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Our Weekly



Future vision

New communities, shopping and entertainment to come to Hollywood Park site

By Cynthia E. Griffin
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Plans for a 238-acre community development on the site where Hollywood Park currently stands and that has taken more than three years to create, are now open to public scrutiny, and a draft environmental impact report (EIR) is available for comments until Nov. 24. A series of public town halls will be held to provide residents with information. They are Oct. 23 at 7 p.m. at Inglewood City Hall; Oct. 27 at Darby Park at 7 p.m., Oct. 30 at 7 p.m. at Hollywood Park Casino in the Breeder's Cup Room and Nov. 8 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. (Spanish language). A final public meeting will also be held Nov. 13 at 7 p.m. on the first floor of City Hall to receive public comments.

Hollywood Park Tomorrow will include a retail shopping district complete with at 16-screen movie theater with stadium seating, sidewalk cafes, fine dining, national brand retailers, a neighborhood grocery store and office space above the retail stores. The complex will be surrounded by three residential communities that include a school, single-family homes, town homes, condominiums as well as some affordable senior and multi-generational housing. About 40% will be single family homes, 40% will be attached town homes while another 20% are condominiums, and the last 10% will be affordable and/or rental housing. The homes are expected to sell for between \$300,000 and \$900,000. Also intended for the site are a 300-room hotel with related meeting space and a refurbished casino.

The neighborhoods are connected by a 25-acre park system (four parks) with walkways, promenades, bike trails, dog parks and a 12-foot water fall. The total cost of the project is \$2 billion, and it is expected to create 19,000 construction and permanent jobs.

The developer hopes to have a revised EIR completed by the end of January and to get final approval on the project by mid February. From there, six months notice must be given to Hollywood Park race track, and then groundbreaking could happen as early as August or September 2009.

The first few years of construction will consist of infrastructure building—roads, utilities, etc.—and then work on the buildings is planned to begin in 2012. The developers estimate it

will take about eight or nine years to complete the entire project.

Hollywood Park Tomorrow is another project that is working to take advantage of the pent-up demand for quality retail and entertainment options in the city of Inglewood. Also on the drawing board are the Inglewood Promenade, a \$750 million retail development on Century Boulevard expected to bring in a 16-screen theater, fine dining and top-rate stores. It is projected to stretch from Prairie Avenue east to Yukon and encompass 1.8 million square feet, about 650,000 of which will be devoted to retail use.

"We did a study on retail; what can be absorbed in the trade area, which is the reasonable distance someone would travel to shop here. . . and found that there are an estimated 800,000 to 900,000 people in the trade area which represents about \$6 to 9\$ billion in retail potential," explained Chris Meany, head of development for the project, who estimates Hollywood Park Tomorrow could capture between 3 and 5 percent of the revenue. Meany estimates that there is room for another 600,000 to 700,000 square feet of retail. But not the same old big box approach, adds the developer.

"Retailers (so far) have taken the easy way out; they bring in big boxes where people do their shopping and leave. We want to create a regional hub . . . and the community wants pedestrian walking and shopping, where people can walk to the retail."