THE GOVERNANCE BEHIND THE GAME PLAN: UNVEILING POWER DYNAMICS IN THE CASE OF SOFI STADIUM

Erasmus Mundus Master Course in Urban Studies [4Cities]

Student: Sophia Matheney Alonso
Submitted: September 1st
Supervisor: Dr. Linus Vanhellemont
Second Reader: Prof. Marta Dominguez Perez

ABSTRACT

Cities around the world have increasingly used mega-sports infrastructure projects as a method of urban redevelopment. This trend is exceptionally noteworthy in the United States, where sports are a means of culture. Mega sports infrastructure projects, like stadiums, become the home to professional sports teams, which can quickly integrate into a city's social fabric, to instill local pride. These projects are promoted as large drivers of economic growth, especially in cities that have faced an economic downturn. This thesis seeks to unveil the intricacies of such mega-sports infused redevelopment, with a specific focus on the case of Inglewood, California—home to the most expensive stadium in the world. SoFi Stadium. By employing a multidimensional approach, this thesis argues that the way in which urban actors assemble the power to govern directly affects the urban planning process. This establishes the direct link between power assembly and the urban planning process, highlighting the realities of the power of the urban planner.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither was this thesis.

To my mom for continuously pushing me to stay curious about the world and follow my passions.

To my brother for your unprecedented interest in my research, thank you for making me feel like my work matters.

To my fellow city dwellers, my chosen family.

To 4Cities California sister, you helped keep me (in)sane.

Finally, to my advisor. Thank you for showing me the way.

PREFACE

In the realm of 4Cities, everyone has their "thing". Some people bring in feminist perspectives, some bring a keen eye for the built environment through architecture and urban design, others emphasize the importance of bicycle mobility through the city. My "thing" was planning in practice. Starting this Master's program, I hadn't read much theory. I didn't know what terms like neoliberalism and capitalist democracy meant. I didn't know who David Harvey was. Honestly, I didn't even know why people were so afraid of gentrification.

From my experience, planning in practice revolved around upholding the code. Nothing more and definitely nothing less. As an entry level planner especially, there was no room to bring differing perspectives to the higher ups outside of the planning department. Broadly, my role in urban governance was to help the City Manager and the elected officials carry-out their preferred agenda, through my technical expertise. Many of the conversations I had with the planning manager involved, "The code says this, but since it was written in the 1950s, it doesn't account for this. How do we then interpret this provision, and how do we justify our interpretation?"

Throughout the course of this Master's, I applied everything I learned to planning in practice. It made me question a lot of the decisions I made throughout my time in local government. It also made me think if the experience I had was unique to me and the city I worked for, or if these were problems that planners faced generally. It led me to question the urban planning process, and the innerworkings of urban governance. This thesis has allowed me to do just that.

Originally, the aim of this thesis was to draw a comparison between a US and European case. However, as I began conducting interviews and reading case-related documents, I quickly realized that my in depth understanding of the overarching planning system in California would serve to bring my research to the next level. Combining that with the European perspective of governance and more broadly, "the urban" that I learned throughout the course of the master's would allow me to bridge the two.

Although this thesis is a requirement to graduate from the Masters, I wanted to use it as an exercise to improve my understanding of the realities of planning and really breakdown process to highlight how it can be influenced. One thing has remained constant throughout the course of the Master's, and that is my desire to once again work as a planner and to serve the communities I will work for to the best of my ability.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLES & FIGURES

TABLES

FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Urban redevelopment projects have long been central to the transformation of cities, shaping their physical landscapes, economic trajectories, and social fabric. In recent decades, the rise of mega-sports infrastructure projects, such as stadiums, has added a new dimension to the urban redevelopment discourse. These projects, often promoted as catalysts for economic growth, community revitalization, and cultural transformation, have drawn significant attention from urban planners, policymakers, developers, and the general public. While the promise of economic and social benefits is alluring, the intricate power dynamics present in such projects and their influence on urban planning processes have remained relatively unexplored.

The City of Inglewood, situated in the heart of Los Angeles County, serves as a notable case study to unveil the complexities of mega sports infrastructure led redevelopment plans. Inglewood is now home to the most expensive stadium in the world—SoFi Stadium. The stadium is located in Hollywood Park, the overarching entertainment district that was developed in conjunction with the stadium. The rapid transformation that has ensued raises essential questions about the power dynamics that drive this redevelopment plan, and the broader urban planning process.

This thesis aims to bring to light the intricate web of power relationships inherent in the process of developing a mega sports infrastructure led redevelopment plan, using Inglewood as a case of the larger phenomenon. By dissecting the typologies of power that shape the decision-making landscape, this thesis seeks to unravel the ways in which power influences the planning and execution of these projects, as well as their broader implications for urban governance and community engagement.

The primary objective of this research is to explore the multifaceted power dynamics within mega sports infrastructure-led redevelopment plans, with a specific focus on SoFi Stadium in Inglewood. Through an in depth examination of the interactions among urban actors, this thesis aims to understand how SoFi happened. By addressing the power dynamics within the context of urban planning, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of power in shaping the built environment and influencing decision-making processes.

The remainder of this thesis is organized as follows: Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive review of the relevant literature, including the topics of power relations, the rise of cultural economies, connecting sports as a form of culture, urban planning theory, and the role of the urban planner. That is followed by the conceptual framework and researcher paradigm in which I highlight the main theories that will frame the research (urban regime theory

and communicative planning theory), and why I am approaching the research from a critical realist perspective. Chapter 3 lays out the research methods. In this chapter I will introduce the case, and discuss the qualitative methods used for data collection and data analysis. This is followed by a discussion on the methodological limitations faced in the research. In chapter 4, I will present the results from my data collection, breaking it down by highlighting the five typologies of power I found: legal power, political power, technical power, the power of sports, and community power. Community power is further broken down into two subsections: community engagement from a top-down perspective, and community engagement from a bottom-up perspective. In chapter 5, I will provide an in-depth discussion and debate of my findings, connecting them back to the relevant literature.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT & RESEARCH QUESTION

Urban redevelopment projects involving mega sports infrastructure, like stadiums, have become increasingly prevalent in cities around the world. These projects are often promoted as economic drivers. However, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding regarding the power dynamics within these redevelopment processes and their impact on urban planning decisions. Existing literature offers insights to how power can be assembled in urban governance and it acknowledges that the urban planning process is a matter of power relations. However, there is a research gap in examining how different typologies of power influence these dynamics, particularly in the context of mega sports infrastructure led redevelopment plans.

Research Gap

Existing studies have focused on the economic, social, and environmental outcomes of mega sports infrastructure projects, but few have delved deeply into the intricate power relationships shaping these endeavors. Moreover, the majority of research has centered on publicly funded projects, leaving a significant gap in understanding the innerworkings of privately financed initiatives. Furthermore, while urban planning plays a critical role in shaping the built environment, there is limited research that explicitly investigates the influence of power on the urban planning process within the context of mega sports infrastructure-led redevelopment. The scale of the mega-sports infrastructure projects enables a larger web of stakeholders, thus making the planning process more complex.

Research Questions

The aim of this research is to explore the role of power in a specific case of urban redevelopment through mega-sports infrastructure. Furthermore, I aim to understand how

power can influence the broader urban planning process. This leads me to form the following research questions:

In the context of mega sports infrastructure led redevelopment plans:
1. What typologies of power affect relationships among urban actors?
2. How do these typologies of power affect relationships among urban actors and the urban planning process?

To achieve this, multiple secondary questions were developed:
o Who are the urban actors?
o How are they institutionally connected to each other?
o Have urban planning processes remained consistent throughout other city projects?
o What is the role of the urban planner in this context?

It is important to define a few terms before moving through this thesis. Urban governance is the conglomerate of a plethora of urban actors. Urban governance is the system, urban actors are the individuals who make up the system. This includes public actors, private actors, and the community. Exploring the relationships among the actors includes understanding how they interact with one another.

By addressing these research questions, this study ultimately aims to bridge the existing gap in knowledge regarding the power dynamics within mega sports infrastructure-led redevelopment and their implications on urban planning decisions.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 *A Quick & Historic Overview on Urban Planning*

Urban planning and planning theory cannot be discussed without acknowledging the importance that power plays within the practice. Urban planning was initially created as a tool for people in power to bring nuanced ideas and functionality to developing cities. As cities began to grow, so did the disorder within them, thus creating a desire for people in power to bring order and control to society. In the early days of planning and society, there was a holistic view of the city and perceptions of the problems within the city, more so relating to public health, urban engineering, and foundational concepts of urban design. There were two main agendas of the people in power during this time—the desire to completely mold the social environment, and secondly, targeting the entire city as an entity—a one-size-fits-all mentality if you will. Funding came from the state as there was a consensus about what needed fixing, for the betterment of the city dwellers. For a lack of better words, in the pipeline from urban planning to urban development, these were the simpler times. There was a strong idea that if the physical environment could be shaped in the way the people in power deemed was necessary, then a holistic, likeminded society would follow.

However, as society became more complex, so did the city. At the turn of the 19th century, urban planning evolved into an interdisciplinary field, encompassing local administrators, architects, planners, engineers, plans, politicians, and urban scientists (Vanhellemont 2011, p.4). This field was now starting to account for the different ways to look at a city and understand that not all cities look the same, nor should they.

2.1.2 *Exploring Growth Machine Politics, Urban Regimes, & Their Implications On Power Dynamics*

Living in a post-industrial society, urban redevelopment strategies are centered around attracting investment opportunities to promote economic growth. Molotch (1976) argues that growth and development are necessary for the economic prosperity of a city and creating conditions for growth is a matter of politics. Thus, local politics shape economic policy (Clark 2001). Measuring the growth of a city in terms of its economic prosperity is tied to the shift from a managerial city to an entrepreneurial city—an overarching effect of late capitalism (Harvey 1989). While entrepreneurialism assumes that cities are not active agents, it assumes that the urban governance process is active and does not act as a reaction to the political and economic needs of the city. The active role urban governance

plays emphasizes its "power to" versus its "power over", which Stone (1989) argues is the political power sought by regimes.

In the realm of urban governance literature, coalitions, power play and power dynamics are recurring themes. Coalition building can be formal or informal, often with the end goal of cooperation (Stone 1989). Logan and Molotch (1987) introduce the concept of viewing the city as a growth machine, which they say is a result of growth coalitions. Local elite groups, no matter how divided they may be on other issues, create a consensus around the desire for growth (Logan and Molotch, 1987). While individual preferences for specific strategies may vary, Logan and Molotch argue that a prevailing "growth consensus" effectively suppresses any alternative perspectives on the role of local government and community (Logan and Molotch 1987, p. 51). Molotch (1976) refers to the growth machine, which actively supports cultural institutions involved in building local communities. One of the main objectives of the growth machine is to diminish the connection between growth and mere exchange values, while simultaneously fostering a stronger link between growth objectives and improved quality of life for the majority (ibid, p. 62). Within the context of the US, coalition building stems from the mutual interdependence of public and private actors (Stone 1989). Stone (1980) views the ownership of productive assets as resting primarily in the hands of business (private actors), whilst the machinery of government is subject to democratic control (public actors).

Those who make up the machinery of the government often have their own personal intertwined relationships with the private actors. Aldrich et. al. (1987) suggests that variability in concerns for different political issues constitutes grounds for measuring self-interest. Aldrich et al. define personal agendas as, "reflecting an individuals consideration of those issues that he or she feels are important both personally and to others," (1987, p. 65). This is notably seen in the establishment of contractual agreements for projects between private and public bodies. Urban governance literature tends to focus on the overarching politics of the event at hand, while often failing to recognize the micro-level politics occurring within the 'day-to-day' with regard to contracts and operational structures (Raco, 2014).

Stone defines an urban regime as the set of arrangements by which a community is actually governed. Stone argues that regimes are not simply created by will—existing arrangements have staying power and implementation is shaped by the procedures already in place. He identifies four regime types: (1) 'maintenance regimes' or 'caretaker regimes', which focus on routine service delivery and low taxes; (2) 'development regimes', which are concerned with changing land use to promote growth; (3) 'middle-class progressive regimes', which include environmental protection, historic preservation, affordable housing, and linkage funds; (4) 'lower-class opportunity expansion regimes', which emphasize human

investment policy and widened access to employment and ownership (Stone, 1989). Clark builds Stone's urban regime theory by developing two additional regime typologies that Stone (1989) did not account for: (1) 'stewardship regimes', which develop in loser communities where major companies decided to exit; (2) 'demand-side regimes', which target disadvantaged areas with neighborhood initiatives (Clark, 2001).

Regime analysis views power as fragmented and regimes as collaborative (Mossberger and Stoker, 2001, p. 812). It cannot be assumed that there are regimes in every city, nor that cooperation readily exists—cooperation must be created and furthermore maintained (Stone). Although in academia it is referred to as urban regime *theory,* Dowding et al. (1999) state it is more of a model as opposed to a theory because it has limited ability to explain or predict variation in regime formation, maintenance, or change. Adding onto this idea, Zunino (2006) argues that macro trends, like neoliberal policies, set the stage for decisions affecting urban patterns, but the relation is not easily predictable. Scholars have argued that urban regime theory is better equipped as a tool for transnational comparisons than growth machine theory because it allows for various regime types (Harding, 1996 as cited by Mossberger and Stoker, 2001).

Honing back in on this idea of formal and informal coalitions, formality can be portrayed in public-private partnerships, whilst informal coalitions are what make up the basis of an urban regime. Urban regimes are then the collaborative arrangements between public and private actors through which they assemble the *power to* govern (Stone). The dichotomy in the way scholars like Stone, Mossberger, Stoker, and Clark view power—power to versus power over—stems from the Foucauldian perspective of power through governmentality. Governmentality forms of action and relations of power aim to guide and shape, rather than force, control, or dominate, the actions of others. In this broad sense, Foucault (1991) understands governance to include any program, discourse, or strategy that attempts to *shape* the actions of others or oneself. Political rationality for governing people in ways that promote their autonomy, self-sufficiency, and political engagement is intended to help people help themselves, which secures the voluntary compliance of citizens.

As urban governance does not simply involve the public actors who make up the urban government, it is important to emphasize the variety of actors who make up governance. We must note that it further encompasses the private actors who have infiltrated the democratic decision-making process. This creates a level of codependency among the actors resulting in informal governing coalitions, in which power relations become intertwined and unclear. Because of the complexity of power relations in this context, power is ultimately unequally distributed among participants in a decision-making process (Zunino, 2006). The idea of unequally distributed power among stakeholders in the decision-making process stems from a Foucauldian perspective of power, which also

overlaps with a central idea of a widely used and studied planning theory—communicative planning theory.

Building further on his own theory, Stone (1993) describes the regime concept as originating in a political economy perspective that rejects both pluralist assumptions that governmental authority is adequate to make and carry out policies and structuralist assumptions that economic forces determine policy. Raco (2014) introduces the idea of 'regulatory capitalism' in which states and corporations establish interconnected policy networks producing abstract policies which are converted into concrete interventions. He further argues that regulatory capitalism can be characterized by the emergence of new public-private hybridities in the development and implementation of policy interventions (ibid, p.179). 'Public-private hybridities', as Raco calls them, are similar to the informal coalitions Stone discusses. Informal coalitions, or urban regimes, assemble the overarching power to govern, while 'public-private hybridities' are associated directly with policy implementation. The biggest difference between urban regimes and public-private hybridities is the scale from which they are approached. Urban regimes stem from a localized perspective, while public-private hydridities account for the influence of multi-national corporations (MNCs) on the local level. Raco goes on to discuss how MNCs can indirectly shape policy decisions by actively lobbying for enhanced regulation and tighter inspection regimes so that smaller, competitor firms are driven out of business (ibid, p. 179). Regimes help to understand inter-municipal variance in development policy-making. Raco's perspective is a kind of nuanced version of what urban regimes are because of globalization patterns in cities. A single international corporation has the *power to* infiltrate a myriad of local economies and policies, giving the entity the "power to" govern in more than one city.

Pierre (2014) argues that economic forces and hierarchical arrangements are believed to be far more important in defining local political capabilities than formal political and administrative roles. Nearly 30 years after Stone's ideology, there is a genuine belief that state actors are unable to deliver the same levels of efficiency as those found in the private sector (Giddens, 2009; Blair 2010 as cited by Raco, 2014). Working with big businesses allows state agencies to achieve something they simply cannot with small businesses, citizens and/or the community— the establishment of clear lines of influence, regulation, and accountability. Raco (2014) discusses the idea of state-led privatization in the context of the London Olympic Games, in which public funds have been converted into privately run and contractually delivered programs of action.

A question often asked in urban governance analyses is who is actually governing? The concept of public interest can be reshaped to encompass the notion that there exists a right to remain unaware of financial expenditures, as this awareness could potentially disrupt

the smooth operation of contractual governance (Raco, 2014). Moreover, Kendall (2003) maintains that there has been an increasing global agreement asserting that democracy represents the most effective framework for state governance. This trend is evident through the broad support for a transnational perspective on "universal human rights," which promotes equal involvement in political processes (ibid). Raco builds on this by stating that generally there is a global focus on models of good governance that encompass devolution, community empowerment, and democratization.

2.1.3 Navigating The Cultural And Creative Economy Landscape

One of the major themes in economic development research, as studied by many, is the shift from an industrial economic structure, to a postindustrial or post-Fordist model. This shift to a postindustrial society led to the rise of cultural and creative economies, which rely on the creative or cultural industry to generate income. Pushing these ideas further led to the formulation of a policy approach called the "creative city", by Bianchini and Landry in 1995. The basis of the meaning of creativity in the urban context has generally remained the same throughout history—creativity is understood as a means to solve urban problems in ways that have not yet been explored. During the late 1980s and the early 1990s, urban problems were often linked to diminishing economic returns. Alongside this idea of creativity, the idea of culture bloomed into an engine to support a city's image and economic development (Comunian, 2011). In 1983 for example, the European Union launched the European City of Culture initiative, renamed in 1999 to the European Capital of Culture (ECC) program. Per the European Commission, the ECC program is designed to highlight the richness and diversity of cultures in Europe, increase European citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural area, and foster the contribution of culture to the development of cities (European Commission, 2022). The European Commission goes on to describe the initiative as an event and states that, "… the event is an excellent opportunity for regenerating cities, raising the international profile of cities, and enhancing the image of cities in the eyes of their own inhabitants," (ibid). The aforementioned initiative highlights an example of how culture can be created, as opposed to culture forming organically. This leads to the creativity aspect of cultural and creative economies, however Comunian argues that cultural consumption is considered as peripheral to actual cultural production (p. 1159).

Although Florida has been criticized by scholars for his other works, in this thesis it is important to acknowledge that the informal coalitions, a product of a postindustrial society, have in turn created a new type of cultural and creative economy. Florida (2002) builds on the creative city model to construct the idea of the creative class in which he argues that in post-industrial societies, metropolitan areas with high concentrations of "the creative class" exhibit a higher level of economic development. Florida deconstructs the creative class into two subgroups: (1) the super-creative core and (2) the creative

professionals. The super-creative core makes up about 12% of all jobs in the US in fields including science, research, education and arts with the main theme being full engagement in the creative process (2002). The creative professionals make up the knowledge-based sectors in fields including law, healthcare, finance, and business where they "draw on complex bodies of knowledge to solve specific problems" (2002). Florida's model has become widely used and accepted in cities around the world, using his "creative class" framework in their economic and strategic plans. Florida has furthermore monetized this idea by creating the "Creative Cities" handbook.

Florida (2003) uses the human capital theory to further develop the creative capital perspective. He questions why creative people cluster in certain places and what makes them choose to cluster in one city versus another. Scholars view the phenomenon of cultural clusters from two perspectives— one could ask the question of "what makes people gather here?" or the question of "what kind of people gather here?" In relation to cultural clusters, Mommaas (2004) argues that it is necessary to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the complex dynamics involved. He brings attention to the shift in urban regeneration policy, where the previous goals were to organize a state-of-the-art event to mimic an economic boom, to a more fine-tuned policy aimed at creating spaces, quarters, and milieus for long-term cultural production and creativity (ibid, p. 508).

2.1.4 Sports As A Form Of Culture

Harvey (2002) argues that social and economic globalization has driven a new political order, in which cities now choose to invest copious amounts of public dollars in flagship urban projects. Flagship urban developments can be defined as prestigious land that catalyzes urban regeneration (Bianchini et al., 1992, p.252). Professional sports are what Molotch calls an "auxiliary player" in the context of viewing the city as a growth machine. Certain institutions like universities, museums, or professional sports maintain an auxiliary role in promoting and maintaining growth. In North America, professional sports facilities have been a consistent element of the conventional "economic recovery toolkit" for many years. But why are both public and private organizations so eager and willing to invest copious amounts of money into sports teams and the infrastructure to house them and their events?

Local political and community leaders, along with the owners of professional sports teams often assert that professional sports facilities and franchises play a crucial role as catalysts for economic development in urban areas (Coates and Humphreys, 2003). Logan and Molotch (1987) state that local teams constitute an industry on their own. Cities throughout the United States, including New Orleans, Baltimore, Columbus, and Minneapolis, have utilized professional sports stadiums and arenas as anchor points for

urban renewal projects. This approach to urban renewal has also extended to European cities, as seen in places like East London, Sheffield, and Manchester.

In 2007, prior to winning the Olympic bid for the 2012 Olympic Games, London adopted the Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) for the Lower Lea Valley (LLV). This plan stemmed from the Mayor's 2004 London Plan. The overall vision for the LLV OAPF was, "…to build on the area's unique network of waterways and islands to attract new investment and opportunities, and to transform the Valley into a new sustainable, mixed-use city district, fully integrated into London's existing urban fabric." (OAPF, 2007, p3). London Mayor Livingston made it evident that it was not what East London could do for the Olympics, but what the Olympics could do for East London. In an interview in 2008, Mayor Livingston said, "I didn't bid for the Olympics because I wanted three weeks of sport. I bid for the Olympics because it's the only way to get the billions of pounds out of the Government to develop the East End." Once London was officially chosen as the host city, officials made it clear what the envisaged legacy entailed—complete regeneration of East London and social and economic change (Lower Lea Valley- Opportunity Area Planning Framework, 2007).

