

Plan Downtown Charrette Stakeholder Meeting Notes October 19, 2015 to October 28, 2015

The Plan Downtown “charrette” (10-day long open studio and series of stakeholder meetings and community events) held from Oct. 19 to Oct. 28. was the beginning of the community involvement strategy for “Plan Downtown,” a Specific Plan being prepared for Downtown Oakland. The purpose of Specific Plan is to engage the community in developing a policy framework and identifying investment priorities to guide decision-making to create an equitable, vibrant and sustainable community over the next 25 years. Throughout the two-year planning process, the City and team of consultants lead by Dover Kohl & Partners will work with the community to link issues of social equity, environmental justice, affordable housing, arts, land use, transportation, economic development, and public spaces.

The charrette culminated in a series of draft concepts that will be further developed over the next several months. The following notes summarize the meetings held with various stakeholder groups during the charrette. The City and consultant team will use these notes to evaluate the draft proposals, as well as to identify issues needing further attention.

Visit the project webpage at www.oaklandnet.com/plandowntownoakland for project updates and additional information.

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City of Oakland Public Works Staff

Overview: this meeting was convened to provide the project managers representing the following ongoing City projects: Complete Streets Typology and General Plan Amendment; Car Share; Bike Share; Downtown Parking Study; Safe Routes to Transit (improvements to I-880 underpass) the opportunity to discuss the way these projects relate to the Downtown Specific Plan.

Main upshot: all of these plans are in progress, with varying timelines, so we will have to find a way to periodically check-in.

Possible data to share:

- car-to-go/shared mobility hub map
- GIS layer of parking meters

Big ideas:

- Dense bike share network
- Dedicated car sharing and car sharing parking
- Prioritize shared vehicle use like care share, van pool, shuttle
- Combine dedicated spaces for car share with bike share stations
- Taxi and shared vehicles stands?
- Improve bike/ped safety
- Prioritize pedestrians downtown
- Automatic pedestrian crossing signals
- Prioritize multi-modalism → across the plan area
- Prioritize accessibility and efficiency
- More PLACES FOR PEOPLE
- Complete and improve freeway access
- Reduce private parking requirements
- Remove meter parking for private vehicles in select areas/transit corridors
- Dynamic pricing parking? Dynamic parking hours and durations
- Need more demonstration projects
- Small interventions make a big difference
- Interim steps: regulate curb for TNC (transportation network company) loading/unloading
- Food trucks!
- Buslets/green stops
- Make “transit corridors” a real designation
- Private vehicle turning restrictions (see Market Street in SF, 2015)

Note: Downtown Parking Supply Study does not include parking demand

Plan Downtown Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

Data request: add publically vs. privately owned land to major project's list; need a map of city publically owned land plus other public owners and uses (parking lots, etc.)

General: Hotel development, downtown and uptown

Process:

- complete the plan on time (to provide developers with assurances and lower uncertainty)
- Chinatown: No posters in Chinese there advertising charrette?
- Chinese language posters...

Policy Issues

- How to operationalize policies to achieve affordable housing goals
- How to address homelessness in the Specific Plan
- Open space maintenance issue
- Address workforce training in Specific Plan
- Cultivate independent businesses in the Downtown
- Families: more schools/playgrounds in Downtown (not just a stream of singles who move out)
- Continuum of housing
- Need to address jobs – Downtown as an Employment Center
- Income crisis, not just housing crisis – need jobs AND housing, good paying jobs
- Opportunities matched with training
- “A city with good livelihoods”
- Job center: Strong transportation infrastructure—is it really being fully used?
- Range of employment choices: ensuring that we are maintaining the spaces where it can be accommodated, which means, don’t put an office building or a condo on every vacant lot. [e.g. no new housing west of B’way in Jack London District?]

