

Location:	Area bounded by 27th Street to the north, I-980 and Brush Street to the west, the Jack London estuary waterfront to the south, and Lake Merritt and Channel to the east
Proposal:	Solicit preliminary input from the Planning Commission on the concepts included in the “Plan Alternatives Report” for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan
Applicant:	City of Oakland
Owner:	SP16001
General Plan:	<u>Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) -</u> Business Mix; Central Business District; Community Commercial; General Industry and Transportation; Neighborhood Center Mixed Use; Urban Park and Open Space; Urban Residential <u>Estuary Policy Plan (EPP) -</u> Light Industry 1; Mixed Use District; Off-Price Retail District; Parks; Planned Waterfront Development 1; Planned Waterfront Development 4; Produce Market; Retail Dining Entertainment 1; Retail Dining Entertainment 2; Waterfront Commercial Recreation 1; Waterfront Mixed Use; Waterfront Warehouse District
Zoning:	C-40, C-45, CBD-C, CBD-P, CBD-R, CBD-X, CC-1, CC-2, CC-3, CIX-1A, CIX-1B, D-LM-2, D-LM-4, D-OTN, IG, M-20, M-30, M-40, OS(LP), OS(NP), OS(RCP), OS(RCA), OS(SU), R-80, RU-3, RU-4, RU-5, S-2
Environmental Determination:	An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared as part of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan.
Historic Status:	52 Landmarks, 21 Areas of Primary Importance (API); 27 Areas of Secondary Importance (ASI)
Service Delivery District:	Metro, 1 & 3
City Council District:	2, 3
Status:	Ongoing
Staff Recommendation:	Provide feedback on the Plan Alternatives Report
For Further Information:	Contact project manager Alicia Parker at 510-238-3362 or email at aparker@oaklandnet.com

SUMMARY

The process of developing a Specific Plan for Downtown Oakland began in July 2015. Through a series of community meetings and public workshops, citizens have been involved at every stage of the planning process – helping to develop the project goals, plan alternatives, and eventually, the preferred Plan, draft Plan, and final Plan. Review of the potential environmental impacts of a Specific Plan is required, and will occur during the later stages of the plan development process.

Benefits of a Specific Plan include:

- Creating a level of certainty and predictability as to how Downtown Oakland will grow and change over time;
- Balancing land-use goals with environmental, economic, preservation and quality of life-related interests;
- Identifying the need for improved infrastructure (utilities, roads, and parks); and
- Providing a certified environmental document which will expedite the entitlements process.

The development of a Specific Plan for Downtown Oakland presents a rare opportunity for the City to leverage new investment to propel Downtown toward a future of thriving, diverse, sustainable

commerce, culture, entertainment, housing and employment; a place where Oakland's authenticity and varied cultural identities are reflected in the built environment. Clear plans for connecting Oakland's distinct districts and waterfront areas can be detailed and future investment decisions can rely on these plans. The Specific Plan is projected to improve Downtown's role as the economic engine of the City, and thereby support the delivery of services to residents throughout the whole city.

Shared prosperity is a central theme to the development of a specific plan for Downtown. Many of the big ideas and themes in the Plan Alternatives Report, the subject of this staff report, call for broad policy changes that would create an improved Downtown. Historically, cities have a reputation for changing, growing, and adapting to the needs of the citizens. A clear plan that documents the way that downtown Oakland should look in the future, coupled with a series of policies and recommendations for implementing the vision, is essential. With a clear plan, when and where growth may occur can become predictable.

The Downtown Specific Plan study area encompasses approximately 900 acres from 27th Street to the north, I-980 and Brush Street to the west, the Jack London estuary waterfront to the south, and Lake Merritt and Channel to the east. The Downtown Specific Plan and its related Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will provide a roadmap for how the area develops over the next 20 to 25 years. A planning effort of this scale requires tremendous coordination among City departments, the City administration, City Council, partner agencies and the broader community. The Oakland Bureau of Planning is committed to conducting a transparent, inclusive and empowering planning process.

This report presents concepts contained in the "Plan Alternatives Report", as well as community feedback received to date from a wide variety of stakeholders. Feedback heard at the Planning Commission meeting will be incorporated into the upcoming "Preferred Plan", which will be publicly vetted. A "Draft Specific Plan" will then be developed, based on the Preferred Plan, which will once again be presented to the advisory bodies and Planning Commission for comment (tentatively scheduled for the winter of 2016).

BACKGROUND

Downtown Oakland is the cultural, business, government, and entertainment hub of the East Bay. It also benefits from excellent transit service, including three Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations, multiple Alameda County (AC) Transit bus lines, Amtrak train service, and ferry service. The specific plan will help to ensure that Downtown remains a place of continuing growth and revitalization, as well a valuable resource for the larger Oakland community through increased employment, housing, arts, and cultural opportunities. The plan will provide sound policy guidance on land use, transportation, housing, economic development, public spaces, cultural arts, and social equity.

Initiated in July of 2015, the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan will incorporate recommendations from the recently completed Broadway-Valdez, Lake Merritt, and West Oakland Specific Plans adjacent to downtown, the Mayor's Housing Cabinet, the Downtown Oakland Parking Supply Study and the Complete Streets Implementation Plan. The Downtown specific planning process will closely coordinate with parallel planning studies including the Alameda County Transportation Commission's "Freeway Access Project" which will study access to and from Interstate 880; Citywide Impact Fee Nexus Study and Implementation Strategy for transportation, affordable housing, and capital improvements; Broadway Transit Circulator Study; and a State Law SB743 Standard Procedures Update, which removes Level of Service (LOS) as a traffic input analysis methodology from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Community Engagement

The initial centerpiece of the Downtown Specific Plan's public participation process was a community design charrette held over a 10-day period in October 2015. During the charrette process, a series of tours, stakeholder meetings, surveys, and community workshops were held that provided opportunities for group brainstorming and input. The charrette was advertised in local newspapers, electronic newsletters, and via flyers posted in local businesses, community centers, residential hotels, and other public venues. Well over 200 people attended each of the initial public meetings held before and during the charrette, such as the project kick-off meeting, the hands on design workshop, and the work in progress presentation. During the 10-day charrette, the city and its consultant team welcomed the public into an open studio housed in a temporary storefront on Broadway that allowed community members to have one-on-one conversations with members of the consultant team as draft ideas were being explored. Surveys were available throughout the charrette period, allowing anonymous written feedback for the consultant team. Finally, a virtual "town hall" was created on the *Speak Up Oakland* website to facilitate participation from anywhere, any time of day. Last fall's charrette kicked off the specific plan's public engagement efforts. Community comments from the charrette are available on the project website at www.oaklandnet.com/plandowntownoakland, see the "past meetings," "charrette" section.

The ongoing Specific Plan public engagement process has been designed to encourage authentic participation by a diverse range of groups and individuals, from traditionally well-organized groups, such as local business improvement districts, property owners and community-based organizations; to traditionally underrepresented communities, such as lower-income renters, small businesses, and arts and culture organizations. A youth engagement component is also underway, highlighted by a youth summit held on March 16th. City staff has attended numerous neighborhood group/coalition meetings (see notes from these meetings available on the project webpage at www.oaklandnet.com/plandowntownoakland, see the "community input" section) and continues to meet with stakeholder groups. Staff has also received general feedback via email transmission or hard copy surveys left at the Plan Downtown display in the lobby of the Planning Department.