In 1991, Sheffield employed a similar strategy by investing £147 million to build sporting facilities to host the World Student Games (Gratton et. al., 2005). In 2002, Manchester invested over £600 million on sports venues and non-sport infrastructure related to the Commonwealth Games and Sportcity (ibid). In the British context, the majority of cities adopting this strategy of utilizing sports for economic redevelopment were industrial centers, typically not recognized as prominent tourist hubs (Gratton et. al., 2005). "When you consider what it would mean in new business for hotels, jobs, pride, tourism—then it's a real good deal. We believe for every dollar spent inside a stadium, seven are spent outside," (Roderick, 1984, p. 24, as cited by Molotch, 1987).

Moreover, sports teams play a vital role in establishing a strong local identity and serve as a powerful magnet for attracting a significant influx of tourists (Eitzen and Sage, 1978 as cited by Molotch 1987). The connection between sports teams and local pridefulness deserves attention. Molotch (1976) suggests that athletic teams are an excellent means to instill a sense of local pride in a community, fostering local boosterism and an overall acceptance of growth. He further explains how athletic teams, in particular, serve as an extraordinary mechanism for instilling a spirit of 'civic jingoism' concerning the progress of the locality (ibid, p. 315). The presence of thousands of fans in a stadium, all rallying for the team that represents their city, creates a unique sense of belonging that is difficult to replicate in any other setting. Furthermore, sports are being used as a social unifier creating a space in which, for example, a CEO can sit next to a homeless person at a professional sporting event bonded over their mutual desire to support their local team

(Eckstein and Delaney, 2002). Swindell and Rosentraub (1998) undertook a study to assess whether sports garnered a greater sense of pride among Indianapolis residents compared to other cultural attractions to try and understand the value of sports. One of their findings indicated a connection between civic pride and direct involvement. Residents who attend professional sporting events or reside in households where someone frequently attends such events tend to attribute greater importance to sports in terms of fostering their sense of pride as local residents.

It is important to note how professional sports teams are tied to elite interest groups. In the North American context, professional sports teams are often owned by billionaires—frequently businessmen with connections in the real estate industry. Professional sports teams have the power to persuade cities to build state-of-the-art stadiums and manipulate lease agreements (Euchner, 1993, p. 212). For example, during the late 1980s, the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, approved a proposal to allocate approximately $60 million towards the construction of a new professional sports stadium, aiming to attract a professional sports franchise to their city (Logan and Molotch, 1987). Euchner (1993) goes on to argue that the power to extract rents is rooted in the geographic mobility of professional sports teams (ibid, p. 213).

2.1.5 *Contrasting Mega Events With Flagship Urban Development Projects*

Flagship urban redevelopment projects and mega-events have many similarities. In essence, they both act as magnets to attract investment into a city. However, the way these events unfold and the planning that must be done for each can differ. Müller (2015) defines a mega-event as a one-time occasion of a fixed duration that attracts a large number of visitors and has a worldwide reach. Mega-events come with significant costs and long-term impacts on the built environment. The most common types of mega-event are the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, and even the Super Bowl. The Games have been around since 1896 and have since drawn in international appeal. Cities globally aspired to become the next hosts of the Games, driven not only by the desire for international recognition, but also by the anticipated economic benefits. The economic gains mindset around the Games took a turn in the late 1990s early 2000s when mega-events started to show diminishing economic returns associated with hosting mega-sporting events.

Müller (2015) introduces the concept of a 'mega-event syndrome' in which he suggests that there are common dynamics that plague mega-event planning. He identifies seven major symptoms that together form the mega-event syndrome: (1) 'overpromising benefits', in which the positive effects of mega-events are overestimated; (2) 'underestimation of costs', in which the actual budget surpasses the planned budget; (3) 'event takeover', in which the event priorities become planning priorities; (4) 'public risk taking', in which the public assumes the risk for private benefits; (5) 'rule of exception', in which there is a suspension

of regular rule of law; (6) 'elite capture', in which there is an inequitable distribution of resources; (7) 'event fix', in which mega-events become seemingly quick fixes for major planning challenges (ibid). Müller suggests the implementation of two types of policies to still have mega-events while preventing the syndrome—radical changes and incremental changes. Kassens-Noor (2016) focuses on the ideas of the 'mega-event utopia, dystopia and heterotopia'. As coined by Kassens-Noor, a mega-event utopia is an ideal and imaginary urbanism embracing abstract concepts about economies, socio-political systems, spaces, and societies in the host during events (p.41).

2.1.6 Planning Culture

The field and study of planning is vastly interdisciplinary and kinetic- it encompasses everything from politics to economics, sociology to environmental sciences— all of which constantly evolve. As such, it is to be expected that in praxis, there is no "one size fits all" approach that benefits each individual municipality in the same way. Following that logic, the actual concept of planning culture can be interpreted in a multitude of ways, mainly seeing the divide between planning culture as the professional culture of *planners* and "as a subculture of a wider community than planning professionals alone" (de Vries J, 2015, p. 2150). As planning is a field that is in theory for the betterment of the community, it would be a disservice to constrict the rolling definition of planning culture to the bureaucrats who make the decisions. Yes, planners are professionals who have studied the elements of cities, the people who live in them, and economic development, however it cannot be expected that they carry the same vision as they move and serve different municipalities throughout their career.

Zunino (2006) introduces what he calls, the role of urban agents. He defines urban agents as individuals participating in decision-making bodies. He adds that urban agents do not act in a vacuum; they are part of a broader social system that manages a set of possibilities and constraints (p. 1828). This aligns with De Certeau's (1980) vision of strategies and tactics. De Certeau (1980) breaks down the concepts of strategies and tactics by defining them as, "… the hidden means in which institutions and structures of power circumscribe a place as proper and generate relations with targeted individuals who consequently indict tactics in order to unsettle from the prescribed conventions of such environments."

2.1.7 Planning Systems as a form of State Intervention

Planning represents a type of state intervention, influencing both current development patterns and shaping the future visions and goals of the city. Furthermore, planning operates in various ways from country to country. Knieling and Othengrafen (2016) who offer a European perspective of planning for example state, "With regard to planning's main objectives, it can be concluded that various informal (spatial) ideas, paradigms,

visions, scenarios and interpretations are developed at the European level and then referred to in national policy documents of the EU member states," (p. 2140). The Netherlands for example, has a decentralized unitary state with emphasis placed on their environmental planning system due to their strong ethos of environmental protection and land conservation (Oxley, et al., 2009, p. 26). On the other hand, France is a unitary state, but has made successful efforts to devolve competences and redistribute power at the regional level (ibid, p. 22). There has been an ongoing comparison between European planning systems and English planning systems. Although until recently England was part of the European Union, their planning system has always operated differently than the rest of Europe. As cited by Nadin and Stead (2008), Zweigert et al. (1998) states, "The European is given to making plans, to regulating things in advance, and to drawing up rules and systematizing them" (p. 71). The European planning system is more conservative, structured around a Napoleonic legal system. Nadin follows this statement by iterating how the common law system in England does not maintain the same regulation factors with regard to planning. The common law system is based on a case-by-case assessment without a predetermined set of legal rules, which puts more emphasis on an administrative decision process (Nadin and Stead, 2008, p. 38). This, along with the fact that the UK has pushed decentralization policies, puts England in a place to practice one of the most flexible national planning systems.

Since this thesis explores a North American case, it is important to discuss its planning system as well. Planning in the US is a very decentralized practice. Allmendinger and White (2002) argue that it stems from the federal system of governance, which serves to diminish centralized control. The federal government establishes overarching policies, leaving states with the discretion to determine their approach for adhering to these policies. This same process is subsequently cascaded to individual municipalities by the respective states. This results in a variety of ways that planning is executed across the US. Regulatory practices act as the mild sticks of government—they help to distribute use and exchange values throughout the urban system (Logan and Molotch 1987, p. 154-155). Modern zoning laws were enacted to replace nuisance laws, which protected individual property owners from external dangers (ibid). Land use designations are legally bound to the zoning code, which can only be modified through a discretionary approval of the City Council. California specifically has multiple regulatory processes aimed at managing land use, development, and ensuring the orderly growth of cities and communities. A few of these processes are: general plans, zoning ordinances, environmental impact reviews, subdivision regulations, building codes, design guidelines, development agreements, housing elements, and historic preservation.

2.1.8 Legacy Planning

Scholars have identified a correlation between the notion of legacy and the strategies utilized in redevelopment efforts. In a broader perspective, legacy can be construed as an inherent aftermath, potentially occurring organically. However, within the context of redevelopment plans driven by mega sports infrastructure, legacy is deliberately engineered and executed with meticulous precision. The word "legacy" started to appear in mega-sporting event literature around the 1990s, coinciding with the increase in questions about the costs and benefits associated with hosting mega-sporting events (Chappelet, 2012). London was the first city to establish a legacy plan associated with the Games. Scholars have argued that although legacy planning can be a useful tool for decision-makers, it is a neoliberal ideal used to garner public support around a project. Smith (2014) says legacy is something everyone can gather around and support because it is all about rhetoric. Legacy is a socially constructed offer to the local people. Numerous authors have attempted to classify distinct types of legacies. While the names of these categories differ, they uniformly encompass components such as economics, culture, environment, memory, and community.

Legacy planning is a planning typology that sells the idea of a proposed project to gain the support of the local community (Dickson et al., 2011 as cited by Smith, 2014). Smith goes on to argue that legacy can be regarded in the discourse of coalition formation. Girginov and Hills (2008) argue that the IOC's mandate for legacy planning as an element in Olympic bid submissions has led to the institutionalization of legacy. Legacies have to ability to offer a multitude of benefits to stakeholders depending on what the policy-makers envisage a project's legacy to be. In turn, redevelopment becomes a tool to create a legacy. The 2012 Olympic Games held in East London aimed to achieve the regeneration of the area through plans centered on legacy and urban renewal (Smith 2014). London Mayor Ken Livingston (2000-2008), one of the project's main advocates, insisted that only an East London Olympic Games would leave a positive legacy, satisfy London's development ambitions, and meet International Olympic Committee (IOC) conditions (ibid, p. 1924). Chappelet views legacies as being tangible or intangible while other authors distinguish legacies as being hard or soft, and physical or spiritual. Molotch suggests that athletic teams are an excellent way to instill local pride in a community, creating local boosterism and an overall acceptance of growth, which Kearney (2005) argues is an intangible benefit to legacies.

Legacies have ushered in a broader agenda, normalizing a growth-driven approach to planning. This normalization has, in turn, validated and mandated the development of high-return housing and infrastructure due to their capacity to yield greater economic surplus. Raco (2014) extends this idea, highlighting how legacies often rest on a fallacy of composition, constructing a narrative from a singular perspective. Conversely, Watt presents an alternate viewpoint regarding the East London regeneration driven by legacy

planning. Watt (2013) highlights the concerns of gentrification and displacement as outcomes of legacy-driven projects. This aligns with Phillip and Barnes' (2015) argument that a disparity exists between theoretical implementation and policy execution.

2.1.9 *Communicative Planning & Arguments Against It*

On the other hand, we have communicative planning, which is another planning typology used by planners in collaboration with developers to garner public support for projects, by addressing the need to empower the community to participate and influence the decision-making process (McGuirk, 2001). Communicative planning stems from the Habermasian theory of communicative action in which he argues that, "debate and decisions about the public realm are a matter for all stakeholders, including the less powerful and marginalized groups," (Taylor, N. 1998, p. 125). Scholars expanding upon Habermas' theory of communicative action have integrated concepts from the Foucauldian school of thought. This integration involves incorporating Foucault's views on power, which he envisions as a dynamic force. He suggests that power can emerge from the bottom-up, diverging from conventional top-down interpretations of power dynamics.

Wolff (2020) states that, "During the process of planning the actors commonly develop communicational patterns, define their relationships, deal with conflict and negotiate power relations". Communicative planning theory has been a central theme in planning theory since its establishment in the 1980s and 1990s (Westin 2021). It builds on Foucauldian ideals of power in which the planning process is understood to distribute power unevenly among stakeholders (Mashhadi Moghadam and Rafiean, 2019). Westin (ibid) states that communicative planning theory has been influenced by American pragmatism, interest-based negotiation, and alternative dispute resolution in which he extracts from the works of John Forester, Patsy Healey and Judith Innes. But what exactly does it assume? Communicative planning theory, as referenced to by scholars like Forester, Healey, Innes, Hoch, and others, aims to foster the democratization of planning and discourses to empower communities (McGuirk, 2001). By promoting open communication and collaboration, communicative planning seeks to build trust among stakeholders in hopes of creating resilient urban environments. Furthermore, it aims to bridge the gap between planners, decision-makers, and the community, fostering a shared vision and ownership of the planning process and its outcomes.

Although communicative planning theory has been advocated by many renowned planning theorists, it does not come without its modern-day critiques. The world of planning has changed significantly since the conception of communicative planning theory in the 1980s and 1990s. Some critics argue that communicative planning theory has become less relevant in modern-day planning because it overlooks significant practical aspects that play

a crucial role in the planning process (Tewdwr-Jones, & Allmendinger, 1998). Other critics argue that communicative planning presents an idealistic view of planning, overlooking the role of power in the field and its impact on the position of planners (McGuirk, 2001).

2.1.10 The Planner

The position of the urban planner has captured the attention of numerous scholars, leading to the formulation of various theories that seek to centralize this knowledge. Urban planners stand at the nexus of these theories, encompassing a spectrum of responsibilities as the landscape of urban governance continually evolves. They assume multifaceted roles, acting as intermediaries between elected officials and the community. Additionally, planners shoulder the responsibility of being technocrats, ostensibly possessing the expertise required to shape a "good city." Furthermore, planners undertake a pivotal role as facilitators in enriching public engagement throughout the planning process. This ensures that a diverse array of voices contributes to planning dialogues, as underscored by Pacheco Bell (2018).

John Forester is a student of the Planner—he applies planning theory to real-world scenarios to examine what planners do in the face of concentrated economic and political power, from a US pragmatic perspective. Forester (1982) argues that information is an important source of a planner's power. If used strategically it can be a means of empowering citizens. If planners ignore those in power, they assure their own powerlessness, and if planners understand how relations of power shape the planning process, they can improve the quality of their analyses and empower citizens and community action (ibid).

Forester identifies five types of attitudes towards power as expressed by planners to show how this may manifest in their actual practice. Forester's approach to identifying typologies of planners lies in his motivation to question and scale down normative assumptions about practicing planners. The main themes he looks at in his work concern, "...the way practitioners think and act, and how they arrive at courses of action..." (Wagenaar 2014).

TYPE OF PLANNER	ATTITUDE TOWARDS PLANNING
The Technician	supposes power to lie in technical information
The Liberal–Advocate	supposes that information is a source of power because it responds to a need created by a pluralist political system
The Incrementalist	supposes that information is a source of power because it responds to organizational needs
The Structuralist	supposes the planner's information is a source of power because it serves to legitimize and rationalize the maintenance of existing structures of power, control, and ownership, and to perpetuate public inattention to such fundamental issues as the incompatibility of democratic political processes with a capitalist political economy
The Progressive	supposes that information is a source of power because it not only enables the participation of citizens affected by proposed projects, and avoids performing the legitimizing functions of which the structuralist warns, but it also calls attention to the structural, organizational, and political barriers that may unnecessarily distort the information that citizens have and use to shape their own actions

Table 1: John Forester's Typologies of Planners from "Planning in the Face of Power" (1982)

Furthermore, Forester questions how practitioners learn in action and what tactics are used in deliberative practices. He argues that planners make decisions based on their own ethics and that they value allocations as they speak and listen in real-time. Furthermore, Forester (1999) says the politics of planning is more complex than assuming planners are merely advising decision makers. He says that the advice in advising decision-makers is never neutral.

> We know that decisions are taken from pre-structured agendas as much as they are 'made', that citizen access and political responses are influenced by wealth and organization by class, race and gender, that the very language in which we post and discuss problems can be politically selective, inclusive or exclusive, and that planning can be influential in pre-decision processes

involving citizens' education, mobilization, and subsequent negotiations. (Friedmann 1987, Forester 1989, Grant 1994, Marris 1982, Yiftachel 1995 as cited by Forester 1999, p. 87-88)

A perspective not often discussed in planning theory literature is the embedded planning narrative. The embedded planning praxis approach, as coined by Jonathan Pacheco Bell (2018), is a means of getting planners to put "feet on the street" to see the realities of community life. Embedded planners, according to Pacheco Bell, work at the street level placing an emphasis on establishing real relationships with those living in the communities in which they serve. While Pacheco Bell, a practicing planner, acknowledges that he still works in office and attends community meetings, he prioritizes street-level engagement whenever possible. This typology of planning offers a multidisciplinary perspective on the role of the planner and the ethics behind it.

Embedded planning is a bottom-up approach which allows planners to make better informed decisions in response to the genuine relationships and trust established between the community and the planner (Pacheco Bell, 2018). Embedded planning, as a distinct planning typology, highlights the potential for individual planners to enact this approach within their respective planning departments, even in cases where the overall organization might not fully embrace the embedded planning paradigm. By embracing and implementing the embedded planning praxis in their individual work, it is argued that planners can significantly contribute to positive changes and improvements within the community (ibid).

2.1.11 *Inclusionary Planning In Communities Of Color*

Renewal endeavors concentrated on redeveloping urban areas have faced criticism for their lack of involvement of local residents during the planning phase (Villanueva et. al., 2017). Such efforts have also been accused of exacerbating concerns related to gentrification, a phenomenon that displaces lower-income communities and frequently results in a transformation of the cultural fabric of a neighborhood (Lees, Slater, &Wyly, 2008; Zukin, 2013). When embarking on a planning project within a diverse city, it can be presumed that individuals with distinctions in ethnicity, age, gender, income, sexual orientation, and more, will possess distinct requirements, apprehensions, and demands concerning the constructed environment (Sandercock, 2000). Furthermore, if the demographic composition of public engagement events does not mirror that of the city's population, it can be inferred that the resulting planning decisions do not accurately represent the diverse requirements of residents (Crompton, 2017). Embedded planning praxis can be taken a step further to assess the challenges that come with planning in diverse cities, specifically in working class communities of color. Furthermore, there are certain challenges faced by communities of color that are left out in traditional planning

education (García et. al, 2021). For example, one way to fill that gap in education could be by getting to experience the community in which the planners are making technical decisions for, by getting boots on the ground (Pacheco Bell, 2018) and by enacting more inclusionary planning processes.

Oftentimes, cities of color are working class cities which means the citizens do not have the free time to attend Council meetings. Furthermore, language barriers can also act as a hurdle. In order to account for these challenges, planners should be prioritizing bridging the gap between City Staff and the community through embedded community engagement strategies. Davidoff (1965) advocates for advocacy planning as a means to act as a tool for the representation and backing of individuals who are usually excluded from the process of planning and making policy decisions.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Drawing upon the contextual framework established in the literature review, it becomes evident that the sources of power are diverse, and can yield distinct manifestations when considering various actors, whether public or private. Importantly, it must be noted that achieving consensus and establishing the power to govern should not be taken as a given; rather, they demand active collaboration (Stone, 1989). Additionally, the impetus behind urban growth stems from a collective vision harbored by influential interest groups who could reap shared benefits from the ongoing expansion of the city (Molotch, 1976).

Simultaneously, the promotion of a democratic decision-making process through community engagement emerges as a pivotal avenue for community empowerment. This, in turn, could significantly bolster the level of public endorsement for a given project. Meanwhile, it is important to recognize that sports act as a cultural element within US cities, and the development of high-caliber mega sports facilities can operate as a catalyst for revitalizing cities facing economic decline.

In this thesis, urban regime theory acts as a critical lens for identifying and dissecting power dynamics within the growth coalition specific to the case study. By conceptualizing the city as a growth machine, this approach contextualizes the case within a comprehensive political economy framework. This framework, in turn, acknowledges the intricate interplay between political and economic factors, influencing how those wielding political power perceive and shape the city's trajectory. Additionally, communicative planning theory situates planners at the heart of the redevelopment process. Emphasizing the necessity of democratic planning, this theory highlights the role of trust-building and community empowerment as fundamental goals in fostering a successful planning process.

However, while the central goal of this thesis is to unravel the nuanced forms of power, it acknowledges that this pursuit, on its own, is insufficient in comprehending the intricate relationships among urban actors and their collective influence on shaping the urban planning process. Urban regime theory effectively compartmentalizes power dynamics by highlighting informal relationships among public and private actors, revealing their collaborative efforts in policy implementation. Nevertheless, this theory falls short in addressing the potential impact of opposing coalitions on the established coalition's dynamics (Davies, 2002). Urban governance, a multifaceted phenomenon, necessitates an exhaustive exploration encompassing an array of perspectives, ranging from the elite to the community.

Communicative planning theory reinforces the imperative of democratic planning, aiming to empower communities as an ultimate objective. Anchored in the philosophy of extensive

community engagement and involvement throughout the urban planning process, Pacheco Bell's embedded planning praxis stands as an example of ethically sound contemporary planning practices, although it does not mend underlying systemic issues that can cause such disparities.

Furthermore, this thesis is firmly entrenched within a political economy framework, firmly rooted in the foundational assumption of reciprocal causation between politics and the economy. By embracing this perspective, the study not only acknowledges but also endeavors to untangle the intricate interplay between political dynamics and economic forces, acknowledging their combined and substantial influence on shaping redevelopment plans centered around mega sports infrastructure.

2.2.1 *Researcher Paradigm*

This study adopts a critical realist research paradigm to investigate dynamics of power and their influence on urban actors and the urban planning process. Grounded in critical theory, the critical lens allows for the identification of power imbalances, structural inequalities, and underlying ideologies that shape the behavior of urban actors. The search of causation in critical realism enables researchers to explain social occurrences and propose tangible policy suggestions for tackling societal issues (Fletcher, 2017).

Critical realism posits that there are three tiers of reality: the empirical, the actual, and the real (Mingers and Standing, 2017). The empirical level is recognized to be the realm in which we experience events and can measure them empirically, mediated by the filter of human experience. In the actual, the human filter is removed, and it is assumed that events happen whether or not we, as humans, experience or interpret them. Thirdly, in the real, causal mechanisms are accepted to exist.

This study employs a critical realist research paradigm to investigate the intricate relationships among urban actors within the context of mega sports infrastructure-led redevelopment plans and how various forms of power influence these relationships. At the empirical level of critical realism, the research framework centers on comprehensively capturing observable phenomena and interactions while delving into the underlying mechanisms that drive these dynamics.

