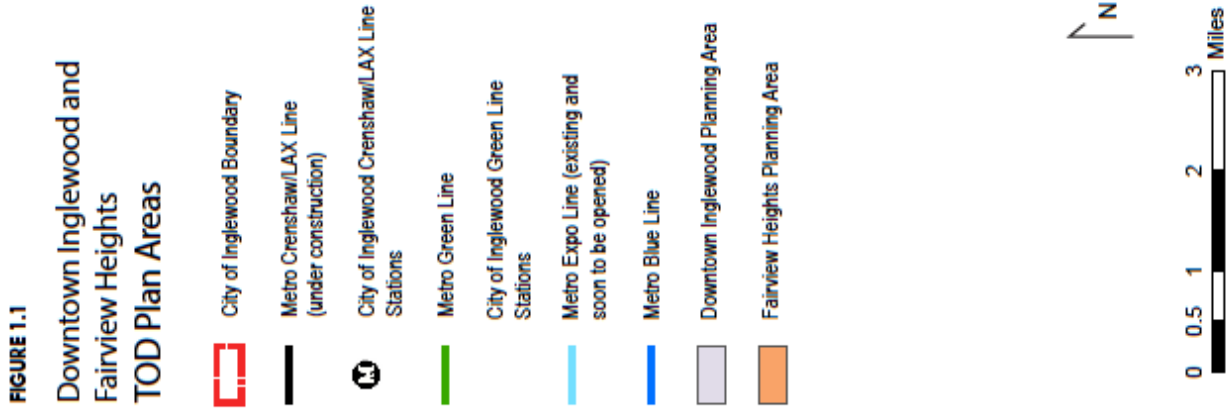
CEQA requires each EIR to reflect the independent judgment of the Lead Agency, including but not limited to the thresholds of significance used to analyze project impacts, analyses and conclusions regarding the level of significance of impacts both before and after mitigation, and the mitigation measures to be implemented to avoid or reduce project-related impacts<sup>1</sup>. In preparing this EIR, Inglewood has employed CEQA and environmental technical specialists. However, the analyses and conclusions set forth in this EIR reflect the independent judgment of the City as Lead Agency.

**1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN INGLEWOOD AND FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS****1.1.1 PROJECT SUMMARY****Project Location**

Figure 1.1 indicates the location of the Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights planning areas. The Downtown Inglewood planning area consists of approximately 585 acres located in the center of Inglewood along the new Crenshaw/LAX Metro line just east of the Florence Avenue/La Brea Avenue intersection. The Downtown planning area generally encompasses the area within approximately half-mile radius of the Downtown Inglewood Metro Station.

The Fairview Heights planning area consists of approximately 328 acres located near the intersection of Florence Avenue and West Boulevard. This planning area generally encompasses the portion of the half-mile radius area extending from the Fairview Heights Metro Station along the Crenshaw/LAX Metro line that is within the City of Inglewood. As shown in Figure 1.1 the westerly portion of the half-mile radius from the Metro station generally lies within the City of Inglewood; the easterly portion of this ½ radius lies within the City of Los Angeles, and is not part of the proposed project.

<sup>1</sup> CEQA §§21082.1 (c)(2) and (3), CEQA Guidelines §§15084 (e) and 15090 (a)(3).



### 1.1.2 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The Transit Oriented Development Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights consists of an amendment to the Inglewood General Plan to recognize the changes that completion of the Metro Crenshaw/LAX Line will have on the community's accessibility, and to capture the land use and economic development opportunities such accessibility will bring. Included in the General Plan Amendment are revisions to proposed land uses to take advantage of higher density mixed use development opportunities adjacent to the two Metro stations that will be opened within Inglewood along the Metro Crenshaw/LAX Line. Concept plans for the two planning areas provide a detailed land use plan and policy direction for appropriate uses and development intensity, along with improved access to the two Metro stations that are at the center of the planning areas and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle mobility. The Concept Plans also provide for new, and enhancement of existing, public spaces within the Downtown and Fairview Heights areas.

Overall, the TOD Plan would provide for the types and amount of development described in Table 1-1, Summary of Proposed Development.