A fourth public workshop was recently held on February 1, 2016, at the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts to introduce the Plan Alternatives. This public outreach event was attended by over 300 people. In addition to presenting the Plan Alternatives, the new "Streetwyze" public input platform was unveiled. Launching of the web-based Streetwyze application is meant to provide a culturally responsive method for engaging the community, particularly those who would not otherwise engage using traditional means, such as city-sponsored public meetings or city-hosted online survey tools. Community comments from this meeting are available for review on the project website at www.oaklandnet.com/plandowntownoakland, see the "past meetings" section.

To help direct the policies and decisions of Plan Downtown, the Specific Plan process is supported by a Community Advisory Group (CAG), which is comprised of representatives of the local neighborhood groups; artist community; youth, health and advocacy organizations; housing organizations; business improvement districts; and the real estate and urban design community. Community feedback from each of these avenues has been folded into the Plan Alternatives Report that is the subject of this report.

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

The Plan Alternatives Report includes a summary of background information, a summary of the community vision for Downtown Oakland (to date), and a series of plan options and scenarios. The Plan Alternatives are reflective of the community vision and goals that have emerged through a series of small group meetings, large public events, and the 10-day public interactive design charrette. These working concepts and goals are grouped into the following categories:

- Affordability & Equity;
- Arts & Cultural Heritage;
- Built Environment, Preservation & Housing;
- Open Space & Recreation;
- Environmental Sustainability;
- Connectivity & Access; and
- Economic Development.

The Plan Alternatives Report contains the “Big Ideas” that the city and consultant team have heard from the community to date, and are discussed as goals on pages 1.8-1.11 of the Plan Alternatives Report. The big ideas and goals will continue to be refined and edited throughout the Downtown Specific Plan process.

The entire Plan Alternatives Report, **Attachment A** to this report, is available on the project webpage: www.oaklandnet.com/plandowntownoakland. **Attachment B** contains a summary of the draft vision and design alternatives for the eight subareas of the Downtown.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Since its public kick off in July of 2015, the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan process has strived for inclusivity and transparency. Over the last several months, significant milestones were reached including: the existing conditions report titled, *Priority Development Area (PDA) Profile Report*, was published; a 10-day public design charrette was held; and the Plan Alternatives Report was published.

This section discusses the key issues and impacts that have emerged in the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan process to date, including:

- Community Engagement;
- Affordable Housing and Community Benefits;
- Social Equity;
- Preservation of Arts and Culture;
- Youth as Key Constituents & Valued Members of Society;
- Development Intensity;
- Regional Growth;
- Transportation Policy;
- Broadway as the Spine that Connects Neighborhoods;
- Industrial Land Uses;
- Coordination with Ongoing Studies and Projects;
- Historic Preservation;
- Environmental Sustainability; and
- Open Space & Recreation.

I. Community Engagement

Members of the community repeatedly expressed concern about the perceived shortcomings of the community engagement strategy for this process. This section addresses this concern by detailing the community engagement approach taken to date, and the new techniques it will use going forward.

Existing Community Engagement Strategy

During the initial charrette, numerous groups were identified as key stakeholders and were engaged throughout the charrette through personal conversations and formal stakeholder meetings. Since the charrette, city staff has continued to engage with these groups. These key stakeholders include: neighborhood groups, arts organizations, SPUR, the project's Community Advisory Group, youth groups (both service providers and high school-aged students), city advisory boards, and an online form. A brief summary of each of these groups is presented below (see meeting notes for additional detail).

1. Neighborhood Group Meetings

Jack London District

A neighborhood meeting was held in the Jack London District on December 12, 2015 to provide an overview of the Downtown Plan process and initial concepts. The discussion focused on six categories: 'big ideas', 'district character', 'gateways/under-crossings/transportation', 'produce market and waterfront warehouse district', 'Howard Terminal', and 'zoning'. Discussion on the bid ideas included topics on a solution for Interstate 880, connectivity to Chinatown, protecting public health from oil and coal trains, addressing homeless encampments, creating a walking trail from Lake Merritt through Jack London to the Bay Bridge, and a walking bridge to Alameda. The discussion on the character of Jack London focused on preserving views of the water, creating public parks and playgrounds, attracting a supermarket, and historic preservation of the Produce Market. The discussion on Gateways/under-crossings/transportation focused on the problems and opportunities with I-880. The 5th street exit from I-880 and the under-crossing are particularly unpleasant because of noise and aesthetics. This could be a place for mini-parks, concerts, food trucks or noisy uses such as a nightclub. Other topics included circulation patterns, a free bus on Sundays, a free shuttle to West Oakland BART and putting a bicycle lane on Broadway or even removing all auto traffic and adding light rail. The discussion on the produce market focused on adding retail uses after the produce business has finished. The discussion of the Howard Terminal area focused on how to create a destination with the water access, but also make it compatible with existing commercial, manufacturing and Port of Oakland activities. The discussion on zoning focused on preservation of the historic warehouse district, ensuring new development maintains the existing historical character, and encouraging conversion and reuse of buildings.

A follow up meeting was held on March 22, 2016, to discuss the Plan Alternatives Report particularly focusing on the legal standing of the Specific Plan, how it would interface with the Land Use and Transportation Element of the General Plan and the Estuary Policy Plan, and the schedule and points to provide feedback. Additional presentations were made by representatives from Connect Oakland (who presented on the initiative to replace the I-980 freeway with an at-grade boulevard), the Freeway Access Project (I-880 freeway on-ramp and off-ramp reconfiguration in Downtown), and the Broadway Circulator Study (streetcar study for Downtown Oakland).

Old Oakland Neighbors

On February 1, 2016, staff attended a walking tour with members of the Old Oakland Neighbors who defined a vision for their neighborhood where there would be housing, services and retail for all ages and household sizes, bolstering Old Oakland as a destination due to unique architecture

and pleasant public realm. During the walk, it was pointed out that the area is somewhat isolated from the rest of Downtown by the convention center, freeways and jail complex. Homelessness is also a huge issue at Lafayette Square and Jefferson Square Parks. Violence and nuisance activity related to the nightclubs in the neighborhood is an issue, particularly around closing time. Ideas around improving the streetscape with amenities, lighting and trash collection were suggested, as were ideas for addressing some of the 4-way stoplights that seem excessive for such low traffic intersections. Careful consideration must be exercised when contemplating new development due to the high-quality traditional architectural character of the area. The need to plan for marches and protests was expressed (since many travel through the neighborhood). On February 17, 2016, staff attended a meeting of the Old Oakland Neighbors where issues of family sized units, homelessness and improvements to the I-880 undercrossings were discussed, as was the need to have clear near-term improvements in the plan.

Chinatown Coalition

Staff have attended two meetings with the Chinatown Coalition, one on February 2, 2016 and one on March 18, 2016. Key concerns of the Chinatown Coalition are ensuring that the Plan includes protections from displacement, cultural preservation, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) as a community asset, improvements to pedestrian safety, more public space, and increased economic vitality of the neighborhood. Other priorities for the Chinatown community are to preserve historical and cultural resources, promote a mix of incomes, and ensure that public services and spaces reflect the culture and history of the area to strengthen and enhance the community as a destination. The inclusion of affordable housing, community facilities and open space can help ensure that Transit Oriented Development (TOD) serves the existing residents. Improvements to pedestrian safety should include a conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets, recognition of the area as a destination and not for through traffic, improved connections to adjacent neighborhoods, and streetscape improvements that increase safety and mobility.