Drawing from critical realism's empirical focus, this research paradigm advocates for the collection and analysis of empirical data. This involves employing methods such as interviews, observations through site visits, and document analysis to uncover tangible evidence of power dynamics and relational intricacies. Furthermore, critical realism enables the identification and categorization of different types of power operating within the urban landscape. By engaging with the empirical data listed above, this paradigm

allows for the exploration of five typologies of power (legal, political, technical, sports, and community) and how each shapes relationships among urban actors. The empirical level of critical realism facilitates the mapping of relationships among diverse urban actors. It delves beyond surface-level descriptions to analyze causal relationships and underlying mechanisms by which power influences these relationships (Næss, 2015). This entails examining how economic power affects resource allocation, how political power guides decision-making processes, and how social power influences community engagement.

Building on critical realism's actuality level, this study embraces the "the actual" realm to analyze the complex relationships between different types of power and urban actors in the context of mega sports infrastructure-led redevelopment plans, and how they impact urban planning processes. This aspect of critical realism underscores the significance of comprehending events beyond human interpretation, recognizing that these events occur independently of our subjective experiences.

By adopting the lens of the "the actual" realm, this research paradigm seeks to investigate power dynamics in a manner that transcends human perception alone. It encourages an examination of power structures that might not be immediately evident in the interactions and interpretations of human actors. Embracing "the actual" realm prompts a deeper exploration beyond surface-level observations. This involves uncovering concealed power structures that may influence the relationships within urban governance beyond what is apparent in human interactions. This is approached through an analysis of political and institutional factors shaping power dynamics.

In alignment with the principles of the "the actual" realm, this research paradigm delves into the causal mechanisms through which different forms of power influence relationships among urban actors. It aims to understand how power operates independently as a driving force behind redevelopment plans, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding how and why decisions are made in this way. The ability to offer explanations and engage in causal analysis, rather than solely providing in-depth empirical descriptions of a particular context, renders critical realism valuable in analyzing social issues (Fletcher, 2017). While the study revolves around human interactions and interpretations, the "the actual" realm calls for a contextualization of these experiences within larger structural contexts. It encourages acknowledging the existence and influence of power beyond the individual perceptions and interpretations I will discuss in the results chapter.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 CASE PROFILE

3.1.1 History of Inglewood

The City of Inglewood is located in southwest Los Angeles County in California. The city is 24 square kilometers and has a population of about 110,000 people (US Census, 2020). Inglewood abuts Westchester to the Northwest, Hawthorne to the South, xx to the North and xx to East.

Figure 1: Map of Los Angeles County

In the 1960s, Inglewood's population was predominantly white, with a relatively small African American population. However, as racial tensions and civil rights movements gained momentum across the United States, the city's racial dynamics began to shift. The black community continued to grow there, and the city's demographics became more diverse. This period marked a time of both progress and challenges. The city saw the emergence of community organizations and leaders advocating for equal rights and opportunities. However, Inglewood also faced socioeconomic issues, including poverty and inadequate infrastructure in certain neighborhoods.

In the 1980s, the black community in Inglewood continued to grow, contributing to the city's diverse cultural fabric. During that time, Inglewood began to face economic challenges. The city's working-class and lower-income status became more noticeable as the City generally started to face declining property values and limited economic opportunities. This period also saw the effects of deindustrialization and economic shifts that impacted working-class communities across the country. During the 1990s and into

the early 2000s, Inglewood faced a mix of successes and ongoing struggles, specific to economic development.

In 2004, Inglewood was the center of attention due to a controversial and ultimately failed project involving Walmart, the multinational retail corporation. The proposal aimed to construct a large Walmart store, known as a Supercenter, within the existing Hollywood Park. The aim here was to replace the horseracing track with the Walmart Supercenter. Walmart found Inglewood's socioeconomic profile favorable, mirroring other urban communities that Walmart had previously opened Walmart Supercenters in (Cummings, 2007)

The Inglewood Walmart project stirred considerable debate and opposition from various quarters, including community activists, labor unions, and local businesses. The primary concerns revolved around several key issues: labor and wages, community impacts, traffic and infrastructure, and concerns about the business fitting into the city's urban fabric.

In an attempt to move the project forward, Walmart sought voter approval through a ballot initiative in the form of Measure 04-A. This initiative would have allowed Walmart to proceed with its plans for the Inglewood Supercenter without adhering to certain zoning regulations and without requiring an environmental impact report. However, the measure faced significant opposition and criticism. Ultimately, Measure 04-A was defeated in the April 2004 election. The defeat of the measure effectively halted Walmart's plans to establish the Supercenter in Inglewood.

In recent years, Inglewood has witnessed changes driven by urban development and economic shifts. The city's proximity to Los Angeles and its inclusion in major regional development projects, such as the redevelopment of Hollywood Park to include SoFi Stadium and an entertainment district, have brought attention and investment to the area.

3.1.2 Sports and Entertainment History

Before delving deeper into the matter, it is imperative to gain a comprehensive understanding of the intricate layers constituting the complex case in Inglewood. The focal point of this thesis is the Hollywood Park redevelopment project, which entails the revitalization of a former horseracing track (298 acres). In the late 1930s, the inception of the Hollywood Park Horse Racetrack commenced a process of attracting both individuals and financial resources to the Inglewood locality. The conclusion of the Prohibition era in 1933 led California voters to approve Proposition 3, a pivotal decision that bestowed upon California the distinction of being the pioneer state to legalize pari-mutuel gambling for horseracing. During its zenith, the Racetrack played a pivotal role as a significant revenue generator for the City, drawing in over 100,000 attendees on a weekly basis who engaged

in spectating, wagering, conviviality, and leisure pursuits. Hollywood Park offered a substantial prize amounting to $350,000 (equivalent to approximately $7.5 million in present-day value), rendering it one of the most lucrative and esteemed horseracing establishments. However, as the passage of time unfolded and the popularity of horseracing waned, Hollywood Park gradually imposed a financial burden on the City of Inglewood, marked by escalating maintenance expenditures coupled with diminishing fiscal returns.

In 2009, following an exhaustive participatory planning process, the City of Inglewood adopted the Hollywood Park Specific Plan (HPSP). The primary objective behind the HPSP for the City was the creation of a dynamic new urban hub at the heart of Inglewood. This envisioned hub would encompass an array of functions including retail, entertainment, residential, office, civic, gaming, and recreational facilities, all intended to replace the racetrack (Hollywood Park Specific Plan, 2009). However, shortly after its adoption in 2009, during the entitlement process, the recession took hold, causing a depletion of all funding allocated to the HPSP project.

The initial wave of the recession primarily impacted the housing market, prompting the City to redirect its efforts toward developing the retail component. Unfortunately, the recession rapidly extended its reach to affect the retail sector as well. Consequently, the City found itself on the brink of having to initiate the sale of various segments of the development, given the depletion of funds required to sustain its progress.

This thesis will mainly focus on the development of SoFi Stadium and Hollywood Park in Inglewood, California. The stadium currently serves as the home for two professional American football teams who play in the National Football League (NFL). These teams are the Los Angeles Rams and the Los Angeles Chargers. The owner of the LA Rams, Stan Kroenke, is also the owner of SoFi Stadium and the adjacent Hollywood Park entertainment district. As a billionaire, Stan Kroenke holds the 5th position in terms of land ownership in the US, possessing approximately 60 million square feet of land. Under his company 'Kroenke Sports and Entertainment,' he has ownership of 10 additional professional sports teams, including Arsenal FC. Furthermore, he is involved in 11 real estate ventures and owns 4 media companies.

In 2014, Stan Kroenke started having conversations with the City about potentially relocating his professional Football team, formerly known as the St. Louis Rams, to Los Angeles. Kronke's end goal was to build a new stadium for his team somewhere in Los Angeles, and the Hollywood Park site looked like a good option for him. Subsequently, the City of Champions Revitalization Initiative emerged as a citizen-sponsored initiative. The primary aim of this initiative was to "accelerate the development of a high-quality project...

that contributes to the overall health and welfare of the City's economy," (City of Champions Revitalization Plan, 2015, p. 3). This initiative facilitated an amendment to the original HPSP, incorporating plans for the construction of a stadium capable of accommodating one or more professional sports teams. This undertaking presented an unparalleled opportunity for economic expansion. In 2021, the stadium was inaugurated as SoFi Stadium and currently serves as the home venue for two professional American Football teams in the National Football League (NFL)—the Los Angeles Rams and the Los Angeles Chargers.

The Inglewood narrative extends further. In 2017, Steve Ballmer, the former CEO of Microsoft Corporation and owner of a professional basketball team, unveiled a plan akin to Kroenke's. His proposal centered on constructing a top-tier basketball arena and an entertainment center adjacent to Hollywood Park. This ambitious vision was intended to establish a home for his team, the Los Angeles Clippers, and was coined the Inglewood Basketball and Entertainment Center (IBEC). However, the IBEC project sparked controversy, resulting in the City facing legal challenges from several fronts, including grassroots community organizations like Uplift Inglewood and Inglewood Residents Against Takings and Evictions (IRATE), as well as Madison Square Garden (MSG).

The first legal case revolved around an alleged violation of the Surplus Land Act, while the second lawsuit claimed that the concealment of information about the proposed project violated the Brown Act. A third lawsuit, filed by MSG, the owner of the Forum, alleged that Inglewood Mayor James T. Butts provided misleading information, leading MSG to give up its ownership rights to the parcel of land that was designated for the IBEC project. However, all lawsuits were dismissed by the Los Angeles Superior Court. Finally, Steve Ballmer resolved the dispute with MSG by purchasing the Forum from them for $400 million in 2020.

Looking at the present-day Inglewood, the city boasts a remarkable infrastructure that includes two professional sports stadiums that also serve as performance venues (SoFi Stadium and IBEC), in addition to two dedicated concert venues (the Forum and the YouTube Theater). All of this is complemented by an entertainment district featuring office spaces, retail establishments, and upscale apartments, all conveniently located within the same vicinity.

The concentration of these new developments has given rise to a proposal known as the Inglewood Transit Connector (ITC). This innovative concept involves an automated light rail system designed to connect the Inglewood Metro stop at Market Street/Florence Avenue to key destinations, including the Forum, Hollywood Park (housing SoFi Stadium,

the YouTube Theater, and the entertainment district), and IBEC. The inception of the ITC has stemmed from a collaborative effort between the City of Inglewood and Metro.
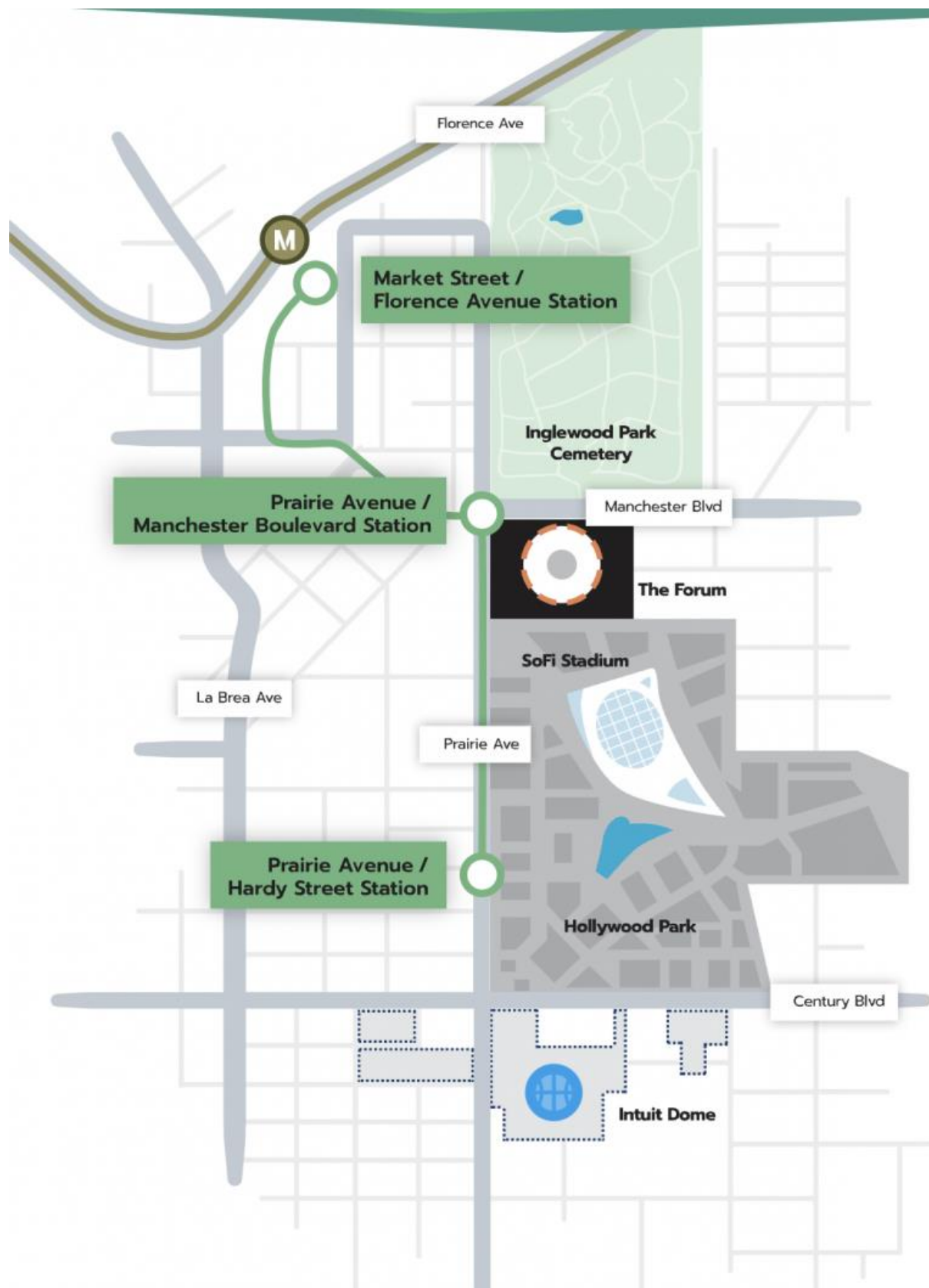
Figure 2: Map of the Proposed Inglewood Transit Connector (2022), Source: City of Inglewood

1933-1994

Hollywood Park Racetrack & Casino open in Inglewood

1999

Declining revenue from racetrack pushes Hollywood Park Inc to sell pieces of the property to private developers

Lakers leave the "Fabulous Forum"

2004

Walmart Supercenter proposal fails, shot down by a referendum

2005-2009

Stockbridge Capital Group purchases entire Hollywood Park site, and enters a collaboration with the City of Inglewood to develop the Hollywood Park Specific Plan

2014

Hollywood Park Land Company becomes a joint venture between Stockbridge and TKG

2013

The Kroenke Group (TKG) purchases the 50-acre property, adjacent to Hollywood Park

2009

Hollywood Park Specific Plan adopted

Housing market crash

2015

City of Champions Revitalization Initiative is submitted and approved by the Inglewood City Council

2016

NFL approves Kroenke's proposal to relocate the Rams to Los Angeles

2017-2020

IBEC proposal for Intuit Dome submitted

IBEC approved by Inglewood City Council

2023

Inglewood Transit Connector (ITC) approved by Inglewood City Council
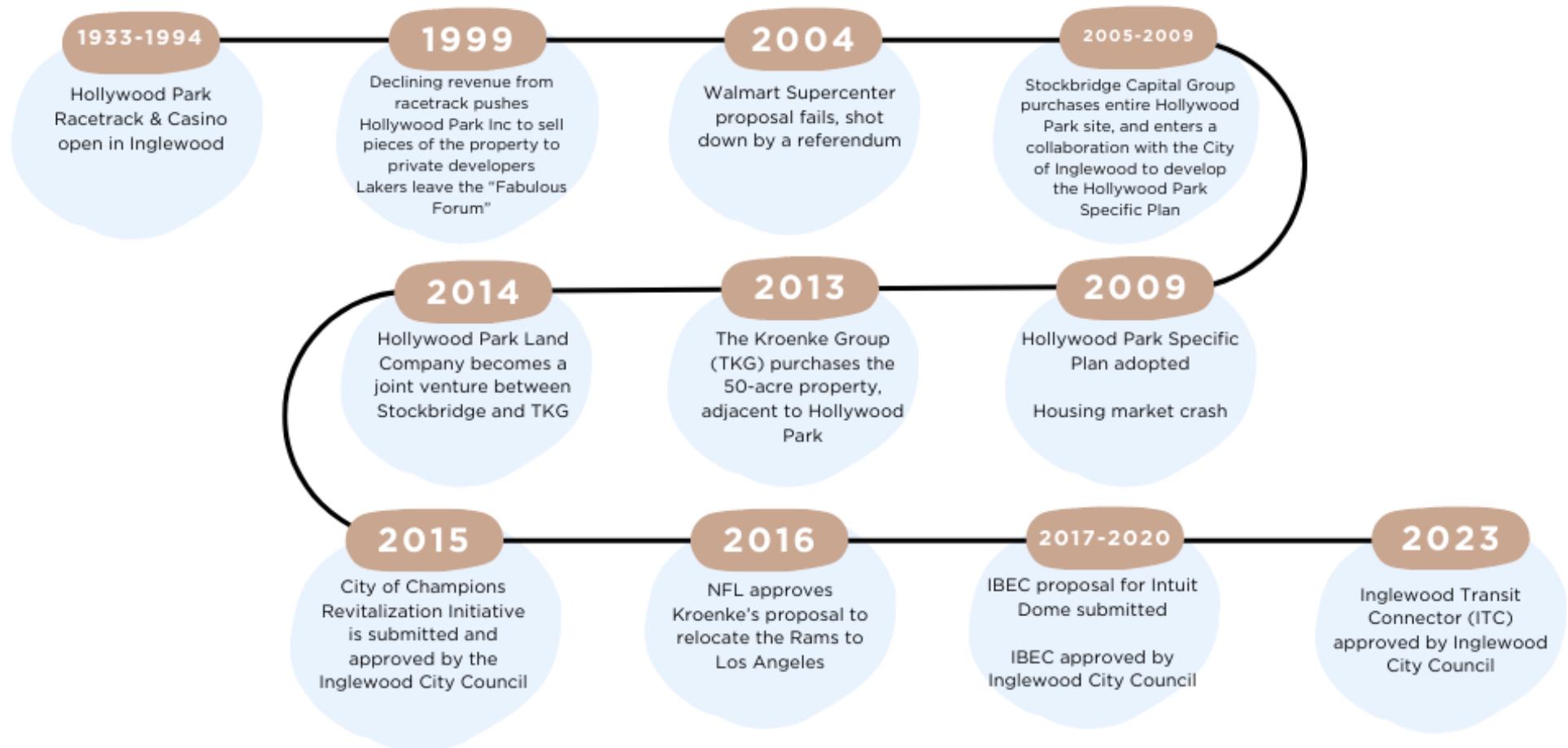
Figure 3: Timeline of Development Projects in the City of Inglewood (Source: Author)

3.2 METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodological approach employed to conduct a comprehensive exploration of the intricate power dynamics intrinsic to urban governance and the redevelopment process around mega-sports infrastructure projects. The study delves into the intricate typologies of power relationships that hold pivotal roles in shaping the urban landscape, particularly in the context of mega sports infrastructure projects. Furthermore, it investigates the fundamental mechanisms embedded within each redevelopment plan, shedding light on the interplay of power within the urban planning process and the broader urban phenomenon.

The overarching objective of this research is to discern and comprehend the manifestations of power typologies within the context of the case study, unraveling their impact on collaborative efforts in the urban planning process and the establishment of redevelopment plans. A central aspect of this investigation involves scrutinizing the multifaceted role of urban planners within this context through the lens of power and its intricate web of relationships. To illuminate the multifarious factors driving this process, a mixed-method case study approach is employed, aimed at collecting descriptive and explanatory research data.

In alignment with urban regime analysis conventions, the chosen methodology emphasizes the scrutiny of power dynamics as a fundamental aspect. The qualitative exploration of the case study is executed through two primary methods: document analysis and interviews. These methods converge to offer insights into the complex interplay of power, relationships, and the urban planning process. Formal documents, including government reports and legislative documents, form a critical pillar of this research. They provide a lens into the legal and administrative dimensions of urban planning, unraveling the formalities underpinning the urban redevelopment landscape. Informal documents such as newspaper articles and online blogs contribute nuanced perspectives, offering insights into public discourse and the engagement of communities affected by these plans.

A cornerstone of the methodology is the engagement in expert interviews, predominantly conducted in a semi-structured format. This approach fosters a balanced interaction that combines predefined questions with spontaneous discussion, facilitating a deep exploration of the subject matter (Jennings, 2005). The inclusion of informal interviews complements the dataset by allowing an unfiltered exchange of thoughts, enriching the depth of insights.

Community perspectives, essential to understanding the lived realities of impacted areas, are captured through interviews with residential civic leaders. This layer of insights

augments the expert viewpoints by grounding the research in the practical experiences of those directly influenced by the urban development initiatives.

Complementing the interview-based methods, site visits offer firsthand experiential exposure to the actual development projects. Collaborative site visits, conducted in collaboration with an expert interviewee, facilitate a deeper understanding of the physical environment of urban development and foster enriched interactions with local stakeholders. The collected interview data undergoes a meticulous process of thematic coding. This iterative process involves identifying specific patterns, concepts, and recurring ideas within the interview transcripts. The first round of coding reveals a range of specific codes, which are subsequently organized into overarching themes that align with the research objectives, ensuring a comprehensive coverage of the research landscape.

For the analysis of diverse document sources, a strategic data triangulation approach is employed. Keyword searches, aligned with thematic frameworks derived from interview coding, efficiently identify and curate relevant documents for analysis. This methodological triangulation fortifies the findings by validating patterns and themes across multiple data sources.

3.2.1 Data Collection

Documents are an important material actor in research because they help stabilize the power relationships between humans. Documents make things real, they prove that things, actions, and decisions have happened in the perceived reality of the research. Not all social relationships are stable in principle. Power comes from the representation of the material object, in this case, documents. Following this logic, Bowen (2009) states that documents help track change and development.