**TABLE 1-1  
SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT<sup>2</sup>**

	RESIDENTIAL (units)	RETAIL (s.f.)	OFFICE (s.f.)	HOTEL (rooms)	INSTITUTIONAL (s.f.)	INDUSTRIAL & INDUSTRIAL/ CREATIVE OFFICE (s.f.)
Existing Development	5,781	1,031,937	805,168	23	408,910	876,479
Future Demolition	40	449,768	122,366	23	42,783	372,927
Future Development	2,733	648,613	437,310	258	383,977	1,248,476
Development at Buildout	8,474	1,230,872	1,120,112	258	750,104	1,752,029

Source: The Arroyo Group, 2016.

The proposed Transit Oriented Development Plan will involve modifications to existing zoning designations to provide form-based development regulations aimed at maximizing use of transit, bicycling, and walking. These regulations set forth opportunities for increased development intensity in mixed use settings, along with expansion of employment-generating uses, particularly in the Downtown area. Form-based development regulations include design guidelines for new development and rehabilitation of existing historic structures. Recognizing the intended transit orientation of new development within the Downtown and Fairview Heights areas, proposed zoning regulations include reductions in minimum parking requirements for uses and locations most amenable to transit use.

<sup>2</sup> See Table 3-1 for a breakdown of proposed development within the individual Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights planning areas.

## I.2 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights requires approval of a General Plan Amendment, Concept Plans, and amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance. Because the proposed TOD Plan requires discretionary actions by the City of Inglewood, it constitutes a "project" under CEQA, and must be evaluated for its potential to create adverse environmental effects.

Consistent with CEQA requirements, this EIR assesses the direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with the physical changes that would result from implementation of the proposed Transit Oriented Development Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights. Additionally, this EIR sets forth all feasible mitigation measures and evaluates a reasonable range of alternatives to address identified significant impacts. The City of Inglewood is required to consider the information provided in this EIR, along with any other relevant information, in making its decisions regarding the proposed project.

### I.2.1 PURPOSE AND INTENDED USE OF THIS EIR

Pursuant to the provisions of CEQA Guidelines Section 15121 (a), this EIR is intended as an informational document to inform public agency decision makers and the general public of the significant environmental effects of the proposed Transit Oriented Development Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights, identify possible ways to avoid or minimize those significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project that might avoid or lessen significant environmental effects. Thus, this EIR is intended to aid the review and decision-making process.

State CEQA Guidelines provide the following information regarding the purpose of an EIR:

- **Project Information and Environmental Effects.** An EIR is an informational document that will inform public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effect(s) of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project. The public agency shall consider the information in the EIR along with other information that may be presented to the agency (CEQA Guidelines Section 15121(a)).
- **Standards for Adequacy of an EIR.** An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to enable decision makers to make an intelligent decision that takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure (CEQA Guidelines Section 15151).

As a public disclosure document, the purpose of an EIR is not to recommend either approval or denial of a project or determine whether a project is "good" or "bad," but to provide information regarding the physical environmental changes that would result from an action being considered by a public agency to aid in the agency's decision-making process.

## 1.2.2 EXEMPTIONS AND STREAMLINING FOR INFILL PROJECTS

### CEQA Exemptions for Infill Development

Because of the developed urban character of the Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights areas, many future projects subject to the TOD Plan may be eligible for categorical exemptions from CEQA. Section 15332 of the CEQA Guidelines describes infill projects that are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. To be exempt, infill projects must:

- Be consistent with the applicable General Plan designation and all applicable General Plan policies, as well as with the applicable zoning designation and regulations;
- Occur within the city limits on a project site of no more than 5 acres substantially surrounded by urban uses;
- Have no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species;
- Not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and
- Be able to be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

### Streamlining of CEQA Documentation for Infill Projects

Senate Bill 226 (2011) revised the Public Resources Code to allow for streamlining in the environmental review process for certain infill projects. In response to SB 226, the CEQA Guidelines were revised to include Section 15183.3, Appendix M, and Appendix N. The streamlining allowed by SB 226 allows for a full exemption from CEQA or for a more narrowed, project-specific CEQA document.

To be eligible, an infill project must:

- Be located in an urban area on a previously developed site or a site that adjoins existing qualified urban uses on at least 75 percent of its perimeter;
- Satisfy the performance standards in CEQA Guidelines Appendix M; and
- Be consistent with the sustainable communities' strategy, as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.3(b)(3).