Northgate Neighbors Group

The Northgate neighborhood alerted staff to several problems that need to be addressed. The retail corridors in the neighborhood are struggling because of a lack of activity. Criminal activity such as auto break-ins, illegal dumping and graffiti is common. There is a poor pedestrian quality because the I-980 off-ramp at 27th Street creates high-speed traffic. There are many accidents and pedestrian fatalities at 27th street at the I-980 off-ramp.

A solution to these problems starts with creating Northgate as a destination. Residents of the neighborhood have ranked the most important issues to address these problems: safety, cleanliness, green, business, and noise reduction. There are a series of projects identified to address these issues. Projects include a bike repair kiosk, art wall, dog park on Caltrans right-of-way, traffic calming, community garden on Caltrans right-of-way, affordable housing, parks and landscaping.

See **Attachment C** for a compilation of notes from the neighborhood group meetings.

2. Arts Organizations

In October of 2015, an initial stakeholder meeting was held to bring together artists, gallery owners, cultural leaders, performance venue representatives, and music institutions to discuss the future of arts in Downtown Oakland. During that meeting, many attendees expressed concern over spiking rents, displacement, and feeling unsupported by the City. A summary of the notes from that meeting is available [here](#). Since then, city staff have continued to outreach to the arts community by engaging the resident dance and performance companies from the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, and attending meetings of the Black Culture Keepers, the 25th

Street area artists, businesses and residents, Art Murrur, and the Oakland Creative Neighborhoods Coalition. A brief overview of each group's key comments about the specific plan is presented below.

Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts

For decades, the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts has been world-renowned for its African and African diaspora derived musical traditions and performance companies. The resident organizations estimate that the Malonga Center reaches 100,000 people annually through its dance and music classes, performances, and traveling artists. Like no other place, the Malonga Center nurtures the human spirit and preserves the cultural traditions of Africans and African Americans, in addition to Pan Asian and Pacific Island traditions in the heart of Downtown Oakland.

Parking is a major issue for the Malonga Center, as the majority of dance students (many of whom are children) are driven there. Further, curbside loading during performances is another huge issue. Many resident companies are concerned that their leases are in jeopardy due to rising costs. The resident companies would like the City to show the same level of support for the *performing arts* as it does today for the visual arts (with equal priority given for both Cultural Arts grant awards and the City's recently passed 1% contribution for art). In addition, the Malonga Center artists and residents request that the city finally address the building maintenance issues that have been documented at the Center for years.

Black Culture Keepers

Over the course of several months and many meetings, a group of African American leaders from the arts, entertainment and media sectors met with the City to develop the 14th Street Black Arts Movement and Business District, and to discuss additional ways that the City can better support Black business owners and artists. Key takeaways included the importance of re-instating the Arts and Entertainment Commission, preserving and protecting Black expression and cultural institutions from harassment, unwarranted complaints and police action, and the need for more than a symbolic gesture, but rather, financial support to ensure that black owned businesses, artists and residents are able to remain a significant presence in the corridor and Downtown.

25th Street Area Artists, Businesses and Residents

A meeting was convened on November 23, 2015, to discuss the Downtown Specific Plan with area stakeholders. Stakeholders discussed acceptable building heights, whether to allow residential uses and the design standards recommended for gallery space (i.e, abundant natural light, tall ceilings, loading areas, etc.). Business owners expressed concern over rising rents, noting that many pioneering gallery spaces had already become casualties of the heated real estate market. Requests were made to develop robust case studies around model arts districts (ones not characterized by gentrification). Stakeholders expressed a strong desire to retain the character of the 25th Street Historic Garage district. Recommendations for an "Arts Overlay" or "Maker Designation" were suggested to ensure that artists would be prioritized for ground floor space and not be priced out only to be replaced by restaurants or retail.

Art Murmur

A series of meetings were held on November 11, 2015, and December 16, 2015, to discuss the acute and immediate issue of artist displacement, as well as ways that the arts can be addressed in the Downtown Specific Plan. Stakeholders shared the significance of the Art Murmur as drawing thousands of visitors each month and wanting to preserve the creative nature of the area. Suggestions around options for artists purchasing their space were discussed, as was preserving the eclectic character of artistic enclaves throughout Downtown. Ideas for providing a variety of spaces, from small work spaces to large galleries should be available in the plan area. Examples from other locations were discussed, such as in Emeryville where artists can buy their live-work spaces. Artists discussed preserving key cultural institutions such as the Malonga Center for the Arts, and protecting vulnerable communities, hiring local and implementing rent control for commercial and cultural arts. Stakeholders also suggested developing protections for artists in designated arts districts including mandating a certain percentage of new cultural space in new development. Parking was discussed as being a valuable component of the arts community.

Oakland Creative Neighborhoods Coalition

The Oakland Creative Neighborhoods Coalition is dedicated to keeping Oakland creative, protecting the cultural identity of Oakland and ensuring equity in the application of policies throughout Oakland. Staff met with Coalition members, who expressed concern over the Downtown Plan process and wanted to know when decisions will be made and how community feedback would be reflected and used. Concerns around the lack of affordable housing and commercial space were expressed as was the general sentiment that the Downtown Plan seemed to be for new people coming in, the “gentrifiers”. Stakeholders were generally supportive of transit improvements and bicycle and pedestrian improvements, however parking remained a concern for some. A recommendation was proposed to offer right of first refusal to recently displaced people in new developments, and a lottery system for artists to win spaces (citing an example from Washington D.C.). Stakeholders expressed concern over how the City actually invests in artists and wanted to know how arts district designations will help artists.

See **Attachment D** for a compilation of notes from the arts organizations meetings.

3. SPUR Oakland

On March 17, 2016, City staff met with members of the SPUR board of directors, staff and the general membership. Another meeting with the SPUR Transportation Policy Board was held on March 23, 2016. The summary below is a compilation of staff notes during these meetings and not a formal position statement from SPUR.

SPUR Board of Directors, Staff and General Membership

Meeting participants advocated for much higher growth and density than what is shown in the Plan Alternatives. Their position is that, there is a need for greater development that can meet the needs of the Bay Area and not just Oakland. Participants also questioned the rationale behind the Plan Alternative Report’s “strategic growth” and “context sensitive development” because while matching the existing character is important in some circumstances, new development should be allowed to exceed the height and density of the existing character in order to accommodate the growth that is needed. Higher densities should be planned overall, but especially in Jack London near Victory Court and in Old Oakland and along the freeway. It was noted that many Jack London residents do not want to see more density and residents in the Koreatown Northgate (KONO) neighborhood are concerned that more housing development could displace the artists that work there. One suggestion was to convene a meeting between residents of Jack London and KONO and representatives from SPUR to discuss density, development, and the character of their neighborhood.

Participants reflected on the Plan Alternatives Report's focus on new housing and office. A comment was made that there could be more of a focus on planning for people, supporting the creative economy and maintaining industrial jobs. The plan could focus on supporting existing residents so it does not seem like it is planning just for new people coming into the city. There is a need to consider displacement resulting from place-making and new development. Affordable housing needs to be addressed. Education and economic development can act as an anti-displacement strategy. Many people are interested to see what the equity plan is going to look like. It is important to understand who would benefit from new transportation projects and new development. It is important to consider if there will be affordability requirements at new transit hubs in order to prevent displacement.