Document analysis has emerged as a pivotal method in urban studies, recognized for its effectiveness in uncovering the intricate power dynamics that shape urban governance, particularly in the context of mega sport infrastructure-led redevelopment plans. Within the realm of urban studies, it is well understood that urban governance is a multifaceted interplay of relationships among diverse urban actors, influenced by various forms of power. In this study, we delve into the realms of legal power, political power, technical power, the power of sports, and the power of community, aiming to dissect how these forms of power intersect and influence urban development decisions.

Mega sport infrastructure-led redevelopment plans constitute a compelling arena to investigate the distribution and utilization of power within urban settings. The transformative nature of such projects necessitates a nuanced understanding of the hierarchies and power structures that underpin decision-making processes. By utilizing document analysis, we embrace a methodology that resonates with the complexities of

urban governance, allowing us to scrutinize a diverse range of texts, including policies, reports, contracts, and public communications.

This research leverages the documented interactions, agreements, and regulations to discern the underlying power dynamics that guide the relationships among various actors involved in mega sport infrastructure-led redevelopment plans. We explore how political actors exert influence through policy frameworks, how technical experts shape the discourse around feasibility, how financial resources drive project implementation, how communities advocate for their interests, and how legal frameworks establish the basis for actions and decisions.

Scholars have increasingly recognized the value of examining textual artifacts as windows into the power dynamics that govern urban spaces. Documents not only offer insights into the formal power structures but also unveil the hidden narratives, strategies, and tensions that influence urban development trajectories.

Fully understanding a project that has not been studied from an academic perspective requires questioning the process from every possible angle. How was the project funded? Who were the actors involved across the public and private sectors? Why was this type of project proposed in this physical space? Were there any competitors or disputes? How were conflictual points navigated? In answering my research question, the type of data that would best serve this thesis is qualitative. My research questions the role of power dynamics and rationalizations of processes, which are best explained through the documents that make them exist now and in perpetuity, and through the individuals who were part of the process. The sections to follow detail the qualitative methods used to collect research data, being document collection, expert interviews, and site visits. For each method employed, the following is explained: why it was chosen, the goal of using the method, and how documents and participants were chosen.

3.2.1.1 Document Collection

I initiated my research by identifying formal documents pertinent to my case. Drawing from my background as a practicing City Planner in California, I possessed a strong foundational understanding of the criteria I needed to search for and the specific sources to consult. While my professional involvement hadn't extended to projects within the City of Inglewood, my experience working with diverse development endeavors equipped me with a grasp of their structural frameworks.

Starting with local legal documents of relevance and extending to pertinent state legislation, I started by constructing the legal underpinnings of the development process for my case study. This involved gathering a variety of official legally binding government

documents, including the Inglewood Municipal Code, the Hollywood Park Specific Plan, the City of Champions Revitalization Initiative, as well as contractual agreements like the Development Agreement and a Professional Services Contract. Additionally, it encompassed supplementary government reports that lack legal binding, such as City Council meeting minutes. Additionally, I delved into state-level legislation, notably the Ralph M. Brown Act and the California Environmental Quality Act. I was able to find all formal documents on the City's website and the California Legislation Information website.

Since part of my research questions how different types of power help shape relationships among urban actors, it was crucial to find data to provide context for every typology of power. Formal government documents such as local specific plans, municipal codes, development agreements, meeting minutes, and state legislation play a crucial role in explaining the state of the art of legal power. These documents provide a structured framework that outlines the legal and administrative guidelines governing urban development processes. The key to using municipal documents as a valuable reference lies in knowing what information each document contains (Lewy, 1974). This condition was met with my prior experience serving as a solid base of understanding. Table 3 provides a summary for the formal documents that were collected and analyzed highlighting the name of the document, whether it is bound to the locality or the state, whether it's legally binding, and what its purpose is in the case of this research.

My approach also encompassed collecting media documents, including newspaper articles and informal blogs chronicling happenings in the City to highlight how information is relayed to the community outside of formal government documents. Blogs contribute to the creation of extensive "archives of daily life" providing distinct insights into personal experiences and individual perspectives (Hookway and Snee, 2019). Newspaper articles and blogs were used to supplement the information from the interviews. These articles were selected based on their inclusion of first-hand quotes from key stakeholders in the case study. Newspaper articles also helped to fill in the gaps of the government documents. Furthermore, I incorporated information from official stakeholder websites and formally published videos from City of Inglewood City Council meetings, Town Hall meetings, and NFL Press conferences. These videos were linked on the City's website and published by the respective agencies on YouTube for public consumption. Table 4 provides a summary for the informal media documents that were collected and analyzed highlighting the title of the piece, the source, and the type of media.

DOCUMENT NAME	LOCAL OR STATE	LEGALLY BINDING	PURPOSE
INGLEWOOD MUNICIPAL CODE	LOCAL	YES	REGULATES LAND USE
HOLLYWOOD PARK SPECIFIC PLAN (HPSP)	LOCAL	YES	REGULATES LAND USE WITHIN THE HPSP ZONE
CITY OF CHAMPIONS REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE	LOCAL	NO	CITIZEN-SPONSORED INITIATIVE TO EXPEDITE STADIUM ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL
CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT	STATE	YES	REGULATES ALL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF PROJECTS
RALPH M. BROWN ACT	STATE	YES	REGULATES TRANSPARENCY DURING THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS
DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT	LOCAL	YES	REGULATES THE STANDARDS AND CONDITIONS BY WHICH THE PROPERTY WILL BE GOVERNED
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT	LOCAL	YES	AGREEMENT BETWEEN CONSULTANT AND THE CITY TO PREPARE TRAFFIC AND NEIGHBORHOOD MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR THE STADIUM ALTERNATIVE PROJECT
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES 2.24.2015	LOCAL	NO	RECORD OF MOTIONS AND SPEAKERS AT COUNCIL MEETING

Table 3: Formal Documents Analyzed

THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

TITLE	SOURCE	TYPE OF MEDIA
NFL OWNERS APPROVE RAMS RELOCATION (FULL PRESS CONFERENCE) | NFL NEWS	NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE	VIDEO RECORDING OF PRESS CONFERENCE
HOW MAYOR BUTTS TURNED INGLEWOOD INTO CALIFORNIA'S PREMIER SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT CITY	LA SENTINEL	NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
TRADING UP IN LOS ANGELES: REPLACING AN AGING RACETRACK WITH A NEW NFL STADIUM	URBAN LAND INSTITUTE	NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
IN INGLEWOOD, ELECTED OFFICIALS ARE WELL-PAID, SPEEDY AND NEVER SEEM TO DISAGREE	THE DAILY BREEZE	NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
I.24.2015 DISTRICT 4 TOWN HALL MEETING	CITY OF INGLEWOOD	VIDEO RECORDING OF TOWN HALL MEETING
LA STADIUM AND ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT AT HOLLYWOOD PARK - INGLEWOOD, CA	THE ROBERT GROUP	BUSINESS WEBSITE
LOS ANGELES RAMS FANS WANT FRANCHISE BACK	ESPN	BLOG POST
BROUGHT BACK THE LOS ANGELES RAMS	FACEBOOK	PUBLIC FACEBOOK GROUP FOR RAMS FANS AND SUPPORTERS

Table 4: Informal Documents & Media Analyzed

3.2.1.2 Expert Interviews

Interviews are a commonly used method in qualitative research. Interviews are an excellent tool to understand what people think, why and how they feel about things (Esterberg 2002, p. 36). Forester (1999) believes that there is much to learn from interweaving the stories and insights of planners in practice to showcase how deliberative planning practices can be pragmatic and politically critical. As I am drawing on the works of Forester and building upon his work, I aimed to embody a similar story-telling element in my research. It is for this reason that I chose to conduct semi-structured expert interviews. Listening to stories told by planners does more than just telling us the process and the outcome of a project—it shows their moral work of constructing character and reputation, political work of telling us who their friends and foes were in the process, power play in relation to support and opposition, what is relevant and significant, what is deemed as possible and what matters (Forester 1999, p.29). And furthermore how all of this is intertwined with the decision-making process. Furthermore, the "Goldberg Rule" recommends that planning and policy analysts should not ask, "What is the problem?" but rather, "What is the story?" which will lead them to find out what the problem really is (Neustadt and May, 1986).

The aims of the semi-structured interviews were to better understand the technical information of the case, what each practitioner's role was from their perspective, motivations from each practitioner in relation to the decisions they were part of making, how they navigated conflictual moments in the planning process, and to try and identify if there were personal biases that affected their decision-making. Conducting semi-structured interviews allowed the interviews to flow more conversationally and guide the participant to speak more on what they thought was most important and most relevant, whether that led the conversation to be more "off-topic". It was important to establish trust with the participants, as the case was so monumental. For some of the participants, it was one of the biggest projects they had worked on in their career, and for others the project significantly impacted their daily lives, as residents.

Participants were selected based on their professional connection to the Stadium Alternative project. I took note of reoccurring names I found in the documents I analyzed and reached out to those key players via email. I also messaged potential participants on LinkedIn and Instagram, if I noted that we had mutual connections for a more personal approach. Furthermore, I gained access to two more participants through the snow-ball method.

After sending a total of 22 interview recruitment emails and messages on LinkedIn and Instagram, I secured five formal semi-structured interviews, and one unstructured interview. All initial and planned interviews took place online, via Zoom, from December

2022 to August 2023. I interviewed two planners one at the City level and one at the County level (P1 and P2), one Elected Official at the City level (E1), and three community engagement specialists, two from the private sector (CS1 and CS2), and one who served as a local civic representative through their involvement with a grassroots organization (CS3). On average, each of these interviews lasted approximately one hour, with two outlies in the 15-minute range and the other in the 2 hour range. Furthermore, as a result of establishing trust with P1 and P2, I met with each of them a second time to continue our conversation about the research at hand. The second meetings were unstructured and less formal. The second meeting with P1 encompassed a site visit (which I will discuss in the sections to come). The second meeting with P2 took place over lunch.

Data anonymity was a significant concern due to the nature of interacting with individuals from local government and the project's extensive publicity, necessitating careful measures to protect the confidentiality of the data[2]. Participants were all sent a consent form prior to the interviews describing the research and informing them of their privacy rights. All participants agreed to having their interviews recorded, either by signing and returning the consent form to me, or through a verbal agreement before the interview started. All semi-structured interviews were audio recorded using the Voice Memo application on my personal iPhone. To digitally transcribe my interviews, I used the transcription feature in Microsoft Word, however it was not accurate enough to use as the final transcription. Transcripts were manually reviewed for accuracy, using the intelligent transcription method to remove filler words and clean up the grammar to provide a clearer result for coding. Table 5 serves as an interview log, showcasing how many times I met with each participant, who initiated the second meeting (if applicable), the interview structure and formality, the interview location, and the interview length.

---

[2] For privacy reasons, I cannot include any transcripts in this thesis. They can be made available for the jury members who are judging this work.

Participant ID	Number of Meetings	Who initiated second meeting	Interview Structure and Formality	Interview Location	Interview Length
Planner 1 (P1)	2	P1	1. Semi-structured, Formal 2. Unstructured, Informal	1. Zoom 2. City Hall, City of Inglewood, Hollywood Park, SoFi Stadium	1. 75 minutes 2. 3 hours
Planner 2 (P2)	2	P2	1. Semi-structured, Formal 2. Unstructured, Informal	1. Zoom 2. Restaurant	1. 65 minutes 2. 80 minutes
Elected Official 1 (E1)	1	N/A	Semi-structured, Formal	Zoom	35 minutes
Community Engagement Specialist 1 (CS1)	1	N/A	Semi-structured, Formal	Phone Call	45 minutes
Community Engagement Specialist 2 (CS2)	1	N/A	Semi-structured, Informal	SoFi Stadium	15 minutes
Community Engagement Specialist 3 (CS3)	1	N/A	Semi-structured, Formal	Phone Call	2 hours

Table 5: Interview Log (Source: Author)

3.2.1.3 Ride Along & Site Visit

After the Zoom meeting with P1, they extended an offer to take me on a visit to Hollywood Park and SoFi Stadium. Upon meeting with P1 in person at Inglewood City Hall on January 19, 2023, the site visit manifested into a full-fledged ride-along tour of the City and formal introductions to several City staff members along the way. This statement was exemplified during my site visit. This opportunity provided a firsthand glimpse into the environment and context of the case study. This unconventional data collection event involved a

comprehensive exploration of the City led by P1 in a government car. This method is often referred to as a ride along in academia.

Wegerif (2019) states that ride-alongs are a good way to recruit new participants for a study, as they can often lead to the researcher meeting participants they would not ordinarily meet. This was exemplified in my case when in two instances. Firstly, before began the ride along, P1 walked me around the 4th floor of Inglewood City Hall, introducing me to all staff that were present in office. This included members from the following departments: Planning and Zoning, Code Enforcement, Building and Safety, and Economic Development. Secondly, with the on-the-spot introduction to a person who ended up becoming a research participant, CS2.

The ride-along commenced with a comprehensive city tour led by P1. During the tour, P1 proudly showcased ongoing and proposed projects, encompassing new housing initiatives, mixed-use developments, the planned Inglewood Transit Connector project, and ongoing construction for the new Intuit Dome basketball arena as part of the IBEC project. Entering the actual stadium is not allowed by the general public on any given day, therefore P1 and myself needed a special clearance enter (Figure 3). P1 made a call to a colleague, and they were present at SoFi to give us badges and to let us in. This was one of the Community Engagement Specialists who works for SoFi Stadium and Hollywood Park, also known as CS2 in my study. This interview was shorter, around 15 minutes, and more conversational as I did not know I would be meeting them prior to speaking with them on site. I took handwritten notes during our conversation, as we stood overlooking the stadium (Figure 4).

Figure 3: Researcher's badge to enter SoFi Stadium
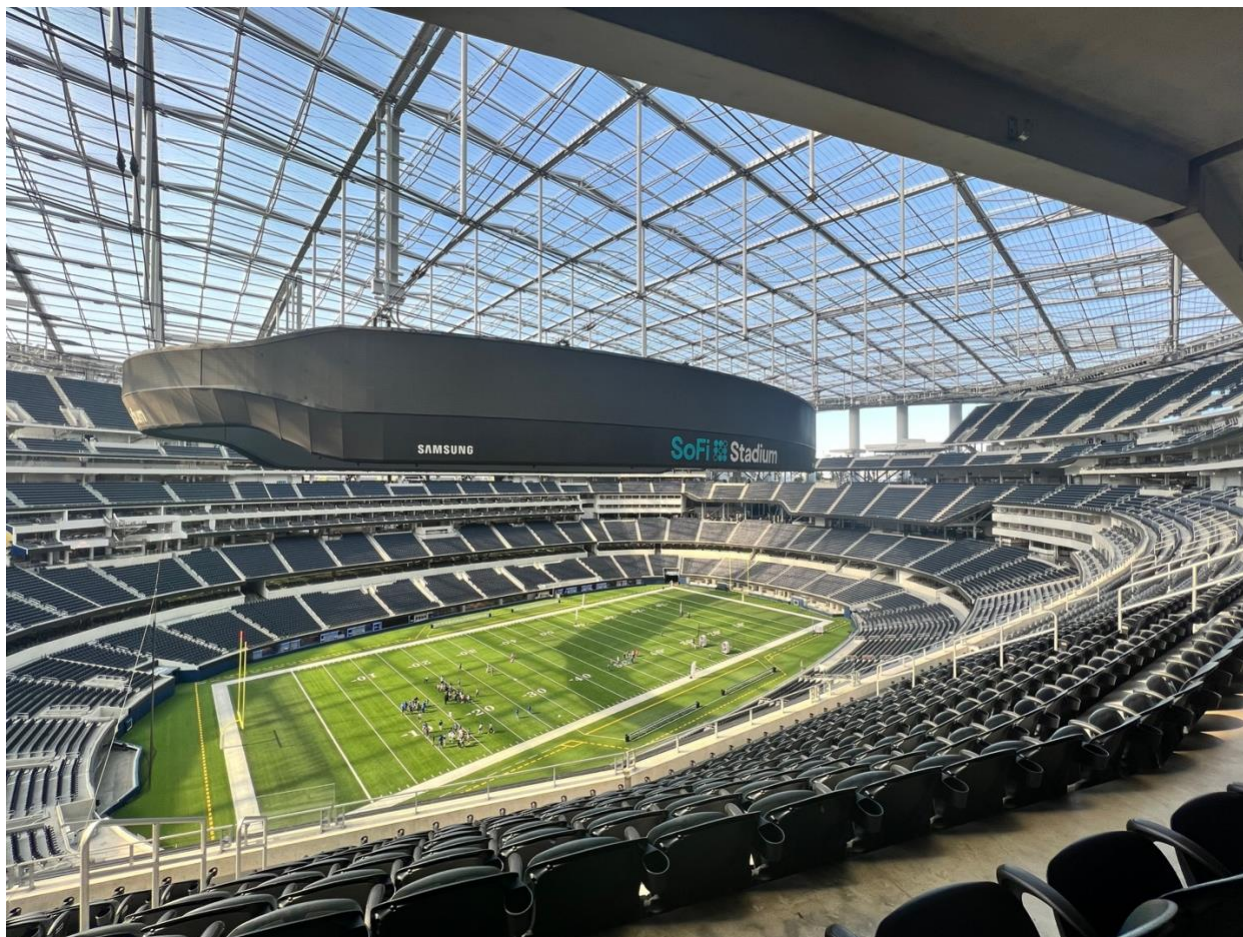
Figure 4: SoFi Stadium from Within (Source: Author)

The ride-along experience further accentuated the participant's engagement with the research and facilitated an organic discussion in a natural setting. I took detailed written notes, when appropriate, during the ride-along and followed up with additional questions relevant to the observations made during the tour. The participant's willingness to share their insights while navigating through various neighborhoods and ultimately arriving at Hollywood Park enriched the understanding of the project's impact on the urban landscape. The ride along and site visit lasted approximately 3 hours. After the site visit, P1 offered to take me to the Hollywood Park Casino to continue our conversation over lunch.

This experiential encounter served as a valuable supplement to the standard interview process, providing contextual insights that might have otherwise been missed. It exemplified the dynamic nature of qualitative research and demonstrated the participant's investment in contributing meaningfully to the study. Furthermore, the participant

3.2.2 DATA ANALYSIS

3.2.2.1 Document Analysis

My document analysis followed a straightforward process, while the complexity mostly lay in selecting the most pertinent documents. Despite collecting the documents and reading some prior to conducting the interviews, I opted to analyze them after the interviews. This strategic decision stemmed from the anticipation that the documents would encompass both pertinent and extraneous content. By analyzing the interviews first and generating initial codes, I could effectively extract and emphasize the relevant portions from the comprehensive documents, and build upon the existing codes, facilitating a more focused analysis.

To start, I uploaded the formal documents into MAXQDA22[3], a coding software that we had free access to through VUB. Formal documents were used initially to contextualize the case. By observing preceding occurrences, documents furnish both contextual details and historical perspective. This data serves as a valuable resource for researchers, offering insights into the historical origins of particular matters and shedding light on the circumstances that exert influence over the subject under scrutiny (Bowen, 2009). These documents were read and went through a preliminary round of coding. I leaned towards inductive reasoning in my research, aiming to allow the data to independently communicate its insights.

Inductive reasoning is particularly advantageous during the initial stages of research, such as document analysis, as it fosters a comprehensive and unbiased exploration of the data (Bowen, 2009). Using an inductive approach for my document analysis allowed me to immerse myself in the primary sources without predefined categories, enabling the emergence of themes that might not have been initially apparent. This method ensured that I capture the full context and intricacies of the documents, allowing patterns and insights to naturally surface.

By approaching document analysis inductively, I avoided imposing preconceived ideas onto the materials, thus ensuring an objective understanding of the case. This approach was especially beneficial when contextualizing the case since it lets the historical and background information within the documents shape my understanding rather than fitting it into predetermined theories. Inductive reasoning during document analysis supports the development of a strong foundation for subsequent stages of research, fostering a deeper appreciation of the case's complexities and nuances. Furthermore, it helped shape questions for interviews that were conducted after some document analysis had begun (Goldstein and Reiboldt, 2004).

---

[3] Prior to starting the document analysis portion of my research, I had to learn how to use the MAXQDA22 Software. This was learnt by watching YouTube videos.

Codes that were drawn from this inductive process included: power, relationships, community engagement, media and narrative control, selling points of the project, initiative process and positive community response, negative community response.

3.2.2.2 Interview Analysis

The interview transcripts were imported to MAXQDA22, the same software used for the document analysis. A coding procedure was conducted to identify patterns within the data points, which would then serve as a foundation for a more intricate analysis (Saldaña, 2013). I went through two coding cycles, as my first round of coding produced 41 individual codes. My second round of coding was aimed at consolidating the codes into broad themes that would help frame the subsections in my results chapter.

New codes that were drawn from this inductive process included: housing, effects from development, legal, economic changes in the city, redevelopment motivations, financial stream, negotiations, Kroenke, Walmart, recession, 2028 Olympic Games, Intuit dome clippers, Madison Square Garden, perceptions of planning, NFL influence, conflict, educational and professional background, social motivations, the planner's role, the planner's power, political motivations, CEQA, and demographics. From these specific codes, I was able to take a step back to group them into broader categories that would help to start answering my research question. I deducted the following themes from the above codes: concentration of power, public participation and community involvement, establishing a regime, navigating economic and political pressures.

Using the same codes and themes for the documents and the interviews helped guide my research in the same direction. The documents were mainly used to supplement details that were shared in the interviews and to provide contextualize the case. In my research, I employed data triangulation by combining document analysis and interviews as complementary methods. This approach allowed me to enhance the reliability and depth of my findings. Document analysis provided insights from historical records and official documents, while interviews captured firsthand perspectives and experiences of the key urban actors. By comparing and contrasting information obtained from these two distinct sources, I was able to corroborate and validate emerging themes and patterns. The convergence of findings across these methods not only strengthened the credibility of my results but also offered a comprehensive understanding of the complex phenomenon under investigation. This data triangulation approach enabled me to capture a more holistic view of the research topic and ensured that my conclusions were grounded in diverse sources of evidence.

3.3 METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

It is essential to acknowledge the limitations encountered during the research process. These limitations are integral in understanding the scope and applicability of the findings.