Transportation/Circulation

- Greater transit capacity
- Underpass around 980- use Tacoma Washington as an example (Demo of Tacoma’s Pacific Avenue overpass)
- Consider the Key Routes System Map
- Broadway is a barrier and needs to transform into a unifying element
- 12th St. and 19th St. BART stations should accommodate bikes

Placemaking

- Need a 24 hour Downtown
- Sum of neighborhoods should be greater than individual neighborhoods
- Want a great street-level experience
- How to distinguish Downtown from other neighborhoods
- Consider gateways: airport, bridges, tunnel, BART stations, etc. beautification, lighting
- Carefully consider public spaces (art installations to attract visitors; murals, space for nonprofits)
- Maintenance of open space; beyond maintenance: programming (activating the public spaces we already have)
- Does lighting/parks district assessment need to be updated? Or impact fees? Or general fund investments (as revenue rises)?
- Broadway should be a key feature of the Specific Plan

- **B R O A D W A Y :**
...is the barrier between neighborhoods-- but it should become a unifying element—and Broadway is the place to show how downtown is different from other places in the city. Image of the city, gateway, and unifier

Zoning

- Allow manufacturing as a ground floor light industrial maker-space (the new manufacturing)
- Mixed use that goes beyond coarse categories; consider retail quotas to regulate the types of retail (restaurant/bar saturation)? hours?, need night time jobs
- Consider no residential west of Broadway in Jack London (live-work at most)
- Provide for enough upzoning to bring in enough value/revenue to provide for all the things people want
- Parking—can it be passed even faster than the specific plan, so podium bldgs can be avoided now, instead of 2 yrs from now

Post Specific Plan Adoption

- The Specific Plan should be a marketing mechanism
- Marketing the downtown and its amazing neighborhoods: tell story widely, draw customers to the independent retailers (see Oakland Central promo campaign)
- The Specific Plan should be continually updated
- Flexibility: Make it meaningful through many years of economic cycles and evolution

Affordable Housing Developers & Advocates

Plan Downtown must include bold strategies to address affordable housing.

Mayor's Cabinet

- Tasked with coming up with five tangible strategies by December:
 - Goal for number of units
 - Prevention
 - Inclusionary housing or impact fee
 - Construction
 - Conversion of blighted properties
 - Follows the Roadmap's guide: **protect, construct & convert**

Moderate-Income Housing

- Affordable homeownership
- Financing
- Another program to capture the higher/moderate-income people is in development

Density Bonus

- Density bonuses were tabled during Lake Merritt-Chinatown Plan because high-rise wasn't feasible at that point
- Density bonus proposals can take advantage not just of height, but setbacks and parking requirements

- Height bonuses, privately-owned public space bonus (like New York City)

Housing policy

- Housing policy has not been addressed in previous specific plans because the City intended to deal with the issue citywide, but has not done so yet
- In the absence of a citywide policy, will need to address it in the Downtown (unless the Mayor's Housing Cabinet develops a policy before the downtown specific plan)
- Not one answer, need a menu of tools

Opportunity Sites

- Public land – any viable sites?
- Port properties – all planned for

State law recently changed to require units remain affordable for 55 years (problem?)

Are at-risk affordable units an issue in the downtown? Ideas for Downtown Specific Plan

- Identify at-risk units: look at sites that were getting developer attention before the recession; these are areas developers are likely to target again now
- Consider how to apply strategies from the Housing Equity Roadmap to the Downtown (and specific neighborhoods) based on type of housing – high-rise vs. moderate density, etc.
- Consider how the Housing Cabinet's strategies would affect each neighborhood of Downtown
- Work with affordable housing developers to identify how the Cap and Trade scoring system impacts applications for financing
- Could use the Tax Credit scoring system/criteria overlaid with opportunity sites to develop strategies for infill development (need to collaborate with affordable housing developers for this info)
- Use tax credit analysis for Broadway-Valdez to designate areas for new infrastructure (grocery stores, transit, etc.)
- Target goal for requirement for affordable housing
- Agendize the discussion of an inclusionary fee for homeownership, an impact fee, and a menu of benefits for density bonus
- Incentivize 3+ bedrooms, since the market is not supplying them (can require a mix of sizes, as San Francisco and Emeryville do)

Construction Issues

- Construction Costs
 - Labor shortage raises costs: we need to train additional construction employees
 - Modular housing saves between 10 and 12 percent, there is time and interest savings, and the quality is a little better
 - Oakland's policies are backfiring; requiring 50% small and local business is too costly on top of paying prevailing wage
 - Note: Contract Compliance is willing to work with developers to make construction doable. EBHO is looking at this next month with a meeting of general contractors.