SPUR Transportation Policy Board

Topics of discussion on transportation included a streetcar, parking policy, and conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets. Policy Board meeting attendees were interested in the idea of a streetcar, but observed that it may not be the most practical solution for several reasons. The discussion on the difficulties of a streetcar led to some other ideas for transportation such as transit only lanes or a shuttle/circulator which could be more effective at improving mobility and opportunity for development. The plan should better define complete streets and understand how applying the complete streets concept fits into the street network. Conversion of existing one-way streets to the historic pattern of two-way streets will help create a more pedestrian friendly downtown, improve access and reduce the amount of driving needed to get to the desired destination. Parking policy needs to fit into this plan. Creating maximum parking requirements and goals for mode-shift goals will help achieve many of the ideas in the plan. There is a need to consider newer, more modern and alternative transportation modes such as private transit (i.e., Uber).

See **Attachment E** for a compilation of notes from the SPUR meetings.

4. Community Advisory Group

The Community Advisory Group (CAG) for the Downtown Specific Plan is comprised of representatives of the local neighborhood groups; artist community; youth, health and advocacy organizations; housing organizations; business improvement districts; and the real estate and urban design community.

Two meetings have been held to date with the CAG to discuss the Plan Alternatives Report. During the first meeting, the CAG members shared their initial reactions to the development alternatives for the neighborhoods. At the second meeting, although poorly attended, the group offered valuable feedback about the vision and guiding principles in the Plan Alternatives Report, as well as feedback on the development alternatives.

A series of CAG meetings are planned for this summer to integrate the equity strategy into the plan and to develop and discuss the Preferred Plan Report which will serve as the foundation for the draft specific plan.

See **Attachment F** for a compilation of notes from the CAG meetings.

5. Youth Engagement

Young people are often left out of the city planning process or engaged in only token ways, and Planning staff is determined to correct this mistake. A plan for Downtown Oakland should account for the needs of young people now and in the future. To meaningfully engage youth, the Plan Downtown team has taken a multi-pronged approach:

- ***City of Oakland Youth Advisory Commission.*** Plan Downtown staff met with about ten middle and high school student members of the City of Oakland Youth Advisory Commission during their regular meeting. Staff gave an overview of the Downtown Plan process, and then facilitated a discussion about how the Commissioners and their friends use Downtown, and what would make Downtown a more valuable and welcoming space for youth. Commissioners were also asked for their input into how local government can best continue to engage youth in planning processes.
- ***MetWest and Skyline High School Y-PLAN Program.*** The City has been lucky to partner with UC Berkeley Center for Cities and Schools' Y-PLAN (Youth-Plan, Learn, Act Now!) program. This program is working with four different classes of high school student classes, from freshman through senior-year, to apply the Y-PLAN process to the future of Downtown Oakland. The Plan Downtown team is acting as their client and UC Berkeley students as their mentors. The students will be providing recommendations on issues such as social equity and greenhouse gas reduction that will contribute to the draft specific plan.
- ***Youth Summit.*** Approximately 80 young people and youth advocates came together on March 16, 2016 at Oakland City Hall to discuss youth ideas and needs for Downtown. Co- led by Planning and Y-PLAN staff, the Youth Summit worked with youth-serving organizations Downtown and around Oakland to bring a range of students from different backgrounds and neighborhoods a chance to hear from one another and share their recommendations with the City.
- ***Youth Service Provider Focus Group.*** Plan Downtown staff held a focus group on March 3, 2016, and invited youth-serving organizations from around Oakland. The purpose was to learn about their organizational needs from the Downtown and their perspective on their youth clients' needs, as well as to encourage them to invite their students into the planning process.

Additional work with youth will continue throughout the length of the Downtown Specific Plan process, bolstered by the work of the equity strategy team.

Across the board, young people have repeatedly said that they see Downtown as a place for rich people and not for young people or even people from Oakland, especially from East Oakland. They experience the retail as unaffordable for them, with the exception of a few "hidden" food spots. The young people staff talked to tend to go to other cities to shop and hang out in retail settings. They almost all have experienced having security guards, ambassadors and businesses yell at them, kick them out of public spaces (even Oakland School for the Arts students who were playing dodgeball in Frank H. Ogawa Plaza with adult supervision), or at least stare at them as if they don't belong or are up to something criminal. They say they feel comfortable in restaurants and other places where the patrons look like them. Some youth expressed concern that the City will not pay attention to youth voices even if they do participate.

The adult youth advocates confirmed that young people – particularly young men of color – are often singled out for oversight and harassment. The adult advocates also pointed to places where youth are welcomed, such as a few shops and cafes where the business owners provide safe havens for youth.

The bright spot is that there are some places where youth feel welcome: the ice rink, Snow Park, the park by Oakland School for the Arts, and to some extent Jack London Square. A few youth said they do feel welcome, hang out in the center of Downtown near the stores, and have family, friends and programs Downtown. They also have many recommendations for improvements to the Downtown.

In terms of youth engagement, youth participants think that government needs to be persistent and engage them in actual projects (like murals and music, for example) rather than just asking them to contribute ideas. They recommended using the Warriors to interact with the community, facilitating paid internships in development and planning, and going to the schools to do workshops there instead of asking students to go somewhere else. They recommended youth programs that interact with the community, involving youth at a younger age, building mentorships and alliances with mentors, and having teens work at City hall.

Additional youth recommendations for the Downtown Specific Plan are:

- **Activities:** sports, parks, cultural events, games for kids, street festivals, art fair;
- **Affordability:** E 12th St./ tax corporations/ keep youth, students and families in mind regarding affordability;
- **Retail:** mall, cheaper cafes, affordable stores, multi-cultural food trucks & festivals;
- **Culture:** homeless assistance, less police/police violence, safety, cleanliness (particularly in parks around lake, and in public restrooms), people of all races, stop gentrification;
- **Engagement:** youth-led programs, youth on decision-making bodies that make substantial decisions, civil corps, mayor approval of youth, internships with the city and local business, take advantage of Warriors, famous Oaklanders;
- **Education/Career:** internships (paid), college prep, tutoring, businesses that employ youth, sex education, increase youth awareness of services, organizations and education;
- **Services:** tutoring, child care, legal services, services for young adults 18-26, medical care, dental care, youth support group, art center, safety patrol, 24-hour BART, drug rehab;
- **Amenities:** youth bike share, youth center and event space, free wifi, free busing, skate park, elderly centers, homeless shelters, exercise stations around the lake, community-based urban gardens, spaces that attract people of different ethnic groups, art centers, all-ages spaces like malls and movie theaters, better lighting, bike lanes, green space, parking, parklets, drinkable water;
- **Environment:** reduce pollution; encourage walking and public transportation; solar panels; more green; rooftop gardens.

See **Attachment G** for a compilation of notes from the youth engagement meetings.

6. Advisory Boards and Commissions Feedback

After the Plan Alternatives Report was released, Planning staff attended a series of public hearings, presenting the report to boards and commissions for their feedback. This section summarizes their feedback:

Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC), March 7, 2016

On March 7, 2016, staff presented the Plan Alternatives Report to the Public Art Advisory Committee. The PAAC Members felt that Oakland has many existing assets that are not well known or well-maintained (including the Michael Heiser sculpture near the estuary, John Yeager's Dandelion sculpture, and the Green Monster on Lake Merritt). Instead of asking every twenty years what can be done to make the city better, commissioners would prefer to see funds for cleaning, fixing, operating and otherwise maintaining existing art. They would also like to see the Arts Commission restored.