1. **Limited Access to Key Stakeholders**
   One notable limitation faced during this research was the challenge of gaining access to all intended interviewees. The case under investigation is a high-profile one, centered around a significant urban redevelopment project-- one of the largest in the region. The hesitance could be attributed to the sensitive nature of the case and the potential implications of their statements. This limitation, while not within my control, must be acknowledged as it may have impacted the comprehensiveness of the data.

2. **Variability in Interview Approaches**
   The study conducted interviews with a diverse range of participants, employing a combination of semi-structure and unstructured interview techniques. While these styles facilitated in-depth insights, the interviews flowed conversationally, and they may have introduced variability in the interview process.

3. **Reliance on Self- Reported Data**
   The research heavily relies on self-reported data from participants. While this approach allowed participants to share their experiences and perspectives, it also introduces the potential for biases. Participants may have inadvertently omitted or altered certain ideas, and their responses may have been influenced by their perceptions of what I wanted to hear. The reliance on self-reported data necessitates a degree of caution when interpreting and generalizing the findings.

4. **Limited Study Duration**
   Another limitation of this study is the relatively short study period, spanning about eight months. Urban development projects, especially one at the magnitude of this case, often unfold over extended periods of time. Furthermore, the additional projects (outside of the Stadium Alternative project) in the City that I collected data on were still ongoing. Consequently, this study may not capture the complete spectrum of changes and power dynamics that could manifest over a longer period of time.

5. **Potential Researcher Bias**
   It is crucial to acknowledge the potential influence of my own personal biases on the research process and findings. As a former city planner with a personal connection to the subject matter, my own experiences, beliefs, and perspectives could have inadvertently shaped the research direction and interpretation of the data. While efforts were made to maintain objectivity, it is essential to recognize that personal biases could have played a role in shaping the study.

6. **Information Accessibility and Public Records Request Challenges**
    Lastly, while striving to gather comprehensive data on the Stadium Alternative
    project, it was observed that a significant portion of relevant information, including
    details about the City of Champions Revitalization Initiative, had been removed from
    the internet. Specifically, the project website that was often referred to in
    government reports. Furthermore, the research faced difficulties when utilizing the
    Public Records Request Act. Per the California Public Records Act, "Access to
    information concerning the conduct of the people's business is a fundamental and
    necessary right of every person in this state." Therefore, all official government
    documents detailing government decisions should have been accessible at my
    disposal. Despite a formal request to obtain the Traffic and Neighborhood
    Management Plan for the Stadium Alternative project, I did not get a response from
    the City, and could be a potential violation of the California Public Records Act. This
    limitation heightened the challenges associated with preserving and accessing
    essential information related to the case.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The following section presents the outcomes of the analysis, shedding light on the intricate interplay of power dynamics, relationships among urban actors, and their influence on the urban planning process. Drawing from a comprehensive examination of both document analysis and interview data, the results offer valuable insights into the complexities and nuances of the research phenomenon. Through coding and thematic analysis, this section unveils the emergent themes, patterns, and relationships that characterize the multifaceted landscape of urban development. The presentation of these findings contributes to a deeper understanding of the central research questions and provides a foundation for further exploration and interpretation.

To reiterate, **t**his thesis seeks to answer two research questions. In the context of mega sports infrastructure led redevelopment plans:
1. What typologies of power affect relationships among urban actors?
2. How do these typologies of power affect relationships among urban actors and the urban planning process?

The first research question will be clearly answered by identifying the five typologies of power I found in the case: legal power, political power, the power of sports, technical power, and community power. Community power is further broken down into top-down perspectives and bottom-up perspectives. The second question is answered by drawing connections between the typologies of power using excerpts from interviews and data from the documents to understand how they affect the urban planning process. The stories shared by the participants highlight key points in the overlap between the types of power, unbeknownst to them.

Data anonymity was a significant concern due to the nature of interacting with individuals from local government and the project's extensive publicity, necessitating careful measures to protect the confidentiality of the data. The short list below explains the abbreviations of the research participants (a full table can be seen in the methods chapter):
- Planner 1, 2 (P1, P2)
- Elected Official 1 (E1)
- Community Engagement Specialist 1, 2, 3 (CS1, CS2, CS3)

Almost everyone that I interviewed can be defined as a planner in the redevelopment process. We have a city planner, a county planner, community engagement planners, and a political planner. This study showcases the different perspectives of looking at and tackling the problems faced in Inglewood through a specific method of redevelopment—through building the world most expensive professional sports stadium. We also have the community member and local activist perspective, to provide a balance of top-down and bottom-up perceptions.

4.1 Legal Power

There are different levels to understanding the power structures and hierarchies of urban governance. For starters, I found it is imperative to understand the legal frameworks in

place that serve to regulate the development process and decentralize power in California. The state of California enacts a piece of state legislation called the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA serves as the main law to regulate the development process by requiring public agencies to evaluate and disclose potential environmental impacts associated with certain projects. As per 14 CA Code of Regs 15378, CEQA defines a project as, " [a project] means the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment". Furthermore, as per 14 CA Code of Regs 15002, the primary goals of CEQA are as follows:

(1) Inform governmental decision makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of proposed activities.
(2) Identify ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced.
(3) Prevent significant, avoidable damage to the environment by requiring changes in projects through the use of alternatives or mitigation measures when the governmental agency finds the changes to be feasible.
(4) Disclose to the public the reasons why a governmental agency approved the project in the manner the agency chose if significant environmental effects are involved.

The State of California enacts another piece of legislation called the Ralph M. Brown Act, more commonly known as the Brown Act. As per California Government Code § 54950, the Brown Act governs open meetings of local legislative bodies such as city councils, planning commissions, school boards, and other similar local agencies. The primary purpose of the Brown Act is to ensure transparency, accountability, and public access to the decision-making processes of local government entities. Its goal is to prevent secret and unannounced meetings and promote open discussions on matters of public concern.

> "In enacting this chapter, the Legislature finds and declares that the public commissions, boards and councils and the other public agencies in this State exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of the law that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly.
>
> The people of this State do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them. The people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know. The people insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created," (CA Govt Code § 54950).

The Brown Act defines a meeting as, "any congregation of a majority of the members of a legislative body at the same time and place to hear, discuss or deliberate upon any items that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body" (§ 54952.2 (a)). Furthermore, the Brown Act specifies requirements for open meetings, notice and agenda requirements for public meetings, public participation, recordings and meeting minutes,

closed session meeting exceptions, and provisions addressing violations of its requirements.

Aside from State legislation, local jurisdictions maintain the power to enact their own zoning and land use laws. Regarding the City of Inglewood, their Municipal Code functions as the legally authoritative source for regulations concerning land use. Land use is regulated by the Planning and Zoning chapter of the Inglewood Municipal Code (Chapter 12). This includes development standards, design guidelines, landscape requirements, provisions to dealing with variances, signage and fence requirements, permitting procedures, subdivision regulations, and definitions. Specific plans fall within the Chapter 12 of the Inglewood Municipal Code.

4.2 *Political Power*

Establishing trust serves as the foundation for any strong relationship. Because of the troubled state of Inglewood's local economy after the recession in 2008, along with the gang violence, poverty, and crime, investment opportunities were few and far between (E1). Inglewood was not the top choice of most developers in the Los Angeles region. Inglewood was known to be a City held afloat by sports and entertainment—that's what proved to sustain a booming economy in the past.

> *When the Lakers and the Kings and the racetrack were going well, Inglewood did well. Regardless of the economic climate. As soon as those things went away, when the recession hit and the housing market crashed, the city was on its way to bankruptcy. (E1)*

It's important to note that the Forum, in Inglewood, was home to the Los Angeles Lakers from 1967-1999. In 1999, the Lakers relocated to a new arena in Downtown Los Angeles, leaving the Forum empty and abandoned. The Forum was never demolished, as it was used for one off events throughout the years, but nothing contractual or permanent, nothing that brought in significant revenue to the City. E1 saw this building as an opportunity to try and negotiate a deal with Madison Square Garden to buy the Forum and to potentially bring entertainment back to the City.

> *My first endeavor was to negotiate with Madison Square Gardens to reopen the Forum. And people said no one will ever come back to Inglewood because of the gangs, the poverty, the crime. And within one year, the Forum was the number one concert venue in the state of California, #2 in the country, and #3 in the world for booked events. (E1)*

The success achieved on a national scale by the Forum's reopening in 2012 effectively demonstrated that entertainment still had a significant place within Inglewood. This accomplishment marked the city's initial major triumph in terms of economic development after the unsuccessful endeavor to launch Hollywood Park in 2009. The reopening of the Forum contributed to revitalizing interest in Inglewood from individuals beyond city limits, as it soonly stood as the #1 concert venue in Los Angeles.

When inquired about the discourse and negotiation process with Madison Square Garden (MSG), E1 elaborated on the pivotal selling points they presented during the conversation to convince MSG of Inglewood's suitability as the preferred choice:

> *The conversation was, you can have a West Coast destination in the city that is in the middle of Los Angeles because we have Westchester on one side, LA to the West and LA on the East, we're 20 minutes from downtown Los Angeles. We're within the South Bay we're 2 miles from the Pacific Ocean and LA International Airport. So that's what that conversation was. And we have proven that this has been desired destination in the past. (E1)*

The significance of location cannot be overstated. When E1 was later questioned about the negotiation process with Kroenke and the factors that rendered Inglewood the optimal selection for his proposed stadium, they highlighted the importance of Inglewood's prime location. This sentiment was conveyed in a manner nearly echoing their earlier response during the negotiation with MSG.

During an official NFL Press Conference held on January 12, 2016, subsequent to the NFL's approval of relocating the Rams from St. Louis to Los Angeles, a question was posed to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell regarding the factors behind the prevailing momentum in Inglewood and the timing of the endeavor. In response, Goodell articulated that the extensive 21-year wait for the NFL's return to Los Angeles stemmed from the prerequisite for a high-quality facility that would be emblematic of Los Angeles, a city he identified as the global epicenter of entertainment. Previous attempts to establish a new NFL stadium in Los Angeles had faltered on two occasions, but the opportunity in Inglewood ultimately aligned with their criteria.

Promoting the potential vision of a project holds significant political influence as well. The dynamic between the developer and the Mayor essentially represents a connection between a billionaire and a politician (P1). In this context, Kroenke, the billionaire, must ensure the presence of political determination and stability for his project before committing billions of dollars to it. Ultimately, it rested upon the Mayor to cultivate a

trustworthy rapport with Kroenke, demonstrating the authenticity of their commitment. When Kroenke initially engaged with the City, his intent was confined to constructing a stadium on the 60 acres of land not encompassed by Hollywood Park, plus an additional 100 acres from the Hollywood Park site, which was zoned for parking. His initial proposition solely revolved around a single stadium. However, the Mayor held reservations about the merits of this project type in terms of benefiting the City.

> *We had a talk which should have been a 15 minute talk. He did want to buy just 100 acres to add to the 60 acres that Walmart had purchased, and a couple other caveats to change parking to be zoned for housing in the event that the NFL didn't vote to allow him to move, and for the city to bond $500 million to pay the relocation fee. That wasn't really the deal I was looking for. We didn't want a stand-alone football stadium because what is that like 14 events a year for one team? This was the largest continuous block of open land in urban Southern California. So we weren't going to subsidize the NFL and we weren't going to rezone the parking. (E1)*

The Mayor held a strong belief that he could negotiate an alternate agreement with Kroenke, one that would better align with the City's interests. This conviction arose because the alternative option was a former landfill site located in the City of Carson. Comparing what Inglewood and Carson had to offer, the Mayor found a stark disparity in favor of Inglewood. A major source of his confidence stemmed from Inglewood's strategic location in close proximity to Los Angeles City. The Project Manager for the Stadium Alternative Project, Chris Meany, was quoted in Urban Land Institute's article called "Trading Up Los Angeles- Replacing an Aging Racetrack with a New NFL Stadium", saying, " 'Inglewood is a spectacular location, just six miles [9.7 km] from beach cities and the Silicon Beach tech corridor—an area that's seeing the biggest residential appreciations in the region,' he says. "About 845,000 people live within five miles [8 km] of the Hollywood Park site, including tech professionals and affluent families."

However, it's important to note that the Mayor also extended an attractive proposal to Kroenke. Kroenke, with a significant presence in the real estate sector and ranking fifth in U.S. land ownership, possesses around 60 million square feet of land. Despite Kroenke's proposal being centered around a stadium, his primary expertise lay in real estate rather than sports infrastructure.

> *He [the Mayor] has a great mind. He's able to paint a picture and that picture then becomes, 'Why do you think it's so small, Stan? Mr. Billionaire.' Think big,*

right. Well, what the Mayor doesn't do is get into the minutiae of what that big is. He's just selling an overall concept. (P1)

The necessity to rejuvenate the Hollywood Park project stemmed from the financial setbacks it experienced during the recession. Building upon this rationale, E1 devised a concept using their political power: proposing to Kroenke the acquisition and financing of the entire 238-acre Hollywood Park development. This proposition involved suggesting that Kroenke's real estate development firm, The Kroenke Group, collaborate in a joint capital arrangement with Stockbridge Capital Group, the existing owner of the Hollywood Park 238-acre site, to establish the new Hollywood Park Land Company. E1 acknowledged the role the' had in that negotiation.

So we, you know, I nudged them to approach Stockbridge Capital. And he did. And they came up with a deal. And they eventually assumed their entitlements, bought all the land except for the acreage for the casino. (E1)

Although the initial development proposal was not accepted as is by the Mayor, Kroenke still ended up with a larger deal, more than he initially accounted for. I found that two major things that influenced Kroenke's decision to build the stadium in Inglewood was the ability to negotiate a deal that Kroenke couldn't pass up and selling the idea of what Inglewood could become as a result of this project. Furthermore, understanding and speaking the language of business also proved to be a method that worked in establishing trust with the developer. The Mayor was quoted in an article titled "How Mayor Butts turned Inglewood into California's Premier Sports and Entertainment City" saying, "It helps that I speak the language of business and understand the concerns of those that risk large sums of capital investing in a city."

Selling the idea of a city within a city to lure in Kroenke was a tactic that proved to work. Kroenke, who is by trade a real estate developer, was now getting the chance to double up on an investment opportunity. Extending this offer can be understood as a trust building exercise, to build rapport between the politicians of the City and the financiers, highlighting the interest of negotiation. Furthermore, the discourse in which the counter offer was proposed made it sound even sweeter, phrasing it as a new version of a sports Disneyworld.

We loved what Hollywood Park was going to produce. That's what brought me here to the City of Inglewood. We want, and the Mayor mentions to Stan, 'Hey, why don't you do like your good friend Jerry? Jerry's got Jerry's World in Texas, why don't you do Kroenke World? Why don't you buy the whole thing, why don't

you turn it into a village-- a city within a city. Incorporate it into your stadium and do a performance venue.' (P1)

In addition to its broader political influence, I found that political stability plays a crucial role in attracting developers. Notably, during the years 2016-2018, which held significant importance for the Stadium Alternative project's decision-making, the City Council experienced a complete absence of dissenting votes (E1). This led to the facilitation of swift and concise meetings with brief agendas. From an internal viewpoint, E1 provided valuable insight, stating,

"… the person that's going to invest billions of dollars, they have to feel that there's some rational stability in government. And you were looking at a city that has had unanimous votes on projects and has had unanimous votes period for probably the prior six years. So there's political stability here," (E1).

However, it's worth noting that a consistent pattern of unanimous votes doesn't necessarily foster trust between elected officials and residents. Conversely, CS3 pointed out that this situation reveals a tendency among elected officials to blindly align with specifically, the Mayor's agenda, neglecting to consider alternative viewpoints on issues. This omission is particularly significant as it fails to represent segments such as younger resident voters and non-homeowners within the City, leading to a perception of underrepresentation in these discussions. When CS3 was asked if they trust their elected officials, they quickly responded with a hard no. The distrust from CS3 stemmed from a questioning the morals and ethics of the Mayor, due to alleged personal scandals that had been brought to the surface. Additionally, CS3 noted that they did not appreciate the Mayor's strong ties to the police force. Prior to becoming an elected official in the City, he served as the Chief of Police in Santa Monica, another city in Los Angeles County. "We're in a time where I think people have very, uh very opposing feelings towards police right. And people are asking for reform, asking for like more allocation of city funding to other things," (CS3). It quickly became evident that there was much more than just policy decisions that were affecting CS3's feelings of trust in their local representatives.

4.3 Technical Power

Technical power derives from the capacity to effectively accomplish tasks. It is grounded in the ability to comprehend a project from multiple perspectives and navigate the process to secure official entitlements, all while ensuring adherence to legal requirements. My findings indicate that planners wield this technical power, serving as administrators who can shape policy direction to the extent that the council approves recommendations from staff.

The concept of planning can furthermore be understood as a practice encompassing control, influence, and authority due to the significance of land use designations in the developmental process (P1). Cities adhere to specific development standards and design principles as they form the bedrock of the municipal code. Planners play a central role in guaranteeing the consistent application of these standards to all projects within the city. Moreover, planners also provide essential guidance throughout the various project phases, facilitating the progression from conceptual ideas to concrete, realized outcomes.

The roles of planners can exhibit variations based on the institutions they represent. For instance, consider a planner working on the private side, advocating for the development project. In this scenario, their emphasis is on incorporating additional components into the plan to bolster economic development strategies (P2). Conversely, a planner employed by the city assumes more of a mediating role, serving as a facilitator throughout the development process. Rather than introducing fresh concepts, their focus lies in navigating the legal pathway to transform an idea into a feasible realization (P1). Here lies a question though—how did the citizens manage to put together the entire City of Champions Revitalization Plan, a citizen-sponsored initiative, seemingly without the technical power of planners?

Without the power of fully grasping *how* the legislation works, the Stadium Alternative project would not have been approved so quickly.

> And then there's the matter of, 'How do you actually push it through the system?' And that's where I came in. I was the one that guided it. (P1)

Although the Revitalization Initiative was passed and approved as a citizen-sponsored initiative, there were informal collaborations among the developer and citizens (P1).

> … if you look at it, it's kind of weird because usually you don't have somebody [a resident] that's that smart that can do all that stuff. So, they're working alongside with the developer to put together all the meat and potatoes of how this thing is going to actually work. (P1)

Furthermore, there are legal requirements that had to be fulfilled and they had to ensure, with the help of lawyers, that this new proposal would not contradict what was already in the existing Hollywood Park Specific Plan (P1).

Additionally, we have the planners in the private sector who helped assemble the community outreach and engagement plan for the Stadium Alternative proposal. Cities often contract out community outreach tasks because they do not prioritize it (P2).

> *… most cities end up just farming it out anyway, they don't find it as a priority. If they do it, they don't fund the units very well, and they usually aim for the middle of, and do more of a 'check this box' approach. (P2)*

Cities prioritize current planning which allows them to issue permits quickly, which generates money. On November 19, 2016, the City recommended that an 18 month Professional Services Contract between the City of Inglewood and the Robert Group be approved to prepare a Traffic and Neighborhood Management Plan to accommodate event attendees. The Robert Group is a community outreach, strategic communications, and public affairs consultancy based in Los Angeles that has a long-standing history of working with the City. The contract, proposed by the City states, "The City currently does not have the expertise to prepare the Plan, and therefore staff recommends that the City Council award a professional services agreement with the Robert Group."

The Robert Group was also the lead agency in community engagement for the original 2009 Hollywood Park Specific Plan. In creating this initial plan, there was a big emphasis on community involvement.

> *Just so you know, there was a lot of community involvement in the specific plan. There were very specific things they wanted to see. They wanted upscale restaurants, they wanted market-rate housing. That's why you don't see affordable housing in that. They actually said no affordable housing at the time that was approved, in 2009. (P1)*

The Specific Plan from 2009 states in the introduction that, "… outreach efforts have included unprecedented opportunities for community participation including a series of open houses, town hall appearances and block club meetings throughout the City." When the Revitalization Initiative was proposed, the outreach strategy was solely centered around garnering support to collect signatures, rather than the initial strategy employed in 2009 to enact, "… an open and involved process by engaging residents, community and business leaders, and interested stakeholders to generate feedback, motivate participation,

and explore all potential land uses for the Hollywood Park Site," (The Robert Group website).

When E1 was asked if the state of Inglewood's economy led them to make "economy first" based decisions, they replied by saying they would have made those decisions no matter what the state of the economy was because it was sound fiscal policy. Additionally, in a District 4 Town Hall meeting on January 24, 2015, the Mayor discussed his achievements during his four years in office. Regarding the Stadium Alternative proposal, he said, "All these things that are happening now do not occur in a vacuum. They occur because there's a good leadership business model in our city and we're making business-like decisions."

4.4 The Power of Sports

Although my research was intended to solely analyze SoFi Stadium, it proved to be nearly impossible to isolate this project with respect to the other major sports arena currently being built in Inglewood. Sports have deep historical and cultural connections within Inglewood. This connection traces back to 1933 when the Hollywood Park Racetrack was inaugurated, marking the commencement of sports and entertainment as major draws for people to the area. Additionally, the prosperity stemming from the Racetrack's activities facilitated the Los Angeles Lakers' residence at the Forum from 1967 to 1999, smoothly integrating it into the fabric of Inglewood. The Los Angeles Lakers served a very important role to Inglewood from a cultural perspective. It created a united sense of pride in the city that was the host to one of the best professional basketball teams in the nation.

The convergence of redevelopment and professional sports is a prevalent model in the United States, primarily due to its ability to garner heightened community support in contrast to a conventional mixed-use redevelopment strategy. This is attributed to the distinct pride and emotional engagement evoked by a sports team that a standard mixed-use redevelopment plan cannot replicate. Moreover, while Los Angeles has consistently been home to professional basketball, baseball, and soccer teams, it experienced an absence of a professional football team after the departure of the Los Angeles Rams in 1994 and the Los Angeles Raiders in 1995. This prolonged absence endured for a span of two decades, until the Los Angeles Rams offically moved back to Los Angeles in 2015. "... there's a ton of Rams fans in the LA market who never let go of the Rams, right? And so having an opportunity to [have them] come back was big," (P1).