- Financial: the risk-adjusted returns are getting better outside of San Francisco and the Peninsula, but there's a 100 basis point difference between San Francisco and Oakland (the whole land price!)
- Lending: Need to incentivize lending. Having specific plans in place help (for example, the Broadway-Valdez SP), but they still have to meet their numbers, and rely on precedent.

Follow-Up

Additional Invitees (architects and contractors who work in affordable housing)

- Pyatok
- Michael Willis
- David Baker
- Fitzmaurice
- BVI
- Van Meter Williams

Additional Potential Participants (Christia Mulvey)

- Resources for Community Development
- Christian Church Homes
- We only have some of the shelter/foster youth/affordable SRO folks included, and that's one of the big areas where preservation/possible expansion is needed
- Susan Shelton in Community Housing Services
- Operation Dignity (Aztec Hotel on 8th Street, supportive housing to homeless vets)
- CL Dellums (operated by Alpha Project - So Cal based, but managed by the John Stewart Company)
- Dreamcatcher Youth Services (emergency shelter and support services for homeless and at-risk teens, expanding)
- First Place for Youth (life skills training and housing support to foster youth)

Statistic regarding rental unit decrease between 2011 and 2012

- Clarification: it's a 34% decrease in *advertised* rental units (from 2015 Housing Element, Table 3-29)

Small Businesses in Downtown Oakland

General Concerns

- Construction incites fear of losing business (during construction)
- Light fence at Lafayette Square for Christmas (to help promote local businesses negatively impacted by construction)
- Blight a huge problem in street comfort; can local muralists help?
- Is there additional money for façade improvements?
- garbage cans routinely stolen (need creative, artistic sidewalk garbage storage areas)
- improve sidewalk in front of shops

- Downtown BIDs cater to large scale property owners (partys, ambassadors, hanging flower planters, B shuttle)
- Permitting is hectic for new businesses—needs to be streamlined

Downtown as a Destination

- No guide for visitors (to local, independent businesses)
- What about changeable wayfinding signs “Fashion” “Music”
- Need to better message to Oakland neighborhoods to come downtown, then branch out to entire East Bay and beyond
- Need neighborhood maps/centers showing location of businesses that is regularly updated

Transportation/Circulation Changes to Support Small Businesses

- revert one-way streets to two-way
- No bus stops on Broadway

Events/Programming/Promotion

- Flyers (of local events, etc.) on the B Shuttle
- There is a lack of coordination in event planning
- Need programmed events throughout the month (First Friday isn't enough)
- Plaid Friday – better coordinate (parking enforcement, etc.)
- Oakland Central (need more coordination, better outreach)
- Retailers would like to compile a list of all retail stores downtown to enhance communication
- Streetscape improvements and signage are needed

Parking

- Need clear directions for parking and validating parking (esp for special events)
- Free parking for special events?
- Better communication b/w City and businesses for no meters on certain days and parking validation
- Need map of parking for local businesses to pass out to customers (Michael Ford?)

Placemaking

- Incentivize immediate interventions by providing grants for murals
- Activate Frank Ogawa Plaza and communicate with community

Investment in Small Businesses

- allocate [un-allocated] left-over redevelopment funds
- Re-program Art & Soul and spend the money to support local businesses
- More support from City to form Merchants Association

City of Oakland Economic Development Staff

General

- Coordinate with Mayor's Arts Task Force
- City processes for special events are arduous, unclear, overly bureaucratic

Example Programs/Initiatives

- Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST) <http://cast-sf.org>, acquisition of space
- Model for community engagement: Dudley Street, Dorchester, MA <http://www.dsni.org> (ambassador programs, etc.)
- Art Arc San Jose example of artist live/work with public rotating art installations in Downtown San Jose

Key Assets in Downtown (Assisting with Employment Development)