The PAAC Members would like to see a citywide art plan, and also a unified arts plan within the Downtown Specific Plan rather than planning for art in a piecemeal way, including a focused discussion around art. The arts plan should investigate cultural districts, and be integrated into the plan from the beginning (see Treasure Island as an example). Performing and living arts need to be addressed, not just visual art and tributes to the dead. This includes protections for performing arts, including drumming at Lake Merritt and Malonga Center.

PAAC Members also commented that the Art business is a critical issue; and that there isn't much of a market for art here (many pieces are collected by people in New York and Los Angeles), galleries are losing their affordable leases, and artists need buyers. The PAAC would like to see the City acknowledge the role of art in developing the economy and support the art business, as well as investing in existing diverse assets, such as the African-American Museum, to draw people from the region. Parking for arts purchasers and loading/unloading for performing arts is important.

In addition to creative sidewalk amenities and temporary installations, PAAC Members think that the City can do big, important, significant art here (see Chicago's Millennium Park as an example).

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC), March 9, 2016

On March 9, 2016, staff presented the Plan Alternatives Report to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. The PRAC Members would like to see a comprehensive vision (including a graphic) and argument (including the 4 acres per 1,000 residents standard) for parks and open space. They suggested additional amenities and features including dog parks, orchards, rooftop parks, gardens and beehives, amenities for disabled children, living walls, public restrooms, and using Chinatown's vibrant, successful parks as a model for the Black Arts Movement and Business District and other parks and cultural spaces.

However, the PRAC also addressed the ongoing challenge of park maintenance, and requested the Downtown Plan focus on maintenance and programming. Additionally, they recommended requiring developers to provide maintained, well-lit open space monitored by surrounding businesses that can be used for children to play, musicians to perform and collect tips, artists to sell handicrafts, and merchant association-provided programming. Some commissioners liked the idea of replacing I-980 with an at-grade boulevard, while others thought that it would create an environmental justice issue by displacing traffic to residential streets, and prefer a plan to cover it with a park (and take down I-880 instead). They requested more attention to designs for Howard Terminal without a ballpark.

PRAC Members are concerned that if we provide new parks, they will become tent cities for homeless, and would like the specific plan to address homelessness, build housing and activate park spaces with programming. PRAC also addressed concerns about the immediate problems of affordability for housing and nonprofits, including helping long-time residents keep their homes or return if displaced.

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB), March 14, 2016

On March 14, 2016, staff presented the Plan Alternatives Report to the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. The LPAB Members praised the report's focus on context-sensitive development, though suggested that the neo-traditional designs portrayed in the report illustrations show a disconnect with the modern and massive designs of the anticipated approved and proposed projects, and this might be starting point for discussion about design guidelines and high-quality detailing. LPAB Members and members of the public suggested that the planning team include additional historic and cultural resources, including historic assets below 12th Street.

Oakland Heritage Alliance representatives would like the plan to more clearly explain the mechanism for transfer of development rights (TDR), and feel that new buildings adjacent to Areas of Primary and Secondary Importance should not be taller than or dominate those buildings. One LPAB Member felt that adding multi-story buildings along Castro would reinforce the I-980 division between Downtown and West Oakland, and would like to see more attention to knitting those two districts together, even if I-980 is not replaced by a boulevard.

Much of the LPAB's feedback focused on supporting local businesses in the plan, including better supporting them through construction, investing in businesses in the Black Arts Movement Business District (BAMBD) along 14th Street rather than just putting up cultural markers, providing grants and a system for signage, and providing loans and business assistance that do not discriminate against certain businesses (as it currently discriminates against businesses such as adult, cannabis and tattoo businesses).

Bicyclist & Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC), March 17, 2016

On March 17, 2016, staff presented the Plan Alternatives Report to the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission. The BPAC Commissioners liked the focus in the alternatives on increased pedestrian space (particularly to support sidewalk cafes that otherwise take up pedestrian space), but would like to see more street amenities and transit-specific infrastructure, particularly dedicated lanes to separate buses and bicycles. They would like to see Broadway as the spine of Downtown highlighting alternative transportation models, particularly treating on-street parking as the lowest priority.

Other Commissioner ideas included addressing freight and loading issues with management and enforcement, developing bike-preferential signal timing, and providing kiss and ride areas at transit hubs (particularly for seniors who need door-to-door drop-off). Some Commissioners liked the idea of replacing I-980 with a boulevard, but suggested that the design as shown breaks up the linear open space so much as to make it unusable, and that the urban design team look at San Francisco's Panhandle as a good example of a boulevard that has enough open space to be useful.

A representative of ACCE Riders for Transit Justice attending the meeting and noted that their constituents are opposed to a streetcar Downtown due to its expense, lack of flexibility, and focus on Downtown instead of the larger community.

See **Attachment H** for a compilation of notes from the advisory boards and commissions meetings.

7. Online Forum & City Display

A virtual “town hall” was created on the *Speak Up Oakland* website to facilitate participation from anywhere, of any time of day. The online forum is available at: <http://speakupoakland.org/projects/plan-downtown-oakland>. Additionally, an informational display has been set up in the Planning and Building Department for members of the public to view the latest concepts and to fill out surveys to provide feedback.

Enhancements to the Existing Community Engagement Strategy

To broaden the public outreach for the Downtown Plan, and specifically to include historically marginalized communities, staff interviewed a series of social justice organizations, hired Streetwyze as a community-responsive, technology-based online platform, and is in the process of hiring a locally-based consultant with expertise in social justice policy development and community engagement. A description of each of these components is described below:

1. Social Justice Organizations Interviewed

Planning staff spoke with representatives from several social justice organizations, both local advocacy groups and regional or national think tanks, to get ideas for the content of the plan as well as how to reach out to involve a broad spectrum of the community. Organizations included:

- Alameda County Department of Public Health (Place Matters)
- Alliance of Citizens for Community Empowerment (ACCE)
- Insight Center for Community Economic Development, Gabriela Sandoval
- Oakland Director of Equity and Strategic Partnerships, Jose Corona
- Policy Link
- Qilombo
- UC Berkeley’s Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, Eli Moore
- Urban Strategies Council

Summary of Comments

Social justice organization representatives emphasized the importance of responding to the community’s needs and concerns with the plan, particularly regarding affordability and inclusivity, while also being clear about what a specific plan can and can’t do. They also suggested that the specific plan be tied to the existing work that the City is doing, such as ongoing housing and workforce development programs, the work of the Mayor’s Housing Cabinet and the development of the new Department of Race and Equity.

The activist groups that staff reached out to include ACCE, which focuses on housing, transit and worker justice, and Qilombo, which supports the community through shared meals, literature, office equipment, workspace, community building, and support in radical activism. Representatives of these groups expressed their concerns about gentrification, and while they appreciated being invited to participate in the plan, they expressed concern that the plan might not benefit all of Oakland, including East Oakland, and could push Black people farther to the margins of the Bay Area.

Health representatives were primarily concerned about maintaining affordability and housing habitability for single-room-occupancy residential hotels (SROs) Downtown. They have been working with other City staff to develop healthy development guidelines, and encouraged the planning team to integrate these into the Specific Plan. More policy-oriented organizations focused more on equitable economic and workforce development, including income

development, and on the importance of providing immediate responses to stem displacement and restore the displaced to their neighborhoods.