Furthermore, for residents in Los Angeles, there isn't a notable distinction between the city and the county. Los Angeles County is comprised of 88 cities, each of which identify themselves as "Angelenos". Regarding Inglewood, it's important to highlight that the term "LA" is commonly employed to refer to where they are from. This leads to a significant

connection with the 88 cities within Los Angeles County, causing people to refer to their location as "Los Angeles" rather than specifying the particular city they reside in. This helps explain why Angelenos, generally, are so connected to all of the Los Angeles sports teams. "Yeah, people love sports. It's very like American. Like I said, football being kind of that very Americanized, like patriotic sport," (CS3). Often times it's not the players, the coaches, or the branding of the team that fans support, it's the fact that they love their home city, the team that represents them, and they don't want others making negative comments about theirs.

Of the 41 positive comments at the City Council meeting on Feb 24, 2015 when the Council was set to vote on the City of Champions Revitalization Initiative, 8 of them solely expressed interest in bringing the Rams back to Los Angeles, and two of them were excited to restore Inglewood as the City of Champions. Upon watching the recording from that meeting, Council chambers was flooded with Rams fans wearing Rams jerseys, hats, and other merchandise showcasing their loyalty to the Rams franchise. Many of the members who were wearing Rams merchandise were from a community group previously called "Bring Back the Rams", who were vocal supporters of the Stadium Alternative since its inception. Now, since the Rams have been returned to Los Angeles, the group renamed itself to be called "Brought Back the Los Angeles Rams". The Bring Back the Rams group was founded in 2009 by a resident based in Orange County who created a Facebook page to garner support all across Southern California to bring the franchise back to Los Angeles. The group's Facebook page has grown to now xx likes and has been posting updates on the Stadium Alternative project in Inglewood since 2015.
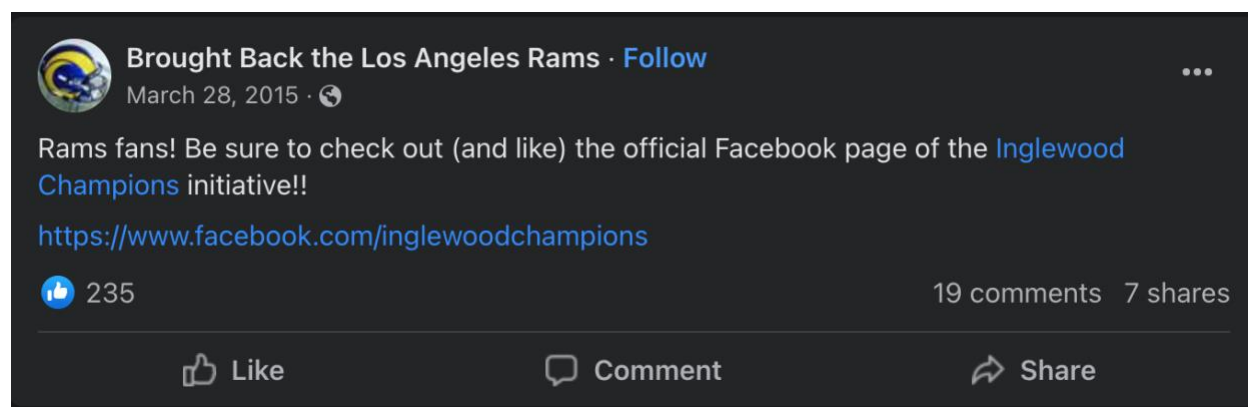
Figure 5: Bring Back the LA Rams group raising support for the Initiative (Source: Brought Back the Los Angeles Rams Facebook Page)
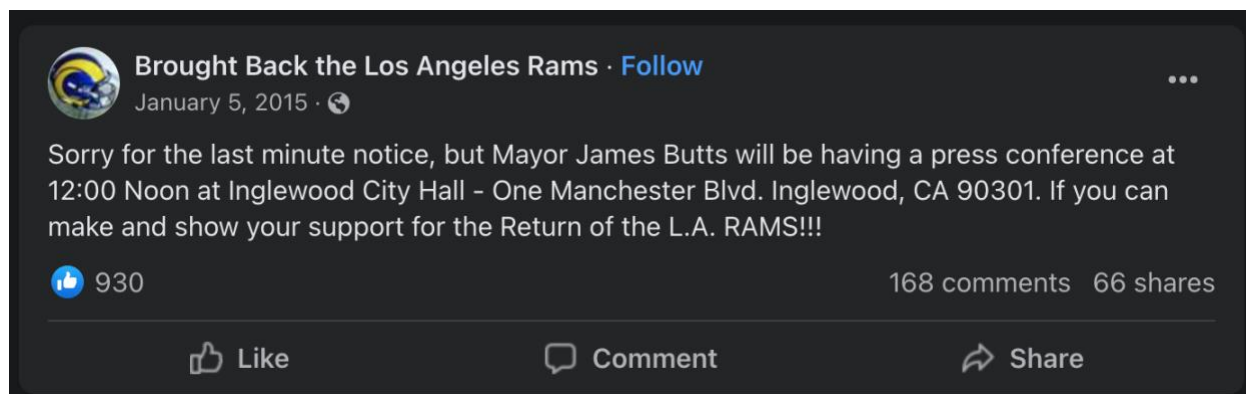
Figure 6: Bring Back the Rams notifying supports of the scheduled press conference
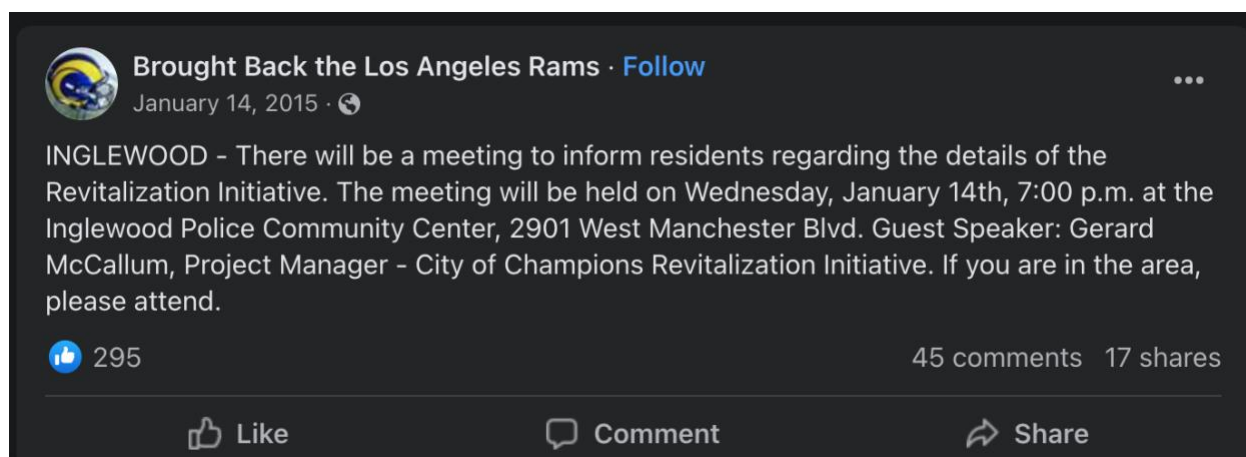(*Source: Brought Back the Los Angeles Rams Facebook Page*)

Figure 7: Bring Back the Rams altering supporters of the District 4 Town Hall meeting
(Source: Brought Back the Los Angeles Rams Facebook Page)

Members of the group would frequent other sporting events around Los Angeles and even Orange County to spread the word about their Bring Back the Rams group to garner as much support from sports fans as possible ("Los Angeles Rams want franchise back", 2012). The group managed to organize a rally with hundreds of people days before the National Football League's (NFL) decision on whether they would approve the Rams to formally relocate from St. Louis to Los Angeles, to showcase their support in relocating the team. This rally even made national headlines.

Another important player in this huge web of stakeholders is the NFL. It's important to note that the City of Champions Revitalization Plan was a proposal for an arbitrary stadium to be built on the Hollywood Park site, it was not a specific approval for a Rams stadium. Without the secondary approval from the NFL to relocate the Rams back to Los Angeles, or any team to Los Angeles for that matter, there would be no stadium to be built. The NFL had the power to require yet a second team to call this new stadium in Inglewood home,

drawing a completely different fanbase to garner support for the project. Regarding the second phase of the negotiation process with the NFL, "… all but two [NFL] teams voted to have the Rams be able to relocate to Inglewood. So, probably six months later, the Chargers opted to join them because one of the requirements of the NFL was that the stadium be built to accommodate 2 teams because market is that large," (E1).

The NFL's internal negotiations to approve the Rams proposed relocation to Los Angeles did not go without a fight. There was another proposal to relocate two teams (the Chargers and the Raiders) to Los Angeles and build their home stadium in Carson, which is another mid-size city in Los Angeles County. The biggest challenge then wasn't to convince Stan Kroenke to pick Inglewood, it was to convince the entire NFL and the NFL team owners to vote to pick Kroenke's proposal over the Carson alternative (P1). How did Inglewood manage to win this vote? Through a PR campaign to alter the perceptions of what Inglewood was and what it had to offer the NFL in perpetuity (P1).

> *So the PR campaign that was instituted primarily came from the developer side. But it was really returning the City to the City of Champions, you know. With everything going on with the economy, you know what it meant for jobs and what it meant for resources that would come to the City, and so we're able to paint a very compelling picture or make a compelling argument that the project was going to be a net positive to the City as opposed to a net negative. (P1)*

This negotiation was not solely about getting approval for a new stadium but it was also an unofficial bid to host the Superbowl as soon as construction could be finished (P1). Super Bowl host cities are selected well in advance of the season's conclusion, ensuring that the teams participating in the Super Bowl remain unaffected by the predetermined event location. The stadium that became SoFi was the host for the 2022 Super Bowl. The Super Bowl serves as the championship game for the NFL annually. Each year, a different city is chosen to host the game, which brings in thousands of spectators from all around the United States as well as millions of viewers from around the world. Hosting the Super Bowl alone is an experience that not all cities get. Coincidentally, one of the teams competing in the 2022 Super Bowl was the Los Angeles Rams. According to "The Sporting News" website, the lowest price for on-site tickets for the 2022 Super Bowl was $5,823 (€ 5.394). To put this figure in perspective, the median monthly household income in Inglewood in 2021 was $5,237.08 (US Census Bureau, 2022).

Moreover, since Los Angeles has been selected to host the 2028 Olympic Games, SoFi Stadium was selected to host the opening and closing ceremonies. P1 spoke on their desire

to stay working for the City, despite their qualifications to retire early. "I want to get to the Olympics. That'd be nice. I think since we're having the opening and closing ceremonies here, that's 2028. That's like five years from now, and I don't know, I'm holding on. The Mayor and I had a long talk. He still wants me to stick around."

4.5 Community Power

The Hollywood Park Specific Plan, as adopted in 2009, serves as the comprehensive framework for guiding the future development, land use, and design of Hollywood Park. Per the Hollywood Park Specific Plan, its purpose is to:

> "1. Determine the appropriate location and intensity of development, mix of land uses and building heights to be constructed in the Specific Plan area;
> 2. Guide the character of the land planning to ensure that high quality, place making improvements are made to create a safe and inviting, pedestrian-oriented regional retail destination not currently available in the area;
> 3. Establish public and private sector implementation measures and responsibilities that adequately address both local and regional impacts; and
> 4. Define the future locations and dimensions of streets, rights of ways, or other access ways." (Hollywood Park Specific Plan, 1-2)

The amendment to include a stadium alternative that was adopted in 2014 came as a result of the City of Champions Revitalization Initiative, which was a "citizen-sponsored" initiative. Citizen-sponsored initiatives are a way that the state of California allows direct-democracy practices by allowing residents of a city to propose, promote and potentially pass a new law, ordinance or policy change through either a direct vote, or by a vote of the city's electorate. Although they are called "citizen-sponsored initiatives", they are often referred to as "developer-sponsored initiatives". The reason being is since 2013:

> *The California Supreme Court held that CEQA does not apply to "citizen-sponsored" initiatives, even where the initiative is adopted by local officials rather than the voters. (CEQA and the Peoples Voice, p. 2)*

An Inglewood resident [Melvin Robert, brother to the CEO of The Robert Group], was approached by the Hollywood Park Land Company (the joint venture company between TKG and Stockbridge Capital Group) to collaborate to the City of Champions Revitalization initiative, ultimately to save the City time and money (P1). P1 acknowledged that the initiative was necessary due to time constraints as well, "...we were under time consideration and time crunches, that's why the initiative was so critical," (P1).

This initiative proposed the "Stadium Alternative" section (Chapter 6 in the HPSP) that was ultimately added into the Hollywood Park Specific Plan. If the City or the developer proposed to modify the Specific Plan to this extent, the proposal would have been subject to a full CEQA review. Furthermore, with a project of this scale, building a stadium with a maximum capacity of 80,000 people and a performance venue would have required an intensive Environmental Impact Review (EIR). A full EIR takes a minimum of 18 months from proposal to approval—this is partially because the CEQA process mandates periods for public comment at each stage in the process.

Bypassing the CEQA review process by enacting a citizen-sponsored initiative is a practice that is still uncommon to some Planners in California, despite it being a legal practice in 2014.

> *I think that this is a little-known part of the code that is probably not often used because I had never seen it before. A lot of my colleagues in the planning world had never seen it either. The ones who were a little bit more familiar with CEQA, it was a surprise to them and the ones who had never heard of it, like me, the ones who were not really CEQA people, it was very surprising. (P2)*

Furthermore, P2 commented on the ethics behind using this CEQA loop-hole through citizen-sponsored initiatives:

> *I gotta say that you know, yes it was legal and I guess that since it was, you know, an ethical use of a land use tool, it wasn't doing something out of bounds in terms of legality. But the question is, was it really mindful of the larger community? And as a planner, and as a community member within Los Angeles County who works in the neighboring jurisdiction, like unincorporated Florence-Firestone, like unincorporate Willowbrook, like unincorporated Lennox, and in other municipalities too within the region as a planner-- that's not a truly community rooted process. It was more like finding a way around it. So I can comfortably say that while I still know that it was technically legal, it doesn't mean it was righteous.*

The Initiative was voted on by the City Council and adopted on February 24, 2015. Per the minutes from that meeting, 47 residents spoke when the Mayor opened the floor for public comments, as delegated by the Brown Act. Of the 47 comments, 41 of them had positive things to say about either the project, the Council, or the benefits that the City would reap because of it. The other 6 residents voiced negative comments, posing concerns about what the financial deficit would be for the City, increases in rent and suggesting a rent control initiative, concerns regarding potential corruption among the Councilmembers and the

Kroenke, and a preference to let the residents vote on the matter as opposed to the Council voting for them. With regard to the lack of rent control policies, it is important to highlight the notion of potential self-interest voting. All councilmembers are homeowners in the City. P1 is also a homeowner in the City, despite the fact that they are not an elected official.

> *I live in Inglewood. I'm local. We bought in Inglewood back in 2013 and got a really good deal on the house that's appreciated majorly since that time, like three times of what I paid for it. (P1)*

This further intertwines personal vested interest of the City's economic success.

However, initiatives are not always guaranteed to pass with flying colors. In 2004, a Walmart Supercenter tried to open in Inglewood wanting to take review shortcuts in the same way the Stadium Alternative project did. "Walmart tried to, you know, bypass CEQA and do a superstore there that got killed, like a horrible death, because they tried to just go to the voters and it didn't work. And as a result of that, Walmart pulled out and said we're not going to do anything there [current HP site]. And they just left it," (PA1).

The interviews consistently highlighted the significance of community engagement and participation. However, it's worth noting that there were varied interpretations of what community engagement entailed.

4.5.1 Community Engagement: Top-Down

During my site visit to SoFi Stadium in January of 2023, it was emphasized by CS2 that the integration between the development and the city was a central aspect right from the project's inception. It was noted that Kroenke expressed a strong commitment to having a dedicated individual from the development team exclusively focused on the city. The aim of the development team was to collaborate closely with the city, aiming to create a sense of unity akin to a conglomerate entity, as articulated by C2.

When I inquired about the specific details of their outreach efforts, C2 shared that a key aspect was the year-round activation of the stadium. This approach allowed them to host events that catered to younger children, providing them with opportunities to visit the stadium. An illustrative example involves the coordination of field trips for local elementary school. These tours encompassed comprehensive explorations of the stadium, including visits to the locker rooms, insights into the stadium's engineering, introductions to luxury suites, and even the chance for the children to step onto the field itself. During the course of my visit, I also observed a youth football team participating in a special practice session on the field, which C2 jokingly stated was merely a coincidence with my visit. When

asked about if there were any challenges with getting the community acquainted with the stadium, E1 said:

> *The Rams have always, and the Chargers have always done things for the schools and redid playgrounds. And the fact that they were here, Nike and HBO came in and redid basketball courts and did things for the football stadium. It's-- there was never any conflict with the Rams or the Chargers or the Clippers. They were embraced.*

Furthermore, there was a $100 million community services agreement between the City and owner of the IBEC project, Steve Ballmer, in which $75 million would go to the development of affordable housing and the other $25 million would fund child-friendly activities and venues, including $9 million to renovate the Inglewood Public Library (E1). This community services agreement was established during the negotiation process between Ballmer and E1.

The Robert Group (TRG) has established a long-standing history of collaboration with the City in developing community engagement strategies. TRG's involvement encompasses crafting community engagement plans for various projects, including the initial iteration of the Hollywood Park Specific Plan, the stadium alternative proposal, and the IBEC project. When P1 was asked about feedback they received from the community regarding the Hollywood Park Specific Plan in 2009, they said:

> *If you look at the development agreement they [the community] wanted steak houses and high end retail. The reason for that was because Inglewood, the residents, the electeds at that time, felt they had all the fast food, they had all the low-end stuff so we wanted to pick it up. So we want to kind of mirror what had happened in Santa Monica and El Segundo and Torrance. We had a pretty deep deep leakage report that was done that showed that a lot of our residents were leaving Inglewood and spending their money in Torrance, El Segundo, and Santa Monica. And so we needed to plug that hole to make sure those sales tax dollars came back to the city. (P1)*

When questioned about the community engagement specialist's role within TRG, CS1 highlighted several key responsibilities. These include regular attendance at outreach events often organized by the City to encourage residents to subscribe to their email lists for project updates. Furthermore, TRG simplifies project information, making it easily understandable for residents. This involves translating the simplified project details into Spanish, distributing flyers within the predetermined project impact zone, and facilitating community meetings to foster dialogue and interaction.

We do surveys at community meetings and just at events as well. Like we have a little comment card so if they [the community] have any questions, concerns, they can write them down to us. And then also we always tell people like, 'Oh, if you have any questions, you can always e-mail us. You can call us, you can leave a voicemail, you can even text us,'. So, we definitely do get those. And I always have somebody monitoring them and I'm also reviewing them myself. So, you definitely see a lot of questions. And a lot of those questions in the beginning were about the whole vibration of the construction and yeah. (CS1)

Moreover, CS1 mentioned that an additional aspect of the role involves familiarizing oneself with the communities to establish connections. This is done to introduce the community to the team and to arrange suitable spaces for enhanced community engagement.

As outlined by TRG, project impact zones are determined based on residents' proximity to the construction site (CS1). Once all necessary government approvals have been secured and construction permits have been issued, TRG evaluates the extent to which the effects of construction, such as vibrations, will extend. This area is then designated as the impact zone.

To mitigate the construction-related effects for the IBEC project, the "Good Neighbor Plan" was developed. Inaugurating the Good Neighbor Plan, TRG organized a festival at a nearby park, during which several professional basketball players from the Clippers (the team for which IBEC was constructed) were present. TRG's approach involved identifying residents within a three-mile radius of the construction site and seeking their input on measures that would alleviate the challenges posed by the construction process. As CS1 explains:

... the people were telling us they're like, 'Oh, our cars, you know they're not clean.' So, one of those benefits was car washes. And those car washes are actually still going on, I think the benefits are going to end next month, since construction is pretty much now just the interior, so there shouldn't really be any dust anymore.

When asked about what some of the common challenges are that are encountered when engaging with the community, CS1 stated it is dealing with the misinformation that residents receive.

"Sometimes people don't come out to our community meetings or they don't completely read our fact sheets. They just kind of listen to some of things that I've

said. So it's kind of us going back in there letting them know like, no, that's not really what's going on. Like that was one of the proposals, but that's not what we ultimately chose because we, you know, we took feedback from the community and we decided like X, Y and Z instead. (CS1)

4.5.2 Community Engagement: Bottom-Up

I found that the perception of what community engagement is can differ greatly from the public administration level to the community level. When CS1 was asked about what methods work best to get to engage with the community, they said that getting into the community and identifying the community council groups has worked best for them:

So even the neighborhood watch groups. Just finding them-- they already have connections with their Councilwoman or Councilman. Going out to those Councilmember representatives and letting them know about the project and they can let you know, like, 'Oh, hey, here's this organization for this city block. I'll reach you out to their director or their board member.' And yeah kind of going from there. It's just either going directly to that Council person or finding out those community stakeholder groups and trying to build a rapport with them and then hopefully they can help you make that connection with their Council person. (CS1)

Building rapport between planning staff and the community is something that was perceived as needing improvement by CS3. On the topic of community engagement, CS3 shared that there is a lack of involvement with the city's planning staff.

And then, you know, our city planner, he's never there, like, never. I've never even like, seen him. I've never met him. I've only ever seen him in City Council meetings. So it's really hard to be involved with the City. Our Councilmembers say, 'Oh, you can e-mail us. You can call us.' But you know, obviously that's them putting it back on us. It's like no, we elected you to represent us! You need to make time to be available to us. (CS3)

The City is subdivided into four districts, each led by its respective representative who also serves as a City Councilmember. These district representatives organize Town Hall meetings, which serve as platforms for updating the community on ongoing projects and providing a forum for discussing inquiries, feedback, and issues related to City affairs. Typically spearheaded by the individual councilperson, these meetings occasionally feature the participation of the Mayor or various project leaders. It is notable that Hollywood Park falls within District 4. District Representatives also organize a range of community gatherings, such as community chili cook-offs, events that provide free school supplies to

kids as they head back to school, dedicated town hall sessions focused on economic development for small businesses, and events for safe document shredding.

Although Town Hall meetings can be beneficial in relaying information to the community, CS3 feels that sometimes they are not held often enough because they only happen when the District Representatives feel they are necessary, not upon the request of the community.

