

# Plan Downtown Community Feedback Notes

Transcription of Feedback from Boards at the  
Draft Plan Alternatives (Options) Presentation and Open House  
February 1, 2016

All text in this document represents public comments written on large poster boards at the Plan Alternatives Open House.

[Brackets] include added information for context purposes.

- Each item in bullet point form represents a comment written by a member of the community.

## Youth Engagement

- Human Rights Training for Youth

## Built Environment, Preservation & Housing

- Build up to preserve open space
- Revisit archaic parking requirements for new development
- Encourage mixed use development throughout downtown, ground level retail with office and housing above
- Designate locations for subsidized housing. Revisit the idea of public housing. NY has some good case studies.
- Do not downzone – maximize potential for housing and identify new and creative affordable housing funding mechanisms. Requirements for developers to build expensive parking reduce affordability – eliminate requirements downtown.
- Less pavement = lower maintenance costs
- Preserve Produce Market
- Institute TDRs for historic preservation and affordable housing
- Increase allowable height and density around downtown 12<sup>th</sup> St and Uptown 19<sup>th</sup> St BART Stations
- Restore Biff's
- Concern with residual economic impact of high density on Telegraph...will spill over and drive up rents on contiguous blocks
- Create mixed income housing developments – same building
- Create retail destinations, encourage contiguous development on the same block

## Economic Development

- Promote Jobs in Oakland by hosting job fairs
- Transportation. Streets & Freeways to minimize traffic jams. Allow better Downtown parking.
- There needs to be more lighting on side streets. It is dark in some areas walking to BART.
- Arts districts aid economic development. Make arts preserves to encourage economic development around their edges. Add retail to Broadway downtown.
  - Yes, retail in the few edges of the downtown
  - Throw a bone 14<sup>th</sup> St
- #KeepOaklandCreative
- Stop pretending all of this not guided and steeped in racism and white supremacy

- Disappointed that there was no discussion of retail, how that should be interwoven in the plan and support for needs of small and medium sized businesses
- WPA-like jobs to rebuild parks, streetscapes, building restorations
- Food warehouse feeder for underserved neighborhoods
- Tax incentives for small businesses
- Encourage more than just bars and restaurants
- Create continuous retail and business destinations along key streets
- More street festivals and the like to encourage stopping

## **Affordability & Equity**

- Require more 2+3 bedroom units near major transit stops
- Stronger rent control!
  - My rent in KONO has gone up 30% in just 2 years.
  - Who cares about these ideas unless we can act on them?
    - I agree: strengthen and enforce what we have, strengthen then make rent board do its job
- Parking
- Build more housing!
- Assistance to small businesses to become property owners, either singly or in co-ops, of the spaces they now rent. +1
- Build housing people who earn minimum wage to working class wages can afford. Keep units at rent-controlled rates where they were at 10 years ago. This is what working folks can afford.
- Yes!! Affordable for the neighborhood you're building in- using regional / citywide median income % skews "affordable" up to levels working class families can't afford
- Make abandoned lots affordable for citizens
- More micro units
- Low-income mortgage assistance
- Parking maximums
- Where are the loans for small businesses?
- Need policies to restrict greedy landlord from raising astronomical rents on residents & businesses, for not renewing leases on no legitimate basis.
  - See Lakeside Produce & the Burrito Shop ( on Lakeshore next to Trader Joe's on Grand Lake)
- Transfer tax on all property sales deposited into affordable housing fund
- Designate self-help/self-build homestead districts on vacant lands
- Rent control on all new rental construction 6 units or more
- Affordable retail for independent business
- Ownership model for housing beyond single family houses, like NYC co-ops
- Support "co-living" development plans

- [www.opendoor.io](http://www.opendoor.io)
- Protect SRO housing as affordable units
- Put a lid on how much rent landlords can charge!!
- We are in CRISIS mode here! We need every last developer to promise a percentage of whatever they are building to be affordable housing. Grocery store? 10 units on top. Clothing? Fine. 10 units on top. Etc.!!
- Build more housing at all income levels, all housing is affordable at a market clearing price.
- Levy 25% low-income housing requirements like most cities are doing!!! 10,000 units Jerry Brown said is not for low to medium income.
- Include deeply affordable housing as part of addressing homeless encampments and homes for seniors, disabled and people with mental + behavioral issues.
- More Phoenix Commons for elders

## **Open Space & Recreation**

- What will happen with the big hole @ 13<sup>th</sup> & Jefferson?
- Jefferson Park kids play area = homeless camp
- 24/7 consistent access to public space allocated towards cultural arts/ youth engagement in arts, music
- Public garden to educate anyone who wants to learn about sustainability ecological responsibility
- Incentivize green roofs
- Interconnected green spaces for commuting by bike/foot and recreation
- Versatile performance spaces
- Playgrounds!
- Parks and green spaces for young families
- Family-oriented spaces
- Spaces that encourage diversity and don't call for policing
- Greenway from Lake Merritt to Broadway e.g. Along 20<sup>th</sup>
- Acquire Schilling Garden and add it to Snow Park
- Plaza at 19<sup>th</sup> St and Telegraph
- More pedestrian benches to sit. +1
  - Not just parks, all over the city

## **Connectivity & Access**

- Connect to the waterfront!
- More 2 way streets please!
- Love the repurpose of I-980. Surface streets!
- Hard for cyclist going straight through Harrison [at Grand Ave]