- BRT
- Stride <http://www.stridecenter.org> technical instruction to adults for career pathways
- Private Industry Council <http://oaklandpic.org> links employers with job seekers
- Girls Inc. <http://www.girlsinc-alameda.org> academic enrichment, counseling for girls
- Youth Radio <https://youthradio.org> media organization providing training and education
- Hack the Hood <http://www.hackthehood.org/what-we-do.html> empowers the next generation of tech innovators
- Yes We Code <http://www.yeswecode.org> national initiative to teach low-income youth to program computers
- Youth Hub <http://youthhuboakland.net/about-us/> connecting youth and business to create an equitable future
- Youth Seed <https://www.bayareayouthseed.org> supports the development of community led social enterprises by providing training, resources and investment to young innovators
- Incubator/shared NGO spaces: Greenline Institute, Kapor Center, HUB, EBALDC, Moving Strategies Center

Big Ideas

- Youth Empowerment Zone (internships/mentorships)
- Need a policy to keep youth actively coming downtown (even if they live far away)
- Support local industry Arts, manufacturing (contemporary), and retail
- and boutique retail
- Need to add programs downtown for youth that are also coupled with housing/arts housing (1/3 artist housing?)
- Also need more affordable buildings/office space; co-working space
- Pop-up grocery stores?
- 14th Street Arts District; Museum as anchor for 14th St. Arts District; Arts District would strengthen connection to the lake
- Need affordable housing but *also* equitable jobs; this will encourage economic development mobility

BART Staff / AC Transit Staff

General

- Traffic signals out of date
- Adjust traffic signals for flow
- Should not have pedestrian crossing signals Downtown
- Improved access to BART stations; see Downtown as a job center
- Strengthen connections: capitol corridor and ferry

- Coordinate with MTC Core Capacity Study
- Density within ¼ mile of BART and transit stops

Transit Priority

- Telegraph Ave. as priority for rail (Macarthur Blvd. too)
- Transit priority: Broadway (11th St. to 14th St. is choke point); remove parking on Broadway
- Lafayette bus layover and 20th St. transit center (important to AC Transit)
- Transit priority – operationalized (map: classification of priority: Broadway, 20th St., 11th St., 12th St.)
- Affordable commerce spaces

Downtown as Employment Center

- large footprints for employment?
- Impediments to jobs:
 - need inventory to attract employers, create nodes/density to house employees; what about small footprint sizes and businesses
 - Must address the capacity of trains
 - image as unsafe, cleanliness (make core Downtown beautiful: lighting improvements, street tree maintenance, address safety to encourage people to walk)

Parking

- Support eliminating minimum parking requirements (Berkeley, MTC Study of Parking Policy)
- Unbundling causes developers to be taxed higher on parking fee
- unbundling parking – projects happening (Broadway Valdez?)
- onstreet parking not well managed; charge more (pricing) closest to Downtown; address handicap turnover; look at Redwood City Parking Management
- Review policies included in previous plans (Lake Merritt Station Area Plan and Broadway Valdez Specific Plan) and how they're being used (e.g., unbundling)
- Better signage toward parking garages

Commercial Real Estate Developers

General:

- Want as much height and density as possible
- Endorse B Shuttle; need more of this
- Need publicity for the good stuff happening in Oakland (so when investors from outside the Bay Area review loans, they have confidence in Oakland and can overlook bad press)
- Need more policy for affordable commerce
- In the past has been difficult to construct office—that is changing

Affordable Housing

- City to continue coordinating with activists for affordable housing
- Is often more difficult to construct in Oakland
- Construction/labor costs are the same as other areas in the region
- Have to meet specific requirements to get financing for affordable

Underutilized “Vintage” Buildings:

- life safety upgrades (some make sense functionally; stairs, fire sprinklers, fire alarm systems)
- utility company hook ups expensive (need transformer for electricity – underground in public right-of-way)
- 1740 Telegraph Ave. 7,500 sq. ft. (typical size for this type of building)
- renting rooms and installing make-shift kitchens (used for residential)
- “B” and “C” office space mostly, small floor plate (e.g., 1904 Franklin St.)
- If all vintage buildings in Downtown were developed, wouldn't change ability to provide jobs; need one large office building and it would go farther.