> *There was a resident recently actually at this week's City Council meeting. She lives in Councilman Padilla's District, District 2. And she's like, yeah, where are the Town Halls? You say we can call you, but you know I've been emailing you and I've been calling. I haven't really heard back. You know, their response rate isn't super. And he [Councilman Padilla] has an annual chili cook off. So she's like, yeah the chili cook offs? But we need more than just chili cook offs, we need Town Halls. We need it. We need to be able to talk to you and talk about these issues outside of official meetings because we only get a minute. We only get one for public comment and then we get 3 minutes to address things on the agenda. (CS3)*

On January 24, 2015, a Town Hall meeting was conducted by the District 4 Representative. This gathering marked the final District 4 Town Hall session before the council's final approval of the City of Champions Revitalization Initiative on February 24, 2015. The meeting extended for a duration of two hours. During this time, the Mayor delivered a 15-minute address, apprising attendees of the advancements witnessed by the City of Inglewood over the preceding four years that the Mayor had been in office. Subsequently, the floor was opened for public comment, with two residents given the opportunity to speak. One individual voiced concerns regarding heightened police presence in their neighborhood. They emphasized that the people in the room make up Inglewood, as they kept repeating the phrase "*We* are Inglewood". The resident emphasized that the anticipated increase in police presence for the proposed stadium shouldn't necessitate a corresponding escalation in patrols within residential areas. The second individual asked if the City had any plans to redevelop an abandoned building that was previously the home to a local social club. The Mayor responded and informed the resident that the City had already entered an exclusive negotiations agreement to build an 18-40 unit market rate housing complex. The Mayor went on to say that he would end up speaking all day if he were to talk about all of the ongoing and propsed projects happening in the City at that time.

As that meeting progressed, the District 4 Representative highlighted the numerous amount of community meetings and block club meetings held for the Stadium Alternative

project to inform the community on project happenings. He went on to say that his talking points from the beginning of the meeting were directly linked to comments and questions that were posed by residents at previous meetings and from emails. The project manager, representing the Wilson Meany Group and the overarching Hollywood Park Land Company spoke next, starting by introducing the stakeholders that were present for the meeting. Those included individuals representing the Social Justice Learning Institute, Turner Construction, and Melvin Robert. Melvin Robert has family ties to The Robert Group and was subsequently the official citizen sponsor of the City of Champions Revitalization Initiative, working in collaboration with the Hollywood Park Land Company. Chris Meany, the head of the Meany Group was handed the mic next and highlighted that this process to redevelop Hollywood Park has been ongoing since 2005, and there has been an emphasis on community engagement throughout the whole process. Chris Meany reiterated what the main problem was in Inglewood—the fact that after horseracing became obsolete, and the Lakers left the Forum, the lack of revenue from Hollywood Park site had caused a significant depletion in the City's general fund, forcing the City to cut back on services.

> *Yes, we do want to have a community that remains Inglewood proud. But we also want to restore the economic engine that was once here and that deserves to be here once again. (District 4 Town Hall meeting, Chris Meany, 2015).*

Chris Meany went on to discuss how the Kroenke Group became involved with the project and stated that if the Kroenke Group were just another commercial real estate developer, and did not have ties to the sports and entertainment world, this project would not have had the turnout it did, and the negotiations would have looked much different. Following Chris Meany's presentation, three residents rose their hand to speak. The first resident asked if her property taxes would increase as a result of this project, worried because they were already "sky-high". Chris Meany responded by saying the revenue produced by the stadium would likely end up funding more city services for the residents. This means that the residents would not have to deal with new tax increases to pay for those city services, since the stadium would increase the City's general fund. However, the District 4 representative took the mic and said:

> *But I want to cut to the chase. If the property values go up, the county assessor says so will the [property] taxes. Let's be realistic about this. Not by 53% but because the value of where you live has gone up. And that's what we've been pushing for.*

The room was immediately filled with a round of applause and cheers from the crowd. CS3 shared their lived experience regarding the Town Hall meetings for the Stadium Alternative proposal as a resident and as a civic leader in the local tenant's union.

From what I saw, there was definitely, like town hall meetings and things like that. Like people would show up and they're like in Rams jerseys. And they're like, 'Oh my God please, please approve this.' So it seemed like they were able to, you know, get support and have more community involvement. (CS3)

However, regarding the IBEC proposal, it should be noted that CS3 pointed out that there's a difference between community involvement and community outreach. On the topic of community outreach, CS3 said:

They had meetings. They advertised it on social media and things like that. But there wasn't outreach. It was literally just so that when people were like, 'Ohh, how did this happen?' It's like, 'Oh, well, we talked about it at a meeting.' Yeah, the meetings that happened at 2:00 PM on Tuesdays?... to me it's obvious that they make it inaccessible because they want to keep people out of the process.

Furthermore, the shift to having 2:00PM Council meetings means that people who work full time often cannot take time off work to attend them. The Council meetings are broadcast on Facebook Live. When it comes to public comment at Council meetings, residents are allowed 3 minutes to speak on items that are on the agenda, and only one minute to speak on an item that is not on the agenda. Often times, one or three minutes is not enough time to convey an entire concern about a proposed project. CS3 expressed apprehensions about how the Mayor might respond to residents who participate in the legally mandated public comments during Council meetings:

If your 3 minutes are used for anything else or if he feels like what you're saying is irrelevant, he'll cut your mic off. If he's like, 'Oh, this isn't relevant,' even if you're like, I'm talking about this item, he will cut you off. And then yeah, like I said, they're like, yeah come to meetings, come to meetings if you want to talk about things. And it's like there's things going on that take more than a minute to talk about. Yeah, the Mayor is very dismissive. (CS3)

Shifting Council meetings to midday during working hours is permissible under the law. The Brown Act, which primarily oversees public meetings in California, does not impose a specific time mandate for meetings. Its legal stipulation is centered on ensuring proper notice of the meeting according to its guidelines, affording residents the opportunity to plan their participation as desired. The Brown Act offers recommendations for local agencies to consider scheduling meetings at times that align with most residents' availability. CS3 said they feel as though meeting times have been shifted because the elected officials want to keep residents out of the decision-making process. Furthermore,

they stressed that they noticed a discrepancy in how Town Hall meetings were publicized for the IBEC proposal compared to the Stadium Alternative project, asserting that the IBEC project decision-making process was less transparent than the Stadium Alternative project. "It's not a coincidence that he [the Mayor] has City Council meetings at 2:00 PM on a Tuesday. People are at work. Like, how do you expect people to be informed when you're not extensively, you know, informing people that a stadium is going to come? You know *another* stadium? What do you think about it? How do you feel about it?" (CS3).

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

THE DYNAMICS OF POWER

The literature review in Chapter 2 distinctly establishes that discussing urban planning necessitates recognizing the pivotal role of power. Scholars have explored the dynamics of power from various perspectives, spanning from the broader spectrum of urban governance to the microcosm of urban planners' daily interactions. Addressing the initial research question pertaining to the power typologies that influence relationships among urban actors, five typologies emerged: legal power, political power, technical power, the power of sports, and community power.

The legal power that I identified within this case stemmed from state and local legislation. When delving into the realm of state legislation, a striking observation surfaced – it exerted the most substantial centralizing force within the broader development process, taking on a distinctly top-down nature. However, this authoritative stance paradoxically carved out channels for advocating on behalf of community members, essentially creating avenues for power redistribution. For instance, the Brown Act stands as a concrete illustration of this dynamic. Enacted to uphold transparency during the development process, it sets explicit parameters for defining meetings and delineates the protocols to be adhered to, predominantly pertaining to the announcement of meetings and solicitation of public input.

The symbiotic interplay between legal power and community power becomes strikingly evident through the workings of the Brown Act. Its provisions form a tangible bridge between the legal framework and the capacity of the community to influence the process. A noteworthy linkage emerges, where the community's ability to assert influence hinges upon the legal stipulations set forth in legislation like the Brown Act. Moreover, this alignment unveils an intricate transformation, where legal power effectively morphs into a conduit for community empowerment.

I found the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) functions in a manner similar to the Brown Act, orchestrating a system of checks and balances that realigns power dynamics. Its core objective is to ensure project compliance with state-defined environmental regulations, a top-down approach that encompasses not only sustainability aspects but also the built environment's impact on local inhabitants. Within the broader redevelopment context, CEQA introduces a mechanism that opens the floor to the engagement of residents and individuals outside the immediate jurisdiction of the project site. This inclusivity empowers them to provide input and potentially halt a project if they can substantiate why their concerns haven't been sufficiently addressed in the

environmental impact report. Additionally, CEQA mandates periodic pauses in the environmental review process to allow ample time for review and public commentary.

However, a nuanced feature of CEQA is its acknowledgment of the community's role, illustrated through the avenue of citizen-sponsored initiatives. This signifies an agreement by the state that citizens seeking specific developments in their city can bypass certain aspects of the lengthy review process, underscoring the original intent of granting the community a voice. Paradoxically, it became evident in my case study that this alternative route within the environmental review process was not thoroughly understood by practicing planners, leading to its infrequent utilization. This scenario underscores the influence of technical power, particularly emanating from lawyers representing developers who adeptly navigate legislation to expedite project approvals.

Subsequent to the legal frameworks that makeup the skeleton of the development process, acknowledging institutional relationships comes next. The strength of the relationships among urban actors can influence cooperation, collaboration, and the effectiveness of governance mechanisms. The legal framework generally helps to frame who the urban actors are allowed to be—it determines who has the right to power. However, it cannot explain the relationships among the power holders, and how the power to govern is ultimately assembled. In my case, I found that the official applicant for the citizen-sponsored City of Champions Revitalization Initiative was Melvin Robert. Melvin Robert informally collaborated with the Hollywood Park Land Company to assemble the power to create a legally sound plan that would meet the requirements of the City. Furthermore, Melvin Robert is also the sibling of the CEO of The Robert Group, which has a long-standing history of working with the City as their PR representative. In this case alone, we can see how the relationships among actors go far deeper than what can be shown on paper.

A pronounced link between the influence of sports and both community and political power becomes evident. Delving into Inglewood's historical ties to sports dating back to the 1930s, a significant insight emerges. The departure of the last professional sports team, the LA Lakers, from the Inglewood market in 1999, seemed to strip the community of its identity. This relates directly to the notion that sports teams play a vital role in establishing a strong local identity (Eitzen and Sage, 1978, as cited by Molotch, 1987). Against this backdrop, SoFi's remarkable community support can be attributed to its role in revitalizing Inglewood's sports identity—providing an avenue to restore what had been lost.
The minutiae of project specifics seemed secondary to the residents, as their focus lay in the broader endeavor of reintegrating sports into the city. Concurrently, politicians and the development team utilized public relations strategies to rally support, with limited emphasis on sharing intricate project details including what types of developments would ensue in Inglewood after establishing SoFi stadium. Both parties—community members

and politicians—shared a common objective. However, this shared goal wasn't solely centered on revenue generation or infrastructural enhancement, as argued by Molotch (1987) with the idea that a growth consensus is enough to foster conditions for a growth coalition. But rather, it united them in the aspiration to reinstate Inglewood's status as the City of Champions—a symbol of its illustrious past. This alignment of interests, though not necessarily addressing all aspects of community welfare, galvanized a collective determination to resurrect Inglewood's cherished identity.

The collective alignment of all urban actors around a shared concept is directly linked to Stone's theory of assembling the power to govern (Stone, 1989). In this instance, power assembly is exemplified by the restructuring of established power dynamics. However, it is for this reason that urban regime theory could be better suited as a model rather than a theory as it cannot predict variations in regime typology (Dowding et al., 1999). This prompts the question: what constitutes community power when its realization relies on diverting legal power? Moreover, if developers, who are influential elements of political and technical power, manipulate the community's use of power, how does this ensure genuine influence over policy decisions?

Another pivotal aspect to consider in this discourse aligns with a point I illuminated within my research gap – notably, the prevailing focus on publicly funded mega sports infrastructure projects in existing studies. It bears repeating that SoFi Stadium, Hollywood Park, and the Inuit Dome are all privately financed endeavors. Moreover, the same individual who financed Intuit Dome also acquired the Forum, further intertwining these developments.

Recognizing the importance of acknowledging divergent implications, it becomes clear that allocating public funds for a sports stadium introduces unique considerations – a facet often overshadowed in the realm of privately financed counterparts. The dynamics shift significantly when public funds are invested, as residents become direct contributors, thus directly bearing the resultant impacts. In contrast, the absence of direct financial contribution in privately funded projects potentially underlies the divergent stances on community outreach and engagement among developers, the city, and residents.

This trajectory leads to the deduction that when resident funds are not directly channeled into a project, it might preserve a level of public disengagement from financial expenditures and decisions tied to the proposed initiative. However, this prompts the question of whether privately financed endeavors might overshadow efforts towards community engagement. This aligns with Raco's (2014) assertion that public interest could be reshaped to accommodate the idea that a right exists to remain uninformed about

financial allocations, as such knowledge could disrupt the seamless execution of contractual agreements.

Another facet pertains to the application of transparency throughout and after the process. The Public Records Request Act doesn't extend in the same manner to privately funded projects due to the absence of public funds. Consequently, the public's access to project-related documents is restricted differently. This became evident during my research when attempting to access the link associated with the inception of the City of Champions Revitalization initiative; it had been expunged from the internet, domain rendered inactive. Similarly, certain website links associated with the Revitalization Initiative on the Mayor's page on the City of Inglewood's website were also defunct.

Regarding community engagement generally, a discernible shift is observed in the intensity of engagement efforts. This evolution is evident from the initial robust engagement strategies surrounding the Stadium Alternative project to a gradual wane as subsequent projects, including IBEC and the Inglewood Transit Connector, entered the city's landscape. This transformation in engagement tactics could be attributed to decision-makers' altered perspective after securing community support for the Stadium Alternative project. However, the introduction of the IBEC project, which completes Inglewood's sports and entertainment portfolio (for now), introduces a new layer to the newly forming sports and entertainment powerhouse in Los Angeles.

Regarding community engagement efforts for the IBEC project, the focus leaned more toward mitigating construction-related impacts rather than the actual planning process. Measures such as car washes to manage dust and monitoring vibrations during construction were implemented. However, it's noteworthy that these benefits exclusively extended to residents residing within the impact zone, predetermined by the community engagement consultant team. Requests for assistance from residents beyond the 3-mile radius were declined. It's a well-acknowledged fact that the ramifications of a project transcend defined boundaries, manifesting as a chain reaction. Traffic alterations on one street can reverberate to impact commuters who live outside the immediate city. Similarly, air pollution stemming from construction and traffic defies spatial constraints. Likewise, the appreciation of property values extends beyond the city's confines, emphasizing the interconnected nature of urban changes.

It is important to acknowledge that this trajectory has not been met without challenges. Among these are concerns voiced by certain community members, particularly business owners and renters. Their initial endorsement of the Stadium Alternative project contrasts with their current situation due to the implications of the ITC. The relocation of their businesses within Inglewood, necessitated by the ITC has engendered discontent among

these stakeholders. This dynamic underscores the intricate interplay between urban development projects and their impact on the community, warranting a deeper exploration of their implications on the local landscape.

Expanding this inquiry, a specific City Council meeting comes to the forefront. During discussions on the ITC project—occurring after construction and completion of SoFi Stadium and the Intuit Dome—numerous community members found themselves in an overflow room without the opportunity to voice their opinions, a direct violation of the Brown Act. Notable distinctions in the dissemination of project information emerge. The transparency offered during the Stadium Alternative project process included dedicated community engagement events and a specialized community engagement team, while the ITC project unveiled less prioritization in communication from the City and development team. Given that the ITC project wasn't advanced as a citizen-sponsored initiative, the city likely believed less general support was required compared to the Stadium Alternative project. This raises an essential question: should the ITC project, even though it's publicly funded, have been privately sponsored, akin to the Forum, Hollywood Park (including SoFi), and Intuit Dome, considering they are all privately sponsored developments benefitting from the improved transportation system?

Furthermore, these transformations have also illuminated pre-existing apprehensions regarding gentrification and the displacement of enduring residents, primarily from the black and Latino communities, which make up the majority of residents in Inglewood. During my interviews, a significant observation came to light – the Stadium Alternative project was positioned between two other projects, the Walmart Supercenter and IBEC, both of which encountered much greater opposition from the community. This stark contrast arises a crucial question: What factors differentiate the Stadium Alternative project from the others? It is noteworthy that the Stadium Alternative project faced no legal disputes or major community resistance that could impede its progress. This sharp divergence in outcomes prompts an investigation into the reasons behind the heightened opposition faced by the Walmart Supercenter and IBEC projects. What strategies and tactics were employed that led to unsuccessful community engagement in these cases, while the Stadium Alternative, a project of similar or even larger scale, proceeded without major hurdles? This situation underscores De Certeau's (1980) assertion that strategies and tactics operate behind the scenes, allowing institutions and power structures to establish a sense of appropriateness for a place and forge connections with specific individuals. These individuals then utilize tactics to challenge and disrupt the established norms within these environments.

The failure of the Walmart Supercenter initiative exemplifies the potent influence of grassroots opposition and community activism in shaping local development decisions.

Despite resistance, the IBEC project proceeded without fully accommodating the community's desires. This discrepancy was mitigated by a substantial monetary settlement. Steve Ballmer, the stadium's financer, entered a $100 million community benefits agreement with the City, allocating $75 million to offer low-interest loans for affordable housing purchase, preservation, and development.

Here, it's pertinent to reconnect with literature concerning cultural economies. One could contend that the addition of another stadium oversaturated Inglewood's sports culture. The historical presence of the racetrack in the 1930s and the Lakers in the 1990s fostered a sense of unity around specific teams or events. The introduction of multiple professional sports teams alters this "home-grown" unity into a perception of Inglewood as a sports and entertainment hub catering not solely to its inhabitants anymore, but also to affluent families from neighboring jurisdictions, akin to the emerging Silicon Valley of Southern California. Taking this concept further, one could extend a parallel to the concept of the "Creative City" discussed by Bianchini and Landry (1995). In this context, a variation could be introduced: the "Sportscape Revival City." This term encapsulates the City's redevelopment model, aligning with the essence of the "Creative City" while uniquely focusing on sports and entertainment resurgence.

THE POWERFUL OR THE POWERLESS PLANNER?

Throughout the research, I interviewed two people whose official job titles included the word, planner. Although one worked for the City and the other worked for the County, it was very evident of the different perspectives they brought to planning, as a practice. The biggest difference between the two ideologies of what planning is meant to be stemmed from one perception of planning a purely technical job, acting as the guiding force through the development process, while the other perception stemmed from a more social perspective of planning for the people. Planning in capitalist democracies like the United States, which places an emphasis on the free market, might seem to lack a purpose (Stein, 2019). However, it has become evident that the US simultaneously regulates its urban spaces in powerful ways.

From my research I found that one focus of planning lies more in the principle of economic development, supporting projects and collaborations among actors in order to boost the City's economy. We can connect this perception to Molotch's idea of how economic growth in a city can equal an overall understanding of success. I found that this perception of city success, as exhibited by other actors I interviewed, creates a space for justifying the connection between increasing property values as a means of community benefits. It promotes the mindset of if we, as decision-makers, can help to increase property values in

the city, then that's an overall win. This perspective would make sense if all residents in the given city were property owners, but that's not the reality of Inglewood today. It's imperative to bring back the fact that 64% of its residents are renters, meaning they would actually be the last ones to benefit from increasing property values. This perspective also links to the idea of trickle-down economics, which has been widely accepted as a form of neoliberal policy-making in academia. Traditional neoliberal policies accept the existence economic inequality because it helps to produce economic growth (Greenwood and Holt, 2010). Without a forward focus on establishing strong rent-control policies embedded within the redevelopment plan to balance the impacts of increasing property values, the planner's role can aid to further exacerbate the issues faced by renters. This connects to Smith's (1979) rent gap theory in which he argues that building market-rate housing in lower-income areas can lead to gentrification and the overall displacement of poorer tenants.

In cities across the US, there is an emphasis on establishing strong and independent streams of revenue due to the lack of state involvement in fiscal policy. This phenomenon has been widely accepted in academia. In the case of Inglewood, this problem was tackled by centering their redevelopment plan around the construction of a new stadium. The main purpose of the Stadium Alternative project was to restore the economic engine in the City. I found that the guiding principle of Inglewood's elected officials encompassed the notion that strong cities are those that don't solely rely on local sales tax and property taxes. While these revenue sources may suffice during periods of national economic prosperity, they have proved to be insufficient during economic downturns, leading to reductions in city services and workforce layoffs. According to Inglewood's elected officials, sound fiscal policy involves attracting external individuals and visitors to the city, encouraging them to spend money there to stimulate economic activity.

However, as planners it is imperative to remember who the job is done for. Generally, there is objectivity found in planning due to the lack of personal vetted interested in the economic growth of the city. This allows for more objective policy-making without a personal vetted interest. If a planner owns property in the jurisdiction in which they work, it can skew their perceptions of which planning principle to lead with. Furthermore, the reason elected officials must reside in the city they represent is so that it becomes more of a bottom-up process- community members collectively making official policy decisions. However, if all of the city's representatives are homeowners, as they are in the case of Inglewood, they are only representing 36% of the residents. This ties into the notion of self-interest voting among the elected officials, and self-interest policy making among staff members in the planning department.