- Opportunity to include existing island to landscaping. [Commentator is referring to the pedestrian island at the Southeast corner of Harrison St at Grand Ave. Commentator suggests that the dedicated turn area for vehicle traffic be eliminated and integrated into the open space at Lake Merritt.]
- Better paved streets are much more comfortable to bike on separated bike lanes
- BRT
- Better public transportation from Uptown / Upper Telegraph to Jack London streetcars – reduce parking lanes – wider sidewalks dedicated rows for streetcar
- Bus + bike lanes (protected!) to prioritize non-auto access. Complete pedestrian safety analysis to identify priority locations for safety improvement.
- Open up streets under I-880 to waterfront especially Franklin Street
- Get rid of 1 ways in Chinatown especially 10<sup>th</sup> St
- Prioritize transit over parking
- BART station at Jack London
- 1-2 lane one way streets are actually more walkable, because you only have to worry about cars in one direction
- BART to and from Vallejo, Fairfield
- Love bike lanes & fewer cars in Downtown...but need more parking on outskirts – non-everyone can ride a bike. What about older folks who need to drive to the Downtown and at Lake Merritt –need to retain parking options!! Otherwise we'll end up driving o the burbs.
- Dutch style intersections for high cycling traffic corridors
- Reliable bus movement + quality bus stops
- Transit priority streets
- Connect the bike lanes for a low stress route from North Oakland to Downtown to West Oakland to Emeryville
- Better transit stops / shelters
- Better signage for parking availability / signage
- Underground I-880 especially between Downtown and Jack London
- BART stop in Jack London
- Parking management
- Countdown timers on all streets
- You should not have to push the walk button to able to cross the street
- More and safer crosswalks
  - HAWK
  - Lit
  - Harrison needs to be more pedestrian and bike lanes

## **Cultural Assets**

- Activate areas west of [San Pablo Ave] with 2 way streets!

- Make 15<sup>th</sup> [Street] 2 way
- Emphasis on initial enhancement [at 18<sup>th</sup> St at MLK Jr Way]
- You know this is a historic structure + asset [at the Northeast corner of Harrison St at Grand Ave]
  - the Oakland Veterans Memorial Building: senior services, Brazilian martial arts, tai chi, hangout + public access to lake views for all!

## Arts and Entertainment

- [Idea:] Jack London BART Station [at Jack London Square Entertainment Area]
- Black Arts Movement and Business District (BAMBD) priorities are affordable housing
- Ownerships + collective ownership e.g. 14<sup>th</sup> St BAMBD
- We don't want sharecropper relationships

## Arts and Cultural Heritage

- Please pass a meaningful impact fee by July 1! City-wide 25K fee.
- Park
- Restore Biff's
- More parking
- Space for people, not cars.
- Include Pardee Home @ 12<sup>th</sup> / Castro
- Planning is great. We need an immediate halt to rent increase & evictions as well as development until we have a complete Race + Equity Plan – put your actions where your heart claims to be!
- Add maker spaces
- Build around historic buildings to focus on them, not to take attention away with modern minimalist blocks. Oakland has character because of historic buildings.
- Designate more Arts Districts
- Historic Preservation + Re-use of vacant buildings
- Save the #SoulOfOakland!
- We need a new Main Library. Please consider this in your planning as the new main library needs public transit access. By definition needs to be somewhere downtown to allow access by everyone. –Susanne Parkins OLAC Commissioner
  - I disagree, I like the current main library!
    - I agree current library front is not welcoming or attractive
- Preserve historic architecture in Garage District especially.
- This is an illusion of inclusion. Racism has already decided.
- More public gardens
- Save Oakland Art Murmur Galleries!!
- Move to Tulsa or El Paso if that desperate for parking!

- What is vision for the Malonga Center? 2 major developments going up across the street and construction will limit accessibility. Not enough parking for arts patrons
- Spread the word about the Mills Act.
- Low cost ground floor space
- Maintain, repair and grow the Malonga Center! Way underground if possible- we're desperate for parking.
- More parking!!! What about parents with children and drop-off? What about handicap? Build an underground garage!!!
- Include Youth and Teen entertainment areas Arts & Recreation districts
- Preserve Black working class culture support + Black Arts Movement and Oakland Cultural Heritage
- More benches
- Build arts center NOT ball fields/stadiums!!!
- Parking!
- Way less parking please!
- Less parking!
- Please no parking!
- No more street parking! Underground if necessary!
- No more street parking. Underground only!
- Save Malonga Casquelourd Center! Keep DIVERSITY ALIVE in Oakland!
- Save the #SoulOfOakland
- Don't Libby Schaaf Oakland
- Develop arts/ culture in the Malonga and other venues. Create meaningful partnerships with artists as contributors to the beautification and economic life of a city.
- No Uber.
- Preserve Garage District (223-26<sup>th</sup> Streets)
- Preserve Produce Market!
- Preserve Souley Vegan Building, our oldest commercial building in Oakland.
- Buy Schilling Garden and add to Snow Park open space.
- Keep Art Murmur District in old buildings.

## **Environmental Sustainability**

- Sustainability includes social justice
- Daylight creeks (Temescal) and turn them into natural areas / greenbelts
- Sustainability includes adaptive reuse of historic buildings
- Why is there turf in front of the Kaiser Center? That shouldn't be allowed.
- Encourage use of gray water systems
- Turn parking into parks or parking lots covered with parks

- Increase off-street parking to reclaim street space for biking / dining / walking / landscaping and reduce traffic!
  - Ensure a good street-level experience with off-street parking, i.e., not like 21<sup>st</sup> St.
- Sea level rise: convert unused waterfront spaces to wetlands
- Preserve available parking for small business