In terms of process, these stakeholders encouraged transparency and inclusiveness, including working intensively and one-on-one over time with community organizations (rather than just large workshops), working with the community to plan the process, and providing clear information about timelines, who will be making decisions, and how the community can be involved. This could include providing direct technical and research assistance to community stakeholders, as well as tailoring participation to different groups, particularly with the awareness that disadvantaged groups often require different approaches.

Many of these organizations gave recommendations for other projects/communities to study and additional contacts to speak with. Staff has been following up with these contacts, some of which are included here, and will continue to expand outreach to more social justice and equity advocacy organizations as the Downtown Specific Plan process continues and more are identified.

See **Attachment I** for a compilation of notes from the social justice organizations interviewed.

2. Streetwyze

The City has entered into a contract with *Streetwyze*, a mobile mapping app and engagement platform to focus on cultural asset mapping. By identifying and cataloguing these assets, the community and planning team can begin to ensure that Oakland's cultural values are guiding the recommendations and priorities in the plan. The *Streetwyze* platform will offer an online forum for community members to submit and vote on ideas, and upload photos, maps, and videos to demonstrate their experience with various places in Downtown. The tool will provide a technological method for gathering real time "experiential" data.

3. Equity Strategy

The City is in the process of selecting a consultant to develop an Equity Strategy for the Downtown Specific Plan (and other specific plans without an equity component as funds become available). The goal of this project is to weave social equity strategies into all areas of the Downtown Specific Plan: housing, employment, access to goods and services, and improved quality of life. This will take the form of a framework for short-term and long-term mechanisms that advance overall equitable development in the Downtown area. The selected consultant team will work with the community to address social equity and ensure that policies are developed that address the physical environment and economic conditions for all people, including those with the fewest resources, through the promotion of participatory engagement and positive social change.

The City is seeking a consultant team with a proven track record in community outreach and engagement and working with communities to address issues of race, ethnicity, income, housing, and employment/jobs creation, and social services; to build capacity for social change in lower income communities, communities of color, as well as underserved communities; and to develop prescriptions for changes in policy and practice that address disparities related to race, ethnicity and socioeconomics.

II. Affordable Housing and Community Benefits Strategy

Affordable housing is one of the top priorities of the community. Many longtime residents of Downtown can no longer afford it due to the rising rents. Planning staff have consistently heard that more housing is needed – both affordable and market-rate, as well as housing with a variety of unit

sizes and building types to accommodate families with a range of incomes. Expansion of the City's existing tenant protection laws and improved enforcement are also needed.

The Downtown currently includes over 2,100 subsidized housing units, representing about 21% of the city's stock of income-restricted housing. An affordable housing strategy will be developed for the Downtown Plan, which will involve consultation with local affordable housing developers.

In addition to affordable housing, community members have identified the need for ground floor art and cultural space, youth-serving facilities, day care centers and "maker" space, and historic preservation. Incentivizing such spaces by allowing taller height in exchange for such community benefits has also been discussed. These ideas will be explored in future phases of the planning process; future feasibility studies may be needed.

III. Social Equity

The median household income for the greater Downtown area (\$32,297) is significantly below Oakland as a whole (\$52,583), (which could be driven by the area's high share of one- and two-person households); 40% of households earn less than \$20,000 per year which has held relatively constant since 1990. In 2013, 16% of households earned more than \$100,000 per year, up from 6% in 1990.

In the greater Downtown area, the Black or African American population is declining and there is concern that other populations, such as the Asian community in Chinatown (which comprises the largest racial group in the greater Downtown), may suffer the same losses without appropriate action. Large income gaps exist by both demographic and neighborhood, as Oakland's poverty rate remains high while wealth grows.

In the current real estate market, where there is a lack of housing supply, the number of households seeking housing exceeds the number of units available. Households must therefore compete for scarce housing, driving up prices and rents. In addition to competition for scarce housing resources, conflicts have risen between new residents and existing, long-time residents with different cultural norms. Recent reports of harassment of Black drummers and Black gospel churches have spurred demonstrations, opposition to development projects, distrust in the planning process and intense debate about whether Oakland can retain its "soul" as it accommodates new development.

Youth, particularly youth of color, say they feel targeted by police and security ambassadors and unwelcome by local business owners. Many are unaware of the numerous youth-serving non-profits active in downtown, or do not have convenient access to these resources from other parts of Oakland, such as East Oakland.

As stated previously, the social equity component being integrated into this planning process is intended to review all recommendations for the plan through the lens of equity. This will result in policies that help ensure equitable outcomes in economic development, transportation, land use and cultural preservation. It will be based on a robust engagement strategy.

IV. Preservation of Arts and Culture

Resident organizations from the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, Black Culture Keepers, Art Murrur, 25th St. Area Galleries and Artists, and Oakland Creative Neighborhoods Coalition, plus numerous individual artists and additional arts-related organizations and institutions have participated in the planning process (summarized above under the "Existing Community Engagement Strategy", item "2. Arts Organizations"). In addition to enriching the cultural landscape of Oakland, many of these institutions serve youth and young adults, so they are actively cultivating the talents, interests and expanding opportunities for youth from throughout the region. While each organization

has its own unique needs and ideas, the resounding sentiment is that Oakland needs a cultural plan and that the Arts and Culture Commission needs to be reinstated (including supportive staff). Affordable workspace and living space is also of critical importance to artists.

The Mayor's Artist Housing and Workspace Task Force has developed promising recommendations and is working to implement them. The Downtown plan will incorporate these recommendations and investigate the establishment of additional arts and culture districts, as well as recommendations for linking these districts.

Members of the Chinatown Coalition have expressed concern over the absence of Chinese artistic or cultural practices being mentioned in the plan. Further, members report that ground floor gallery space would not necessarily meet the needs for traditional Chinese martial arts such as Tai Chi, for example.

V. Youth as Key Constituents & Valued Members of Society

The city values the contributions that youth add to planning processes, particularly in the Downtown where a network of non-profits that specialize in youth supportive services and social enterprises is nurturing Oakland's youth. From United Roots that work with youth to develop innovations in coding to Youth Radio who record the experience of youth in order to educate and groom future leaders, Downtown's historical role as a cradle for and national model of civic activism is thriving in these institutions. In terms of youth engagement, youth participants think that government needs to be persistent and engage them in actual projects (like murals and music, for example) rather than just asking them to contribute ideas. They recommended using the Warriors to interact with the community, facilitating paid internships in development and planning, and going to the schools to do workshops there instead of asking students to go somewhere else. They recommended youth programs that interact with the community, involving youth at a younger age, building mentorships and alliances with mentors, and having a teen work at City hall.

VI. Development Intensity

The Plan Alternatives Report contains conceptual ideas that vary in intensity and focus on improved physical form that better serves residents and accommodates projected population growth while preserving community character. The Lake Merritt Office District is proposed to accommodate the bulk of new high-rise towers. Additional areas for transformative new development include the I-980 corridor (conceptualized to be reverted to a multi-way boulevard), the Howard Terminal area, the area east of Broadway near City Center, the blocks adjacent to 7th Street in Old Oakland, and the blocks adjacent to 5th Street in the Jack London area as well as the area between Castro Street and M. L. King Jr. Way (in the Jack London area). The remaining proposed development planned throughout Downtown is conceptualized to be context-sensitive (e.g., slightly taller near major corridors such as Telegraph Ave. and lower in height near existing one- and two-story buildings) and similar in character to what exists now.