Stein (2019) explains planning in very simple terms, as the way we shape space overtime. Connecting my experience as a practicing city planner for an LA County city and the findings from my research, I must acknowledge that economic development is of course one of the things planners must keep in mind. However, this is not the only principle that should guide the field. When stripping planning down to its most simple interpretation, I envision the role of the planner then, to balance a focus on four main principles: environmental protection, economic development, social welfare, and architecture and urban design.
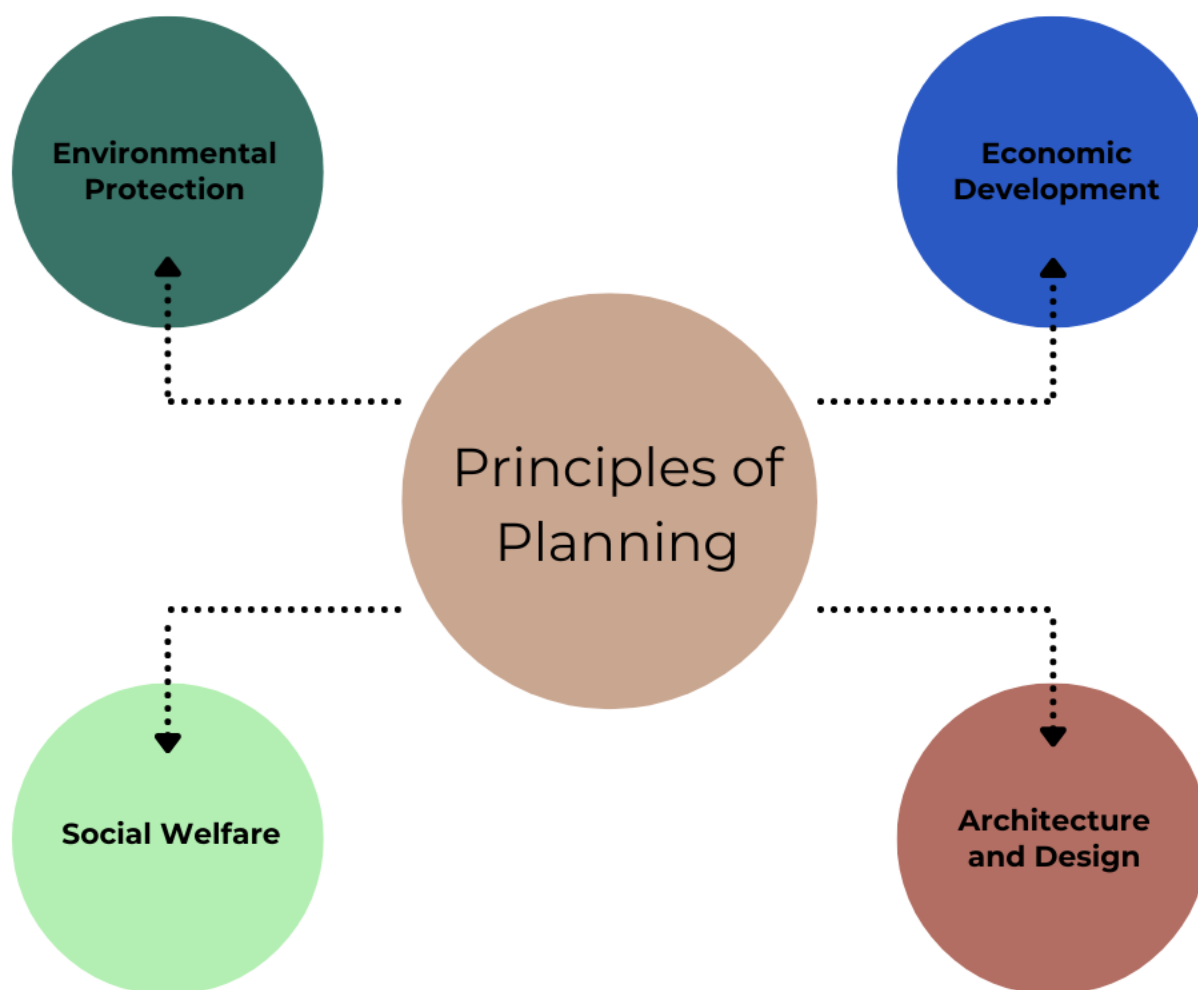
Table 7: Principles of Planning (Source: Author)

City Planners are trained and educated in all four principles, therefore we can assume that planners are supporting policy decisions that serve to balance the four, as they all are important. Otherwise, we wouldn't have city planners we would only have economic development specialists. That being said, planners are tasked with doing it all while

remaining at the center of urban governance sphere. Forester (1999) describes this phenomenon:

> *These planners and designers face the challenges of playing multiple roles simultaneously. At different times within the same process, they must bring the knowledge of experts; they must listen and encourage creative solutions as mediators; they must defend particular values as negotiators; they must structure processes of participation, discussion, invention, and decision making as organizers too. (Forester, 1999, p. 64)*

My findings align with Forester's ideas about the challenges faced by planners. In the face of power, I found that planner's do not have the upper hand. As understood by this research, navigating such a large-scale project, like the Stadium Alternative project which encompassed building the most expensive and high-profile stadium in the world, planners serve as a guiding force through the urban planning process. However, this does not mean that their role in this case serves as a method to uphold best practices. In simple terms, the more costly a project is, the more diverse the group of urban actors become. Some of those urban actors may have an institutionally higher ranking, enough to overpower a best practices approach. This is notable in the case of SoFi. The NFL is an enormous corporation with enough power to steamroll through virtually any decision-making process, rendering the planner, powerless.

CONCLUSION

I have found through this research that the way in which urban actors assemble the power to govern directly affects which principle of planning is placed at the forefront during the redevelopment process. This establishes the direct link between power assembly and the urban planning process, highlighting the idea that the power of the planner, in this case, is not strong. Applying this to mega-sports infrastructure led redevelopment, from the developer side, I found that their justification for building stadiums is linked to community empowerment, while political elites justify the project through the potential economic gains. I find this dichotomy particularly interesting because developers are typically experts in economic development, while political elites should be experts in assembling community empowerment. This raises the question then of why the justifications for redevelopment roles seem to be reversed in this scenario.

When it comes to the urban planning process, it is recognized by both policy-makers and the members of community that getting "feet on the street", is a proven method to build rapport among all urban actors. The community wants to be involved; they want to feel like their voices are heard so their elected officials can be a voice for them. Establishing the power to govern is ultimately rooted in building trust. Integrating stronger community engagement strategies from the local level would aid in establishing trusting relationships between policy-makers and community members, to ensure a smooth and collaborative planning process. It should be noted that transparency does not equal community engagement. While transparency is a method to establish trust, community engagement that truly works goes far beyond that.

With the SoFi project specifically, it has been accepted that there was an emphasis on community involvement in the planning process and with transparency. As SoFi has changed the perceptions of Inglewood, the City now has the momentum to keep pushing the economic development agenda, without fear that community pushback will draw away potential investors. I found that developers want to feel like they are investing in a city with political stability. Now that Inglewood has seemingly proven that with the success of bringing sports and entertainment back to the City, it seems like their redevelopment methods are changing, to lessen the importance of community voices.

It serves to say that SoFi Stadium has made its mark on Inglewood. Football was finally brought back to Los Angeles, the loyal Los Angeles Rams fans have rallied together at tailgates, as has the community around this project. The SoFi Effect, if you will, has led to further push economic development ventures in the City. However, as I have mentioned, economic development agendas do not serve as the sole method to keep all urban actors,

notably the community, happy. Moving forward, we should hope to unveil a larger presence of true community engagement in the City of Inglewood.

References

Bianchini, F., Dawson, J. & Evans, (1992). Flagship projects in urban regeneration.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *9*(2), 27–40. https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027

Brought Back the Rams Facebook Group. (n.d.). Www.facebook.com. Retrieved August 1, 2023, from https://www.facebook.com/losangelesrams/

California Attorney General. (2003). *The Brown Act*. https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/the-brown-act.pdf

California League of Cities. (2017). *CEQA and the People's Voice: Developer Ballot Measures*. https://www.cacities.org/Resources-Documents/Member-Engagement/Professional-Departments/City-Attorneys/Library/2017/Spring-Conf-2017/Engberg-CEQAandthePeoplesVoice.aspx

Certeau, M. de. (2011). *The practice of everyday life* (S. F. Rendall, Trans.; 3rd ed.). University of California Press.

Chappelet, J.-L. (1970). Mega Sporting Event Legacies: A Multifaceted Concept. *Papeles de Europa*, *0*(25). https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_pade.2012.n25.41096

City of Inglewood. (2009). *Development Agreement by and between the City of Inglewood and Hollywood Park Land Company*. City of Inglewood. https://www.cityofinglewood.org/DocumentCenter/View/123/Hollywood-Park-Development-Agreement#:~:text=The%20Draft%20Specific%20Plan%20sets,space%20uses%20on%20the%20Property.

City of Inglewood. (2015a, January 24). *01-24-2015 District 4 Town Hall Meeting*. Www.youtube.com. https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=QZSHJlUJmjg

City of Inglewood. (2015b). *City Council Minutes* . https://www.cityofinglewood.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Minutes/_02242015-821

City of Inglewood. (2015c). *City of Champions Revitalization Initiative*. City of Inglewood. https://www.cityofinglewood.org/DocumentCenter/View/1162/Hollywood-Park-Champions-Initiative

City of Inglewood. (2015d, February 24). *Hollywood Park Specific Plan*.

City of Inglewood. (2016). *Professional Services Contract with The Robert Group*. https://www.cityofinglewood.org/DocumentCenter/View/9745/3pdf?bidId=

City of Inglewood. (2022). *Inglewood Transit Connector Project (ITC) | Envision Inglewo*. Envision Inglewood. https://envisioninglewood.org/transportation-solutions/itcproject/

City of Inglewood. (2023). *Inglewood Municipal Code*. https://library.qcode.us/lib/inglewood_ca/pub/municipal_code

Clark, J. (2001). Six urban regime types: The effects of state laws and citizen. In *Public*

Administration Quarterly; Spring (Vol. 25).

Comunian, R. (2011). Rethinking the creative city: The role of complexity, networks and interactions in the urban creative economy. *Urban Studies*, *48*(6), 1157–1179. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098010370626

Crompton, A. (2017). *Towards Inclusive Community Engagement: Engaging Marginalized Residents in the Urban Planning Process* [MA Thesis]. https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/79195/3/Crompton_Amanda_201711_MA_thesis.pdf

Cummings, S. L. (2007). Law in the Labor Movement's Challenge to Wal-Mart: A Case Study of the Inglewood Site Fight. *Escholarship.org*. https://escholarship.org/uc/item/66q0z8ct

Daily Breeze. (2018, September 8). *In Inglewood, elected officials are well-paid, speedy and never seem to disagree*. Daily Breeze. https://www.dailybreeze.com/2018/09/08/in-inglewood-elected-officials-are-well-paid-speedy-and-never-seem-to-disagree/

Davidoff, P. (1965). ADVOCACY AND PLURALISM IN PLANNING. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, *31*(4), 331–338. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366508978187

Davies, J. S. (2002). Urban Regime Theory: A Normative-Empirical Critique. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *24*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9906.00111

de Vries, J. (2015). Planning and Culture Unfolded: The Cases of Flanders and the Netherlands. *European Planning Studies*, *23*(11), 2148–2164. https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2015.1018406

Dickson, T. J., Benson, A. M., & Blackman, D. A. (2011). Developing a framework for evaluating Olympic and Paralympic legacies. *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, *16*(4), 285–302.

Dickson, G., & Zhang, J. J. (2021). Sports and urban development: an introduction. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, *22*(1), 1–9.

Dowding, K., Dunleavy, P., King, D., Margetts, H., & Rydin, Y. (1999). REGIME POLITICS IN LONDON LOCAL GOVERNMENT. In *URBAN AFFAIRS REVIEW* (Vol. 34, Issue 4). Kantor.

Eckstein, R., & Delaney, K. (2002). New Sports Stadiums, Community Self-Esteem, and Community Collective Conscience. Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 26(3), 235–247. https://doi.org/10.1177/0193723502263002

Esterberg, K. G. (2002). *Qualitative methods in social research*. Mcgraw-Hill.

Euchner, C. S. (1993). *Playing the Field: Why Sports Teams Move and Cities Fight to Keep Them.*

European Commission. (2022). *European capitals of culture*. Culture and Creativity. Retrieved November 13, 2022, from https://culture.ec.europa.eu/policies/culture-in-cities-and-regions/european-capitals-of-culture

Fletcher, A. J. (2019). Applying critical realism in qualitative research: Methodology meets method. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *20*(2), 181–194.

Florida, R. (2002). THE Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life. Canadian Public Policy / Analyse de Politiques. 29.

Florida, R. (2003). Cities and the Creative Class. City & Community, 2(1), 3–19. https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-6040.00034

Forester, J. (1982). Planning in the face of power. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *48*(1), 1–80. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944368208976167

Foucault, M. (1991). Governmentality. In G. Burchell, C. Gordon, & P. Miller (Eds.), The Foucault Effects: Studies in Governmentality (pp. 87-104). London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

García, I., Jackson, A., Harwood, S. A., Greenlee, A. J., Lee, C. A., & Chrisinger, B. (2020). "Like a Fish Out of Water." *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2020.1777184

Girginov, Vas & Hills, Laura. (2008). A Sustainable Sports Legacy: Creating a Link between the London Olympics and Sports Participation. International Journal of The History of Sport. 25. 2091-2116.

Goldstein, A., & Reiboldt, W. (2015). The Multiple Roles of Low Income, Minority Women in the Family and Community: A Qualitative Investigation. *The Qualitative Report*. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2004.1927

Gratton, C., Shibli, S., & Coleman, R. (2005). Sport and Economic Regeneration in Cities. Urban Studies, 42(5–6), 985–999. https://doi.org/10.1080/00420980500107045

Greenwood, D. T., & Holt, R. P. F. (2010). Growth, Inequality and Negative Trickle Down. *Journal of Economic Issues*, *44*(2), 403–410. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20778683

Harvey, D. (1989). From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism. *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography*, *71*(1), 3–17.

Harvey, J. (2002). "Sports and Recreation: Entertainment or Social Right?" Policy Research Initiative 5 (1): 26–28.

Hookway, N., & Snee, H. (2019). Blogs in Social Research. *Springer EBooks*, 1353–1368. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4_19

Jennings, G. R. (2005). Business, Social Science Methods Used in. *Encyclopedia of Social Measurement*, *1*, 219–230. https://doi.org/10.1016/b0-12-369398-5/00270-x

Kassens-Noor, E. (2016). From ephemeral planning to permanent urbanism: An urban planning theory of mega-events. *Urban Planning*, *1*(1), 41–54. https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v1i1.532

Kearney, A. T. (2005). Building a Legacy: Sports Mega-events Should Last a Lifetime. Chicago, IL: AT Kearney

Kendall, N. (2003) Localizing democracy and good governance, Peace Review, 15:3, 259-

266, DOI: 10.1080/1040265032000130832

Kirk, P. (2016, April 15). *Trading Up in Los Angeles: Replacing an Aging Racetrack with a New NFL Stadium*. Urban Land. https://urbanland.uli.org/planning-design/trading-los-angeles-replacing-aging-racetrack-2-5-billion-nfl-stadium/#:~:text=New%20NFL%20Stadium-

Knieling, J., & Othengrafen, F. (2015). Planning Culture—A Concept to Explain the Evolution of Planning Policies and Processes in Europe? *European Planning Studies*, *23*(11), 2133–2147. https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2015.1018404

LA Sentinel. (2020, December 17). *How Mayor James Butts turned Inglewood Into California's Premier Sports and Entertainment City*. Los Angeles Sentinel. https://lasentinel.net/how-inglewood-became-the-sports-and-entertainment-of-southern-california.html

Landry, C., & Bianchini, F. (1995). *The creative city*. Demos.

League of California Cities. (2022). *The People's Business: A Guide to the California Public Records Act*. https://www.calcities.org/docs/default-source/city-attorneys/the-people's-business.pdf?sfvrsn=f827f33f_3

Lees, L., Slater, T., & Wyly, E. (2013). *Gentrification*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203940877

Lewy, Cheryl Winter (1974) Urban Documents as Reference Tools https://doi.org/10.1016/0093-061X(74)90020-3

Logan, J. R., & Molotch, H. L. (1987). *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. University of California Press. http://www.gbv.de/dms/bowker/toc/9780520063419.pdf

London, G. (2007). *Lower Lea Valley- Opportunity Area Planning Framework*. www.london.gov.uk

McGuirk, P. M. (2001). Situating Communicative Planning Theory: Context, Power, and Knowledge. Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space, 33(2), 195–217. https://doi.org/10.1068/a3355

Mingers, J., & Standing, C. (2017). Why things happen – Developing the critical realist view of causal mechanisms. *Information and Organization*, *27*(3), 171–189. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoandorg.2017.07.001

Molotch, H. (1976). '*The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place*'.

Mommaas, H. (2004). Cultural clusters and the post-industrial city: Towards the remapping of urban cultural policy. *Urban Studies*, *41*(3), 507–532. https://doi.org/10.1080/0042098042000178663

Mossberger, K., & Stoker, G. (2001). THE EVOLUTION OF URBAN REGIME THEORY The Challenge of Conceptualization. In *URBAN AFFAIRS REVIEW*.

Müller, M. (2015). The mega-event syndrome: Why so much goes wrong in mega-event planning and what to do about it. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *81*(1), 6–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2015.1038292

Nadin, V., & Stead, D. (2008). European spatial planning systems, social models and learning. *DISP*, *172*(1), 35–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2008.10557001

Næss, P. (2015). Critical Realism, Urban Planning and Urban Research. *European Planning Studies*, *23*(6), 1228–1244. https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2014.994091

National Football League. (2016, January 12). *NFL Owners Approve Rams Relocation (Full Press Conference) | NFL News*. Www.youtube.com. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rR484xIOOU4&t=693s

Neustadt, R. E., & May, E. R. (1986). *Thinking in Time*. New York : Free Press ; London : Collier Macmillan.

Oxley, M., Brown, T., Nadin, V., Qu, L., Tummers, L., & María Fernández-Maldonado, A. (2009). *Review of European Planning Systems*.

Pacheco Bell, J. (2018). *We Cannot Plan From Our Desks*. https://www.planning.org/planning/2018/oct/viewpoint/

Phillips, C., & Barnes, M. (2015). Whose legacy is it, anyway? A tale of conflicting agendas in the building of the Hamilton Pan Am Soccer Stadium. *Annals of Leisure Research*, *18*(4), 549–568.

Pierre, J. (2014). Can Urban Regimes Travel in Time and Space? Urban Regime Theory, Urban Governance Theory, and Comparative Urban Politics. *Urban Affairs Review*, *50*(6), 864–889. https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087413518175

Raco, M. (2014). Delivering flagship projects in an era of regulatory capitalism: State-led privatization and the London Olympics 2012. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *38*(1), 176–197. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12025

Robertson, K. (1995). Downtown redevelopment strategies in the United States: An end-of-the-century assessment. *Journal of the American Planning Association,* 61, 429-437

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.

Sandercock, L. (2000). When Strangers Become Neighbours: Managing Cities of Difference. *Planning Theory & Practice*, *1*(1), 13–30. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649350050135176

Smith, A. (2014). "De-Risking" East London: Olympic Regeneration Planning 2000–2012. *European Planning Studies*, *22*(9), 1919–1939.

Southern California Association of Governments. (2021). *PRE-CERTIFIED LOCAL HOUSING DATA FOR THE CITY OF INGLEWOOD*. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/inglewood-he-0421.pdf?1620796741

State of California. (2023). *California Environmental Quality Act* .

Stein, S. (2019). *Capital city : gentrification and the real estate state*. Verso.

Stone, C. N. (1980). "Systemic Power in Community Decision Making: A Restatement of Stratification Theory," *American Political Science Review* 74(4, December),978–990.

Stone, C. N. (1989). *Regime Politics Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988 (Clarence N. Stone)*.

Stone, C. N. (1993). Urban regimes and the capacity to govern: A political economy approach. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 15:1-28.

Swindell, D., & Rosentraub, M. S. (1998). Who Benefits from the Presence of Professional Sports Teams? The Implications for Public Funding of Stadiums and Arenas. *Public Administration Review*, *58*(1), 11–20. https://doi.org/10.2307/976884

Taylor, N. (1998). *Urban Planning Theory since 1945.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Tewdwr-Jones, M., & Allmendinger, P. (1998). Deconstructing Communicative Rationality: A Critique of Habermasian Collaborative Planning. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, *30*(11), 1975–1989. https://doi.org/10.1068/a301975

The Robert Group. (n.d.). *LA Stadium and Entertainment District at Hollywood Park - Inglewood, CA | The Robert Group*. Therobertgroup.com. Retrieved August 1, 2023, from https://therobertgroup.com/project/la-stadium-and-entertainment-district-hollywood-park-inglewood-ca

The Sporting News. (2023, February 12). *How much are Super Bowl tickets 2023? Prices plummet after nearing record-high*. Www.sportingnews.com. https://www.sportingnews.com/us/nfl/news/how-much-super-bowl-tickets-2023-prices/ec6oikbmbbkoqq1hqynyzoek#:~:text=How%20much%20did%20Super%20Bowl

US Census Bureau. (2022). *U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Inglewood city, California*. Www.census.gov. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/inglewoodcitycalifornia

Vanhellemont, L. (2011). *The Power of Objects and Things: The Mediating Role of a Few Material Actors in Participatory Urban Planning: A Comparative Research*.

Villanueva, G., Gonzalez, C., Son, M., Moreno, E., Liu, W., & Ball-Rokeach, S. (2017). Bringing local voices into community revitalization: engaged communication research in Urban planning. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *45*(5), 474–494. https://doi.org/10.1080/00909882.2017.1382711

Watt, P. (2013). "It's not for us": Regeneration, the 2012 Olympics and the gentrification of East London. *City*, *17*(1), 99–118.

Wegerif, M. C. A. (2019). The ride-along: a journey in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research Journal*. https://doi.org/10.1108/qrj-d-18-00038

Westin, M. (2022). The framing of power in communicative planning theory: Analysing the work of John Forester, Patsy Healey and Judith Innes. Planning Theory, 21(2), 132–154. https://doi.org/10.1177/14730952211043219

White, M., & Allmendinger, P. (2003). Land-use Planning and the Housing Market: A Comparative Review of the UK and the USA. Urban Studies, 40(5–6), 953–972. https://doi.org/10.1080/0042098032000074263

Williams, D. (2012, April 26). *Los Angeles Rams fans want franchise back - ESPN - Fandom - ESPN Playbook- ESPN*. ESPN.com; ESPN. https://www.espn.com/blog/playbook/fandom/post/_/id/1238/los-angeles-rams-fans-want-franchise-back

Wolff, A. (2020). Planning culture–dynamics of power relations between actors. *European*

Plan- ning Studies, *28*(11), 2213–2236.
https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2020.1714553

Zunino, H. M. (2006). *Power Relations in Urban Decision-making: Neo-liberalism, "Techno-politicians" and Authoritarian Redevelopment in Santiago, Chile*.