Streamlining allows for CEQA to not apply to an infill project's effect if:

- The effect was addressed as a significant impact in a previous Plan-level EIR, such as the EIR for the proposed Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights Transit Oriented Development plan (even if the significant impact is unavoidable after mitigation); or
- The effect was not addressed, or if the infill project's impact would be more severe than was analyzed in the previous EIR, the lead agency can make a finding that uniformly applicable development standards and policies would mitigate the effect.

If it is determined that additional environmental review is required for the infill project, such review can be focused on the effects that have not been evaluated in the previous EIR and that would not be mitigated by uniformly applicable development standards and policies. The Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights planning areas are highly urbanized, and future development under the

proposed TOD Plan would be located on previously disturbed, infill sites. Therefore, development under the proposed TOD Plan would most likely be eligible for streamlining.

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### 1.2.3 PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

A program EIR is being prepared for the proposed TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights, in that the TOD Plan includes separate concept plans and proposed zoning for the two planning areas, and all of the TOD Plan's physical environment effects would occur as part of developer driven site-specific development projects and infrastructure projects that would be proposed over an anticipated 20-year time frame following approval of the TOD Plan. No site-specific development or infrastructure projects are proposed at this time.

The proposed TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights provides a policy framework for future site-specific development and infrastructure projects that would be (1) geographically related, (2) logical parts in a chain of contemplated actions, (3) connected as part of a continuing program, and (4) carried out under the same regulatory authority and having similar environmental impacts that can be mitigated in similar ways (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168). Thus, a Program EIR is appropriate.

This EIR considers the environmental changes that would occur as a result of implementation of the site-specific development projects that would be permitted by the proposed TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights over approximately 20 years. It assesses environmental effects that may occur as the result of future site-specific development and infrastructure projects that would be permitted within the planning areas pursuant to the proposed TOD Plan, including the cumulative effects of that development combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future development. The EIR also analyzes alternatives and sets forth mitigation measures to reduce the impacts of development that would be permitted by the TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights, pursuant to Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines.

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### 1.2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

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#### Notice of Preparation

Pursuant to the requirements of CEQA, the City of Inglewood, as Lead Agency, prepared a Notice of Preparation (NOP), including a project description and a preliminary site plan and phasing (Appendix A). The NOP indicated that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was being prepared, and was circulated for the required 30-day public review beginning on April 5, 2016. The NOP requested members of the public and public agencies to provide input on the types of environmental analyses that should be included in the EIR being prepared by the City of Inglewood. There was a 30-day public review period, during which comments regarding the proposed project were received by the City. The public review period closed May 4, 2016. Comments received on the NOP are included in Appendix A and summarized in Table I-2.

The main comments submitted on the NOP during the public comment period are summarized in Table 1-2. This table also includes a reference to the EIR section in which issues are addressed. Comments received on the NOP are also included in Appendix A.

**Table 1-2  
Summary of NOP Comment Letters**

Issues	Relevant EIR Sections
<b>1. California Department of Transportation May 3, 2016</b>	
This letter requests that the Traffic Impact Analysis address impacts to the I-405 and the I-105 freeways, and that the analysis be conducted consistent with Caltrans traffic study guidelines. Coordination with neighboring (adjacent) cities and meetings with Caltrans staff are encouraged for the purpose of identifying potential improvements to minimize future congestion and to identify mitigations for cumulative impacts in the area.	Traffic and Circulation Cumulative Impacts
<b>2. County Sanitation Districts of L.A. County April 29th, 2016</b>	
The letter indicates that the TOD Plan areas are located within District No. 5 and that presently no deficiencies are known to occur. The letter requests District review of individual projects as they are developed to confirm capacity of the trunk sewer system, and indicates that if projects result in the need for expansion of District facilities, such projects must be consistent with SCAG's regional growth forecasts for L.A. and adjacent Counties. The District is empowered by California Health and Safety Code to impose a capital facilities fee if construction of expansions to the system are needed as a result of the Proposed Project. Calculation of wastewater should be based on the District's methods found here: <a href="http://www.lacsd.org">www.lacsd.org</a>	Utilities, Service Systems and Water Supply Hydrology and Water Quality Growth Inducement
<b>3. South Coast Air Quality Management District April 28th, 2016</b>	
The letter references the SCAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook, and recommends using the methodologies therein to evaluate impacts of the TOD Plan, including use of the CalEEMod model, recommended regional significance thresholds, and localized significance thresholds or dispersion modeling. Copies of the analysis including technical documents showing emissions calculations, assumptions and modeling files are requested. A mobile health risk assessment is recommended, as is use of the California Air Resources Board (CARB) land use compatibility guidance. Impacts associated with implementing mitigation measures is also recommended.	Air Quality
<b>4. L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority May 2, 2016</b>	
The letter requests that the TOD Plan include Metro's notification procedures and considerations for projects located in close proximity to Metro facilities including Metro bus operations, and informs the lead agency that Metro has development review authority over projects within 100 feet of a Metro facility. Zoning changes should consider measures to reduce noise impacts upon future development. Metro Joint Development (JD) of the 1.44-acre property at 923 Redondo Boulevard is being coordinated with the City of Inglewood and would comply with the TOD plan when adopted.	Land Use Noise and Vibration Traffic and Circulation
<b>5. Inglewood Historic Preservation Alliance May 2016</b>	
The letter requests clarification of the Live/Work Overlay Zone and measures to prevent diminishing Inglewood's image. The letter requests information on which structures would be demolished. A map of the tech town campus is requested. Impacts of the grand staircase to adjacent business should be analyzed. The letter raises questions regarding potential impacts to existing artists, and provides	Project Description Cultural Resources