The majority of the Downtown north of I-880 is currently zoned Central Business District (CBD) and allows unlimited height closest to Broadway. Moving outward zoning height limits range from 275 to 55 feet, decreasing in height further from the center. Under these zoning regulations, high-rise development would continue to focus at the center of Downtown while allowing a high density of residential development throughout most of downtown.

South of I-880 the area is guided by the Estuary Policy Plan (an element of the General Plan adopted in 1999) and zoned commercial and industrial (last updated in the 1960s). No height limits are prescribed in many of these zones, with the exception of some limitation along edges shared with lower-intensity zones. Residential uses are not permitted in the industrial zones. Also, since land uses

at Howard Terminal are governed by State Tidelands Trust, it would require an act of the State of California legislature to allow residential uses to occur there.

Implementation of the proposed development alternatives would likely require some downzoning to achieve the context-sensitive, strategic growth approach. This alternative should be carefully balanced with the need to provide sorely needed housing and increasing Downtown's role as a regional employment center given its rich transit options. Further, if community benefits (such as ground floor cultural or youth-serving space) are to be achieved, setting height limits just below optimal and allowing additions to those limits in exchange for community benefits is one potential incentive for this type of mutually beneficial exchange.

VII. Regional Growth

Senate Bill (SB) 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, which was adopted in 2008, strengthened coordination between regional housing allocation and transportation planning. Under SB 375, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is required to incorporate a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) into the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) which is updated every four years. The SCS is intended to achieve greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions. To that end, regional housing allocation planning should be designed to achieve GHG emission reduction goals by developing efficient land-use strategies such as infill, mixed-use, and/or downtown revitalization strategies, promoting and incentivizing a variety of housing types affordable to the workforce and households with lower incomes, and addressing climate change by reducing vehicle miles traveled.

In an effort to meet overlapping objectives of SB 375 and General Plan Housing Element law, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) adopted "Plan Bay Area" with the following objectives:

- Increase supply, diversity and affordability of housing
- Promote infill development and more efficient land use patterns
- Promote intraregional relationship between jobs and housing
- Protect environmental resources
- Promote socioeconomic equity

The Plan Bay Area's strategy is to meet the region's housing need in Priority Development Areas (PDAs). PDAs are transit- and service-rich neighborhoods that offer a wide variety of housing options and amenities such as grocery stores, community centers, and restaurants. Oakland has identified eight areas of the City that fit this criteria, including the Downtown PDA. The One Bay Area Grant program (OBAG) operated by MTC will focus transit investment to jurisdictions that embrace infill housing and development planning. In 2013, Oakland received \$20 million in transit investment for five projects located in PDAs. The City's Housing Element policy goals are designed to align with Plan Bay Area's objectives.

Operating within the Plan Bay Area framework, ABAG prepares population, household, and employment projections for all Bay Area communities and specific subareas. ABAG has projected that a larger area encompassing Downtown, Broadway-Valdez, Lake Merritt/Chinatown, and a few blocks in West Oakland will gain approximately 12,309 households and 31,244 jobs between 2015 and 2040, which will need to be accommodated. As described above, grant funding for infrastructure improvements is closely tied to meeting these growth projections.

The development alternatives for the Downtown plan provide an estimated 12,641 to 16,487 new residential units (including 1,150 new units from the potential I-980 right-of-way conversion). The office space in the low estimate and high estimate alternatives would accommodate approximately

14,345 to 24,330 new jobs downtown by 2040. Thus, legislative mandates and regional growth assignments indicate that Downtown may be entering a period of transformative growth.

Equitable economic development is a core value of the city administration and requires incorporating a racial and geographic lens in the application of local economic development policies and to address access to new economic development opportunities for disadvantaged communities. Supporting existing residents by growing existing businesses and the creative economy (including preserving industrial “maker” work spaces downtown) are important to creating a plan that is for both existing and proposed residents (who may be more prepared for office-based occupations).

VIII. Transportation Policy

Conversion of Downtown’s existing one-way streets to the historic pattern of two-way streets is one of the top transportation improvement priorities in the plan and will help create a more pedestrian friendly downtown, improve access and reduce the amount of driving needed to get to desired destinations. Parking policy will be included the plan. Creating maximum parking requirements and mode-shift goals will help achieve many of the ideas in the plan. All streets are designed to be “complete streets”, where pedestrians, bicyclists and transit are prioritized, streets are slower and safer and contribute to place-making of a vibrant downtown. The number of car travel lanes could be reduced and additional bicycle, pedestrian and transit infrastructure could be added (such as a dedicated transit lane on Broadway). Select side streets such as 15th Street between Franklin Street and Webster Street, where monthly gatherings occur, could be re-designed as “shared streets” with decorative paving, planter boxes, seating and a uniform tree canopy creating a sense of enclosure.

IX. Broadway as the Spine that Connects Neighborhoods

Broadway, the “main street” of downtown Oakland, travels through the core of City Center. Improvements suggested for this historic street include the addition of transit-only lanes, bike infrastructure, street trees, lighting, and street furniture to help connect the Civic Center to Uptown and facilitate successful ground-floor commercial businesses.

Community feedback on the future of Broadway has included going further to demonstrate the future of Broadway as the connective tissue for all of the districts Downtown. Additionally, while many are interested in the idea of a streetcar, it has also been suggested that it may not be the most practical solution for several reasons. The discussion on the difficulties of a streetcar led to some other ideas for transportation, such as transit-only lanes or a shuttle/circulator that could be more effective at improving mobility and opportunity for development.

X. Industrial Land Uses

The plan area includes 1.6 million square feet of industrial space or “production, distribution, and repair” (PDR) and 390,000 square feet of flex space (which typically consists of a mix of office and PDR space depending on user needs) concentrated in the Jack London and the Koreatown/Northgate (KONO) areas. This represents a relatively small proportion of Oakland’s industrial space (estimated at 4.8%). Demand for PDR and flex space is strong, both within the plan area and Oakland generally, however, attainable rents are much lower relative to office and residential uses. Jack London’s industrial buildings are outdated for large traditional manufacturing and distribution operations, and are instead often targeted for office conversion, arts uses or leased to small-scale industrial users with unique needs. Many of KONO’s automobile-related warehouses are being repurposed for arts and retail uses.

Introduction of work-live uses has been discussed as a way to meet housing goals; however, concerns have been expressed about the possible dissolution of the industrial fabric of the area in which it is introduced (particularly in the Jack London area west of Broadway and in the historic 25th Street Garage District). The community has expressed concern about the over-saturation of ground floor

retail requirements and offered, as an alternative, the out-right permitting of some light-industrial activities. Designating ground floor “maker space” and redefining light industrial uses and recognizing the value of these activities not just by providing a diverse array of jobs, but by adding to place-making (through ground floor treatments that provide visitors a window into a production operation).

XI. Coordination with Ongoing Studies and Projects

Numerous studies are underway that have timelines and content that overlaps with the Downtown Specific Plan. The Downtown plan will coordinate with these parallel studies. The main projects include: the Mayor’s Housing Cabinet; Downtown Parking Supply Study; Complete Streets Study; Transportation Impact Review Streamlining; Pedestrian Master Plan Update; Broadway Transit Circulator Study; and the Freeway Access Project. A summary of each project and the coordination with the Downtown Plan is described below.

