

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **WHITTIER CITY COUNCIL ADOPTS AN EXTENSION OF THE HOUSING MORATORIUM IN THE WORKPLACE DISTRICT**

*Housing builders take note; there are still ample opportunities for new housing development in the City of Whittier.*

On August 27, 2013, the Whittier City Council adopted an extension of the housing moratorium urgency ordinance for the Workplace District of the Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan for an additional ten (10) months and fifteen (15) days to now expire on July 23, 2014. City staff will immediately begin the process to study the potential impacts of residential housing in the area, if any. It is not anticipated the moratorium will be in place for its entire allowed duration. The City Council action exempted several properties from the moratorium—all parcels fronting the east side of Whittier Boulevard from immediately south of Mar Vista to Philadelphia Street.

The moratorium was implemented for two primary reasons. First, the goal of the Workplace District is to increase jobs for city residents by attracting medical and office businesses as well as supporting existing manufacturing and industrial uses. "The intent of the Workplace District has always been to be the city's employment center," said Mayor Bob Henderson. Council Member Fernando Dutra said, "While the City Council has extended the housing moratorium in the Workplace District, the city will continue to welcome housing developers as there are plenty of opportunities within the exemption areas, throughout the city, and in other areas of the Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan for new residential housing."

Second, the city has determined that some available opportunity sites in the Workplace District which could be used to develop housing may create an incompatible living environment for potential residents due to the neighboring industrial and manufacturing businesses that currently exist. The existing commercial environment which includes a helicopter helipad and large hospital power generator, for example, may potentially create an incompatible environment for residents, if housing development in the Workplace District is not studied more closely. Commercial impacts such as noise, traffic, light/glare, and aesthetic concerns frequently associated with manufacturing businesses may not be well suited for residential housing.

The housing moratorium extension will allow staff time to conduct further research on the potential impact of housing in the Workplace District; determine a reasonable cap on the number and type of residential units and where new housing may best fit in the area; as well as ensure the implementation of best planning practices and principles.

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*The Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan was originally adopted in 2005 and subsequently amended in 2011 with the intent to put the best of Whittier on display and to group existing and desirable land uses together for specific purposes. Therefore, the Plan is divided into five distinct districts including the Gateway Segment, Workplace District, Shopping Cluster I, Center District, Shopping Cluster II and the Neighborhood Spine. The Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan can be found online at [www.cityofwhittier.org/depts/cd/planning/default.asp](http://www.cityofwhittier.org/depts/cd/planning/default.asp).*

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