Market Factors:

- Let market forces guide development
- Timing is crucial when investing in real estate development
- Existing entitled larger projects starting to see investor interest
- Loans for restaurants starting to change since there is saturation Downtown

Challenges to bigger investors:

- bigger checks want bigger development (rather than multiple smaller projects, as when rehabing old buildings)
- retrofit considered bigger risk

Market-Rate Real Estate Developers (residential & commercial)

Office Space Concerns

- When there is housing pressure without a hot market for office, there is no room for job growth if all of the parcels are going for housing
- Berkeley has this problem – all of the office space has been taken up by housing
- Putting all development in high-rise is unrealistic
- Need to prioritize office near BART; the geography of area walkable to BART is very small
 - At the same time, we have a lot of surface parking lots and low density near BART. Residential will help bring in the bars and restaurants that will draw office tenants; encourage mid-rise housing now to draw office during the next cycle. [Note: Catherine Payne thinks bringing in bars and restaurants will draw office tenants, which then draws residential.]
- Need a critical mass of office (Uber will help); office is easier to concentrate around other office, since there are retail amenities to support the employees.
 - Don't tax retail on the street floor; pay for tenant improvements or subsidized (good quality) retail
- New construction office is really not worth it to a developer; spec office isn't even going up in San Francisco (it's all committed); City would need to provide incentives and earmark office sites to get office construction
- Office wants large floorplates and proximity to BART

- Oakland infill lots work for residential (10,000sf is even hard to make pencil as residential), but are too narrow to be profitable to produce office; office developers would rather build a lower, broader building (more salable space; less devoted to elevator/egress)
- No one is going to build high-rise; it's cost-prohibitive.
- Oakland needs to build *good* tall buildings at the scale of Mission Bay (it's what people want, and what developers want to build)

Fees

- City needs to balance fees; recognize the need for services, but don't tamp down nascent development
- Capital will go elsewhere if you tax it; fees will knock off the marginal projects and drive up occupancy costs
- Emeryville and Berkeley have high requirements, but three projects were abandoned in Emeryville; no one is building (people also seem to *want* to stop production there)
- In Berkeley, everyone is requesting a density bonus and putting the units on site because they can't afford the fee
- Any housing takes the pressure off the existing housing stock
- If you're worried about developing land near BART, charge fees for low-density; tax the outcome you *don't* want to see (not uniform taxes/fees)
- Any fee on office will end development.
 - No, the market takes care of it for high-rise. You need to be open to mid-rise. See the San Francisco Transbay terminal (their fees go up with taller buildings)
- People who are holding on to land will never sell until it reaches the figure they're looking for. You could accelerate them selling. (By instituting fee? Land costs?)
- Worst thing would be to make the fees retroactive. You need to give people time to react; it takes people a while in Oakland to move.
- Phase the fees, and trigger based on entitlement applications and set timeframes (see San Jose, which gave developers 18 months to get entitled, but had to have their certificate of occupancy by 2020 to avoid the fee)
- Give developers options for a fee as well as providing units on site; a set amount of money is easiest to predict
- Open space requirements mostly lead to roof decks; would like to send more money/in-lieu fees to building collective pocket parks or maintaining existing parks

Investment

- Oakland is still risky; you need to deliver a higher cap rate to make it worth the risk (1/2 point on residential, 1 point on office)
- Capital doesn't believe Oakland's story; Uber is better, but not enough. If all the existing development is built and Oakland gets a few more anchor tenants, capital will be more willing to invest.
- Specific Plans/PDA's seriously help

Zoning

- Current zoning was written in 2009 and hasn't yet been tested

Parking

- Specific plan should help with the management of the existing abundant parking
- Mission Bay put in too much parking, and doesn't have a lively street life
- The challenge for reduced parking is convincing the equity partner that the parking is adequate
- Downtown needs a 24-hour garage

Housing

- You can't build affordable housing in a high-rise; you have to charge more for the market-rate to subsidize the low-income, and you end up with only the very rich and very poor

Hotels

- The City cannot get a hotel in the current economy without a massive subsidy and public/private partnership.