The recommendations included in the Mayor’s Housing Cabinet will be studied for inclusion in the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan Affordable Housing Strategy. Recommendations developed by the Downtown Parking Supply Study will be included in the Downtown Specific Plan and may be further refined. The Downtown Specific Plan is proposing complete streets components that are in line with the City’s separate Complete Street Study. The environmental impact report that will be prepared for the Downtown Plan (estimated to begin early next year) will utilize the revised transportation impact review procedures currently underway. The recommendations in the Downtown Specific Plan will be guided by the preliminary findings of the Pedestrian Master Plan Update, and will continue to inform the plan and may ultimately assist with prioritizing pedestrian improvements. The Downtown Plan is including the concept of a Broadway circulator, the study of which is underway. The Downtown Plan has also been closely working with the Freeway Access Project to ensure that the local street improvements are compatible with the Freeway Access Project and will continue to work closely together, and with the community on this project.

XII. Historic Preservation

The Downtown Plan area contains Oakland’s largest concentration of substantial and architecturally distinguished buildings, and therefore its highest concentration of historic resources. From the earliest city settlement at the foot of Broadway in the 1850s, the original town plat remained a compact and coherent geographical unit, surrounded by the Estuary, the future Lake Merritt, and the West Oakland marshes. The city expanded concentrically from the foot of Broadway but Broadway never lost its primacy as a business center. From the early 20th century, building codes inside the central business district “fire limits” required fireproof and therefore substantial and permanent construction, further insuring the survival of many building from that era.

Within the Downtown Plan area, there are several different types of historic districts, including National Register-listed (Downtown Oakland Historic District, Coit Building Group, Waterfront Warehouse District) as well as locally-designated historic districts (Old Oakland, Preservation Park) and districts identified by the Cultural Heritage Survey. The Survey identifies districts in a two-tiered system, Areas of Primary Importance (API), which are National Register-quality but not necessarily listed, and Areas of Secondary Importance (ASI) or districts of local interest. Additionally, downtown has over 50 designated landmarks.

Downtown is a mix of old and new, large-scale and smaller structures, office and housing uses and significant entertainment and retail enterprises. All of these uses occur in both historic and more modern structures, creating a diversity of building type and construction era that gives Downtown a character of its own. Previous preservation strategies, set forward in specific area plans, as well as the Historic Preservation Element of Oakland’s General Plan, provide a strong context for the continued use of preservation as an important planning tool to create places for everyone in Oakland.

The Downtown Specific Plan will consider relating the height, bulk, scale, and massing of new buildings to the important attributes of the existing city pattern. The plan will also consider strategies to protect Downtown's most significant view corridors, including views of Lake Merritt, the estuary and waterfront, the Oakland hills, historic and culturally significant buildings, and civic spaces. A Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program has been recommended to assist in the overall preservation efforts Downtown. TDR programs can be used to exchange additional heights in areas where appropriate, for retaining smaller-scale buildings. This can give owners an incentive to retain, reuse, and rehabilitate lower-scale, historic structures in Downtown. Additionally, investing in a rehabilitation program for owners of SRO hotels to encourage needed upgrades for safety, health and habitability in these facilities while continuing to provide an affordable housing option within Downtown. The program could include permit streamlining and fee reductions, as well as reduced parking requirements for these types of occupancies.

XIII. Environmental Sustainability

As described above, Senate Bill 375, established a new planning framework whereby regional transportation plans are required to achieve greenhouse gas reduction targets by developing efficient land-use strategies - such as infill, mixed-use, and/or downtown revitalization strategies, promoting and incentivizing a variety of housing types affordable to the workforce and households with lower incomes, and addressing climate change by reducing vehicle miles traveled.

The Plan Alternatives Report includes sustainability goals including adaptive reuse of existing buildings, focusing on density around transit hubs to reduce vehicle miles traveled, and initiating an ambitious street tree planting effort, coupled with drought-tolerant landscaping and permeable surfaces to shade pedestrians, improve mental health of urban residents, sequester carbon, reduce noise pollution, buffer pedestrians from cars and manage stormwater quality. Through the equity strategy under development for the project, steps will be taken to ensure that the community's most vulnerable residents are not disproportionately affected by adverse environmental impacts of development (lead paint, freeway emissions, location of industry, highways, etc.).

XIV. Open Space & Recreation

Over the course of the public participation process to date, staff has heard the community repeatedly express a desire to take better advantage of Downtown Oakland's existing amenities, such as Lake Merritt, Lake Merritt Channel, and the Estuary waterfront; maintain and activate existing parks and plazas; better provide parks that support families with children; and celebrate Oakland's unique cultural gifts with flexible outdoor performance, art and gathering spaces.

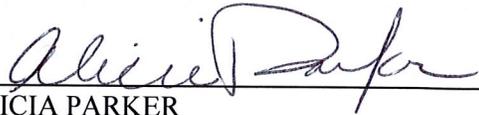
The Plan Alternatives Report presents possible scenarios to address these needs. The concepts are primarily addressed in two sections of the report, "Vision & Goals" and the "Illustrating the Vision." However, other areas of the Report present ideas that also further parks and recreation goals, including general public realm and public space improvements; urban canopy growth; sustainability through open space interventions; and safe, multi-modal connectivity between Downtown north of I-880, Lake Merritt, and the Estuary Waterfront.

Community feedback around open space and recreation have included improving connections between existing parks and open spaces, requiring new open spaces in development projects (privately maintained, but open to the public), concerns around homeless encampments (particularly at Jefferson Square Park), identifying dog parks and other areas where dogs will be welcome in the public realm, and programming parks to better serve youth.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Receive comments from interested citizens and provide comments on the Plan Alternatives Report.

Prepared by:



ALICIA PARKER
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Reviewed by:



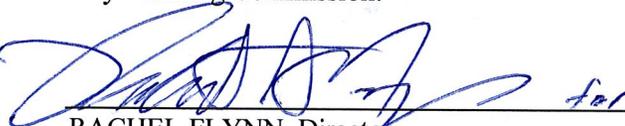
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Reviewed by:



Darin Ranelletti, Deputy Director
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Approved for forwarding to the
City Planning Commission:



RACHEL FLYNN, Director
Department of Planning and Building

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Plan Alternatives Report
- B. Summary of Plan Alternatives Report
- C. Neighborhood Groups Meeting Notes
- D. Arts Organizations Stakeholder Meeting Notes
- E. SPUR Meeting Notes
- F. Community Advisory Group Meeting Notes
- G. Youth Engagement Meeting Notes
- H. Advisory Boards and Commissions Meeting Notes
- I. Social Justice Organizations Meeting Notes

Attachments

All attachments are available on the project webpage at www.oaklandnet.com/plandowntownoakland under the “Meetings” section.

Direct links to each attachment are provided below.

Attachment A Plan Alternatives Report	http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak057388.pdf
Attachment B Summary of Plan Alternatives Report	http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak057905.pdf
Attachment C Neighborhood Groups Meeting Notes	http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak057906.pdf
Attachment D Arts Organizations Meeting Notes	http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak057907.pdf
Attachment E SPUR Meeting Notes	http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak057908.pdf
Attachment F Community Advisory Group Meeting Notes	http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak057909.pdf
Attachment G Youth Engagement Meeting Notes	http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak057910.pdf
Attachment H Advisory Boards and Commissions Meeting Notes	http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak057911.pdf
Attachment I Social Justice Organizations Meeting Notes	http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak057913.pdf