Issues	Relevant EIR Sections
suggestions for complete streets plan, bike routes, bike and walking paths in Vincent Park. Clarification of specific locations of proposed parks is requested. The letter indicates support for the plan.	
<b>6. Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation April 4, 2016</b>	
The letter was sent to the City of Inglewood as a response to the TOD Lan Notice of Preparation, but is addressed to the California Energy Commission regarding the Pomona Repower Project and the Ab 52 Consultation Process with the Tribe. The letter states that it is in response to a request for consultation with the Tribe. The comments in the letter do not apply to the TOD Plan addressed in this CEQA document.	NA

Pursuant to Section 15082 (c) (1) of State CEQA Guidelines, the City of Inglewood hosted a public scoping meeting to provide an opportunity for members of the public and public agencies to provide input as to the scope and content of the environmental information and analysis to be included in the EIR for the proposed TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights. The scoping meeting was held on April 19, 2016 in the Community Room at Inglewood City Hall.

A summary of the issues that members of the public raised at the April 19, 2016 scoping meeting is presented below.

- Effects of proposed development on views of the Forum and NFL stadium.
- Odors from nearby oil derricks and their effects within the TOD Plan area.
- Location of faults within and nearby the TOD Plan area.
- Safety issues related to homelessness in the Downtown area, and a request that the TOD Plan provide shelter for the homeless.
- Water supply availability, including long-term cumulative demand for water supplies.
- Effects on water pressure and fire flow availability.

#### Availability and Review of the Draft Program EIR

The City of Inglewood filed a Notice of Completion with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, indicating that this EIR has been completed and is available for review. A Notice of Availability of the EIR was published concurrently with distribution of this document. The Draft Program EIR for the proposed TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights is being distributed directly to agencies, organizations, and interested groups and persons for comment during the formal public review period in accordance with Sections 15085, 15086, and 15087 of state CEQA Guidelines. The Draft Program EIR is available for review at the following locations:

- Inglewood City Hall, Planning Division, One Manchester Boulevard, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Inglewood, CA 90301
- Inglewood Public Library, One Manchester Boulevard, Fourth Floor, Inglewood, CA 90301
- TOD Plan Website (<http://inglewood.arroyogroup.com>)



Materials referenced in this Draft Program EIR are available for review at: Inglewood City Hall, Planning Division, One Manchester Boulevard, Fourth Floor, Inglewood, CA 90301.

During the 45-day public review period, which begins on July 6, 2016 and ends at 5:00 p.m. on August 19, 2016 (by which time comments on the Draft Program EIR need to be received by the City of Inglewood), written comments regarding the content, analyses, and conclusions of the Draft Program EIR may be submitted to the City of Inglewood. These comments should focus upon the sufficiency of this Draft Program EIR in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts of the proposed TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights on the environment and ways in which significant effects on the environment might be avoided or mitigated (CEQA Guidelines Section 15204(a)).

