

Draft Vision and Goals for the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan

DRAFT VISION

The following draft vision for the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan updates the plan objectives based on input received at CSG and TAC meetings and the Community Workshop #1. New edits are shown in *italics*.

- *Create a more active, vibrant, and safe district to serve and attract residents, businesses, visitors, students, and tourists.*
- Provide for community development that is equitable, sustainable, and healthy.
- Increase use of non-automobile modes of transportation.
- Increase the housing supply *to accommodate a diverse community*, especially affordable housing and housing around the BART station.
- Increase jobs and improve access to jobs along the transit corridor.
- Provide services and retail options in the station area.
- Identify additional recreation and open space opportunities.

DRAFT GOALS

The following draft goals for the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan include all the major goals within the Nine Guiding Principles identified in the 2009 Community Engagement process, which have in some cases been condensed, or expanded to include additional community comments. In addition, three major goals that came out of additional community input have been added.

1. PUBLIC SAFETY

- Create safe public spaces by increasing foot traffic, improving lighting, and strengthening linkages.
- Promote safer streets with traffic calming, improved lighting, and improved sidewalks and intersections.
- Improve community police services.

2. JOBS

- Attract development of new office and business space.

- Increase the number of good jobs, including green jobs.
- Support the provision of job training opportunities.

3. HOUSING

- Accommodate and promote new rental and for sale housing within the project area for individuals and families of all sizes and all income levels (from extremely low to above moderate).
- Prevent involuntary displacement of residents due to loss of affordable and/or senior housing, or due to redevelopment activity.
- Promote healthful homes that are environmentally friendly and that incorporate green building methods.

4. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE

- Improve existing parks and recreation centers; and add new parks and recreation centers to serve increased housing and jobs.
- Ensure all parks are safe, accessible to all age groups, clean, well maintained, and provide public bathrooms and trash containers.
- Create a multi-use, multi-generational recreational facility, either in addition to or including a youth center.
- Provide space for community and cultural programs and activities, such as multi-use neighborhood parks, athletic fields, areas for cultural activities such as tai chi, community gardens, and expanded library programs for youth, families, and seniors.
- Work with the Oakland Unified School District to ensure adequate capacity of school and children's recreation facilities.

5. BUSINESS

- Strengthen and expand businesses in Chinatown, through City zoning, permits, marketing, redevelopment, infrastructure improvements, and other City tools.
- Attract and promote a variety of new businesses, including small businesses and start-ups, larger businesses that provide jobs, and businesses that serve the local community (such as grocery stores, farmers markets, restaurants, pharmacies, banks, and bookstores).
- Promote more businesses near the Lake Merritt BART Station to activate the streets and serve Chinatown, Laney College, and the Oakland Museum of California.

6. TRANSPORTATION

- Preserve and strengthen the neighborhood's access to public transit, walkability, and bicycle access.
- Expand modes of transportation serving the neighborhood.
- Ensure safety and compatibility of pedestrians, cyclists, and autos through improvements that calm traffic, improve sidewalks, and improve intersection crossings.
- Improve connections between existing assets and destinations, including between Chinatown, BART, and Laney College and between the BART Station and the Jack London District, including improving the I-880 undercrossings.
- Develop a parking strategy that allows access to the area, and particularly to local retail, while also promoting non-auto modes of transportation.

7. CULTURAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Ensure that public services and spaces proposed preserve and reflect the cultural history and aspects of Chinatown's historic geography.
- Highlight the historic resources in the planning area through signage, historic walks, and reuse of historic buildings.
- Preserve existing designated historic resources per all federal, State, and City regulations, and encourage restoration of designated historic structures that would achieve priority Chinatown and/or City goals.

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Ensure opportunities for effective community participation by all residents and organizations in the further development and implementation of the Plan.

9. HEALTH

- Establish the area as a healthier place to live and work, through a range of strategies including:
 - Improving environmental quality, including improving air quality as a public health measure.
 - Ensuring access to healthy food and housing.
 - Increasing health and medical services available to the community.
 - Cleaning up air, soil, and water contamination (including trash on the streets).
 - Reducing noise levels where permitted noise levels are exceeded.

- Providing clean and well maintained public outdoor places that provide public bathrooms and trash containers.

10. COMMUNITY AND TOURIST DESTINATION *(additional goal)*

- Establish a clear identity for the area as a tourist/cultural/and/or entertainment destination, building on exiting assets such as Chinatown, the Oakland Museum of California, Laney College, the Kaiser Convention Center, and Lake Merritt and the Lake Merritt Channel.
- Preserve, celebrate, and enhance the cultural resources of Chinatown, including but not limited to architecture, urban design, services, and businesses.
- Promote a more diverse mix of uses near the BART Station, such as cafes, restaurants, music venues, retail stores, etc, that activate the area as a lively and vibrant district.

11. REDEVELOPMENT OF KEY PUBLICLY OWNED BLOCKS NEAR BART *(additional goal)*

- Establish a long-term plan for redevelopment of the four publicly owned blocks, including the two BART blocks, the MTC/ABAG block, and Madison Square Park to meet identified plan goals, including accommodating improved open spaces, new housing development, more jobs, more retail, and improved BART access.

12. URBAN DESIGN *(additional goal)*

- Establish high quality, distinctive urban design standards and/or guidelines for new private development and public infrastructure, including building design, street design, and park design.
- Build on the existing urban fabric and further promote high density and mixed use building design.
- Promote green and sustainable design.
- Identify landmarks and gateways, and promote improvements at key locations such as gates, lights, public art, etc.