The market can only deliver Type 3 hotel; a high-rise won't fit [at Parcel 4?] and isn't needed (consider Paris, which is 5-6 stories)

Historic Preservation

General

- It's really about preservation
- Adaptive re-use key in downtown
- Implementation strategy (within a certain time--)
- Produce Market—prime for TDR
- Contribute to structural integrity—in policy
- View corridors: from 880, from across the lake, 980 to downtown (Tribune tower, old Bank of America building), downtown from West Oakland
- Modernize the market? (refer to studies)

Historic Districts

- Add on to downtown historic district?
- Often the historic district plan is given more priority than the building
- Tax credits from district – very little used

Concerns

- King Block endangered
- SROs are under attack
- No incentive to keep up historic
- Need to have height where you want it—lake edge not place for height
- FAR has preserved the produce market
- Overlap between historic buildings and affordable housing (residents)
- Attacks on historic buildings on Broadway/displacement
- Example where – vegetarian soul food building)

- Travelers hotel
- 3 blocks out from 14th and Broadway—house a lot of people
- Good example: Madison Park Apartments (across from BART headquarters)
- “Natural affordable housing”

Historic Character-Defining Features

- Historic sidewalk lights
- Plain concrete sidewalks? Brick? Like Old Oakland (has granite)
- Metal ground into the asphalt?
- West waterfront—lack of street improvements (but lack of sidewalks is sometimes a part of the character)
- Sand and pebbles rather than tree grates
- Need to better maintain trees
- Can be coordinated? With OUFF
- Broadway from the water to 4th street – untouched

County Arterial & County Transit

- County-wide Complete Streets Study can be coordinated with Specific Plan
- Downtown a place for complete streets
- Complete streets in downtown include transit priority streets and ped/bike priority streets
- The two plans can work together
- Transit priority streets include Broadway, 20th, 17th ...

Transportation Projects In and Around Downtown

Overview: this meeting was convened to provide the project managers of each project listed below the opportunity to discuss the way these projects fit together and how they relate to the Downtown Specific Plan.

Downtown Oakland Comprehensive Circulation Study

Project Manager. Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC)
Evaluate feasibility of key priority transportation/circulation projects identified as part of Plan Downtown
www.oaklandnet.com/downtowncirculationstudy

Freeway Access Project

Project Manager. Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC)
Using the circulation framework developed in Plan Downtown, create alternatives for addressing I-880 freeway access in Downtown
<http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/report/oak051201.pdf>

Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Core Capacity Study

Project Manager. MTC
Evaluating BART capacity (and possible second tube to San Francisco); Prioritizing long-mid-near term; Second tube—getting attention; also, looking at running more buses over

Capital Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA)

the bridge

http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/core_capacity/

Project Manager: CCJPA

Evaluation of railroad at Embarcadero; goal: Oakland has connection to waterfront; Still testing options—very high-level

<http://www.capitolcorridor.org>

Reconnect Oakland

Project Manager: Van Meter Williams Pollack Architects

Community initiative to remove I-980

<http://www.connectoakland.org/>

General

- Specific Plan sets the broader vision
- Mayor's priority: immediate improvements: pilot cycle track, parklets
- lack surface transit (inter-county)
- no level boarding (BRT will be level boarding)
- MTC Core Capacity – mid 2016 prioritized improvements for SF & East Bay corridors; outreach with Plan Bay Area Spring 2016 (tube white paper?)
- Multi-modal Arterial Plan:
 - How new county model supports all modes
 - A framework plan
 - Complete Streets Framework for major arterials in the county
 - High-level
- Resilience—redo cap improvements in terms of resilience
 - If there was a major shock
 - Dedicated transit lanes during emergencies (bus vs bike)...Broadway should be bus only after shock

Factors to Consider When Scenario Testing

- Transit speed reliability
- Broadway/11th St./12th St. - important transit connections to East Oakland
- Concentrate 2-way conversion first on one-way streets with less transit priority
- Surface transit access/interface with urban environment operation perspective
- AC Transit's Major Corridors Study – capital improvements on larger streets

Big Ideas

- Equity in improved connections
- Separated bike network
- Specific Plan should consider design concepts for Grand Ave. because it is an important future street (hosts trans-bay bus) all day trans-bay and local and regional service (Alameda CTC Grand Ave. concept)
- Signage/Parking Benefit District (better manage parking)

Considerations for Scale of Infrastructure Projects Included in Specific Plan

- Creative small things to create more pleasant streets; build a better block
- Deliverable given Oakland staff and funding

Overall Coordination of Projects

- Establish a “Base Camp” site to share deliverables
- Possibly consider a bi-monthly or quarterly meeting