Comments on the Draft Program EIR should be sent to:

Ms. Mindy Wilcox, Planning Manager  
City of Inglewood Planning Division  
One Manchester Boulevard, Fourth Floor  
Inglewood, CA 90301

(310) 412-5681 (fax)

[mwilcox@cityofinglewood.org](mailto:mwilcox@cityofinglewood.org)

### Preparation and Review of the Final EIR

Following the close of the public review period for the Draft Program EIR, the City of Inglewood will prepare a Final EIR in conformance with the CEQA and state CEQA Guidelines. According to *CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15132, the Final EIR shall consist of:

- (a) The Draft Program EIR or a revision of the Draft Program EIR;
- (b) Comments and recommendations received on the Draft Program EIR during the public review period;
- (c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft Program EIR;
- (d) The responses of the lead agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process; and
- (e) Other information necessary as determined by the lead agency.

### 1.3 INDEPENDENT UTILITY OF THE PROPOSED TOD PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN INGLEWOOD AND FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS

Concurrent with preparation and public review of this EIR addressing the impacts of the proposed TOD Plan for Inglewood's Downtown and Fairview Heights areas, the City is anticipating initiating planning for transit oriented development in two additional areas of the City: Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial. The City has determined that the TOD Plan for the Downtown and Fairview Heights areas has independent utility from planning for the other two areas, and that proposed

approval of the Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights TOD Plan would therefore constitute the “whole of the action” under CEQA. The City reached this conclusion for the following reasons:

- Planning for the Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial areas involves different Metro stations than those for which the development analyzed in this EIR is focused.
  - The TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights addresses development generally within those portions of a half-mile radius from the Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights Metro stations, respectively, along the Metro Crenshaw/LAX line that are within the City of Inglewood.
  - The TOD Plan for the Westchester-Veterans planning area would address development generally within those portions of half-mile radii from the Westchester-Veterans station along the Metro Crenshaw/LAX line and the Crenshaw-Imperial station along the Metro Green Line that are within the City of Inglewood.
- The TOD Plans undertaken for the (1) Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights planning areas and (2) Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial concept plans would be funded through separate Metro grants. The grants for the Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights planning areas have been awarded to the City of Inglewood, while for the Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial is currently being considered by Metro. These grants are thus being independently awarded to the City of Inglewood at different times, with different deadlines for completion. Neither grant would be conditioned or dependent on the award or completion of the other.
- The City of Inglewood applied for and pursued each grant independently without regard to the other grant.
  - The City of Inglewood would have pursued grant funding and planning for the Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights areas whether or not it had decided to apply for or actually received grant funding for the Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial study areas.
  - Similarly, the City’s decision to apply for grant funding and undertake planning for the Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial study areas was not dependent on winning grant funding or undertaking planning for the Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights.
- The City’s consideration of the provisions of the proposed TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights will occur solely on the merits of the proposed TOD Plan for those areas, regardless of the status or any provisions of TOD planning for the Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial areas.
- TOD planning for the Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial areas will be undertaken based on the specific opportunities and needs of those areas, regardless of any action taken by the City in regard to planning for the Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights areas.

While transit oriented development plans for the Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial areas are clearly separate from the proposed TOD Plan for Downtown Inglewood and Fairview Heights, plans for the Westchester-Veterans and Crenshaw-Imperial areas are a reasonably foreseeable future action of the City of Inglewood.

## I.4 DEFINITIONS OF KEY CEQA TERMINOLOGY

**Mitigation:** Actions which address an adverse environmental impact by either (1) avoiding the impact; (2) reducing or minimizing the magnitude, scope, or intensity of the impact; or (3) compensating for the impact by replacing or substituting for the [natural] resource, or ecological functions, which are impaired, suspended, or eliminated.

**Significance Criteria, Threshold of Significance:** The criteria used in this EIR to determine whether an impact is or is not “significant” are based on (a) CEQA-stipulated “mandatory findings of significance,” which are specific conditions that the Legislature and the Secretary of Resources have determined constitute a significant effect on the environment, and are listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15065; (b) the criteria outlined in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G; and/or (c) commonly accepted practice and the independent judgment of the Lead Agency in instances where CEQA Guidelines do not set forth a relevant criterion.

**Significant Impact:** Includes any substantial adverse change in physical environmental conditions, such as land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic and aesthetic significance that would result either directly or indirectly due to implementation of the proposed project (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15382). An economic or social change by itself is not typically considered to be a significant impact, even if such is substantial. However, social or economic changes related to a physical environmental change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15382).

**Significant Unavoidable Impact:** Includes those significant adverse environmental impacts for which either no mitigation is feasible or for which implementation of all feasible mitigation will not reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

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