Museum and Hood Design

Overview: Walter Hood of Hood Design is working on conceptual plans for the Oakland Museum garden and grounds redesign

- Fire Alarm building as key site
- Grant for Lake Merritt cultural district (managed by Oakland Museum): stage 1: community outreach, define cultural district; stage 2: call for proposals from artists; stage 3: funding plan
- Lake Merritt, Lakeside Dr., Snow Park – intersections with the museum
- Identify ways to link together the civic buildings, museum, library and Kaiser Auditorium
- Hood design approach: imagability, memorability, as opposed to focusing on street connections
- Capacity for every public space in Oakland
- Would be ideal to straighten 11th St. and 12th St. (to have a large plaza in front of Kaiser Auditorium, as opposed to at the lake (current configuration))
- Museum as programmatic and architectural anchor
- Consider cultural district as interdisciplinary: environment, nature, architecture, cultural organizations together are meaningful “art”

City Council District 3

Consider setting up an informational kiosk (at City Hall or off site) to continue community engagement

Targeted outreach to:

- Hoover Rack Resident Advisory Council
- Oak Center Neighborhood Meeting
- American Steel, Attitudinal Lean(?)
- Senior housing developments in Gold Coast
- PTA meetings
- West Oakland Educators Round Table
- NCPC
- 14th Street as African American Cultural District Leadership Group
- Robert Wilkins, SPUR Board
- County Public Health Department Place Matters

- EBALDC – public health
- Policy Link
- Urban Strategies
- Regina Jackson, EOYDC
- Youth Radio
- City of Oakland Youth Commission

Need recreation/entertainment for youth; activate open space

- Examples: St. Paul's Middle School use of Lake Merritt; Oakland School for the Arts uses Frank Ogawa Plaza for PE
- Webster green – space for families
- Space near Plank

Open Space

- Show open spaces in visuals, playgrounds
- Snow Park – plan for improvements approved by PRAC (follow up with OPR?)
- Consider senior programming in parks

Big Ideas

- Incentivize jobs
- 400 block of 14th St. should be like Bourbon St. in New Orleans or Miami South Beach
- 980 removal – see Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Parkway

Plan Downtown Community Stakeholder Group (CSG)

General

- Need a better script for quickly and succinctly talking about the Downtown Specific Plan including a timeline, parameters, where people can go to get information and how they can give feedback. A poster that explains the process and what a Specific Plan is would be good.
- There are no tangible ideas for people to react to, just word clouds promoting equity, etc.
- Information should be presented visually.
- How is feedback being recorded?
- Would like the City officials to be involved in the planning process and hear directly from the people (i.e. attend the public meetings); Need officials to give assurance that community stakeholders matter.
- Oakland has a history of trauma; you have to acknowledge the past as part of the conversation or it will continue coming back
- Direct responses are necessary. Need response. Utilize people that have experience.

Outreach

- Give expectations/perspective of community meetings ahead of time.
- Consider the space (of community meetings) if asking people to trust the process.
- Need wide representation from long-time residents, business owners, students
- There is involvement fatigue from dozens of planning efforts over the years

- Have to reach out specifically about specific issues; big ideas have nothing tangible for people to comment on
- There are people in the community who specialize in marketing and outreach; take advantage of them and have them do the outreach

Outreach Materials

- Overall point: People are confused, and the current outreach materials don't explain what a charrette is, what a specific plan is, what's going to happen at any of the events, etc.
- Create a set of talking points and answers; these can be forwarded to networks
- Develop simple poster graphically illustrating the process with a one-sentence explanation of what the specific plan (and charrette) is
- City web pages are hard to navigate – it needs to be edited, and people need easy to understand highlights/bullet points
- Send a mailer to everyone

Preliminary Plan Ideas

- It looks like someone not from Oakland is looking at what the neighborhood looks like
- Couldn't read maps at the hands-on workshop and didn't understand what they were trying to show
- Participants need to know which areas they can and cannot influence through the plan (including seeing a list of already permitted development projects)
- Proposals should be given with context.
- Street names on all diagrams.
- More community interest in 17th St.
- Lack of parking is an issue for Malonga Casquelord Center for the Arts (dance classes, performances, units)
- If we go with a cycle track approach, who will enforce rule following?
- Define the daytime downtown and the nighttime downtown.
- Consider adding brief statements to graphics that describe big ideas and trade-offs

Artists, Gallery Owners, Cultural Leaders, Performance Venues, Music Institutions

General Comments

- How does the plan address cultural equity? What does equity look like in Oakland? The plan needs to address cultural equity
- Need accountability for cultural equity
- How will the Oakland community's needs and desires be reflected in the Plan? What is the City's intention around process and final Plan? How do people get in the room? Invest in intentional arts and true diversity, parity and cultural equity. Who does the City intend to invest in? How do we operationalize intention?
- Must have a succinct policy for arts in the Specific Plan

- Oakland’s artists create excitement and attract development, and need to be valued for this
- Arts needs to be treated as an industry in the same way that tech does (1 in 8 jobs in California is in the creative economy, according to the California Arts Council)
- Support youth pathways to arts industry jobs
- We need to think about how to take the money coming into the city and use it to support existing groups and innovation

Study other cities

- Sacramento has a city-subsidized 15-block area with free studio spaces and low-income artist housing
- Baltimore
- Brooklyn Naval Yard

Information – more needs to be made public

- List of all arts organizations
- List of all City-owned and private properties with space for arts & performance
- Information about City grants and programs – concern is that now only established, large, monied organizations are informed enough to take advantage of them
-

Critical need for performance space

- Small and mid-sized, affordable spaces (affordable to resident companies)
- Flexible and accessible seating (with space for 20-30 wheelchairs)

Existing spaces

- Laney College is not very available
- Paramount is unaffordable
- Calvin Simmons Center is good, but not enough space, and needs to be restored
- Malonga Casquelourde Center is not well-maintained
- African-American Museum is underutilized; needs more support and engagement
- Why not restore underutilized institutions—Malonga can anchor the Arts with Calvin Simmons (BOTH to be restored)

Arts District

- Could anchor arts district around Malonga Center and Joyce Gordon Gallery
- 15th Street also has a lot of arts
- Designate an African American Cultural District along 14th St
- Concern about dedicating “the” arts district; consider designating an arts zone all over Oakland, like the Enterprise Zone
- Participants would like to know more about the definition and benefits of an arts district (the policy is new and the State is still developing this)

Affordability & Displacement

- How can we use new development to demonstrate our commitment to affordable housing?

- Hotel tax as possible source of funding for arts
- Artists feel like they are being exploited as place-holders to attract development that will then displace them
- Participants expressed that they feel that people are trying to come and take over the city
- Need protection from displacement for small spaces
- Recommendations:
 - Land trusts
 - Housing under life estate
 - Rent control

Arts Commission

- Was dissolved under Ron Dellums
- Need an arts commission and staff to get federal funding and other grants for arts
- Concern that arts is under economic development
- Council members Lynette McElhaney and Abel Guillen are trying to put one together
- Need a fully staffed arts department to keep arts from being secondary, to be able to apply for grant funding, and to be able to take stalled projects, such as the cultural plan, further
- Lack of coordination for funding for the arts

Tracking and Data

- Track statistics about who applies and receives funding to ensure equity (used to be done)
- City staff clarified that it became illegal to ask on the City's application, and the responses to the question when it is optional skew the data
- Create a list (and map) of existing arts communities and cultural institutions as a baseline to track retention and growth
- Create a list of funding streams for Arts

Outreach

- The process needs to reach out to organizations and cultural leaders that have already been doing work
- Some felt that 11:30am was not a good time for a meeting, others thought that evenings were bad – suggested switching between times (early morning and right after work are potentially good for some)
- Some of the people not in the room are the people who are not there because they have been priced out.
- Members offered to take on the outreach for the process, since they are more connected to the arts scene than the City
- Give out an agenda ahead of time so people can come prepared with information

History

- Speakers did not feel represented in the planning processes of the City in general (an example given was the Broadway-Valdez Plan; the Art Murrmur representative was not asked to participate, and they represent 47 different businesses)

- One participant stated they don't trust City planners because they don't believe there is an affordable housing crisis. Participants want to see a sense of urgency among City staff.
- One participant grew up in the former cultural and economic district of West 7th, and saw it re-developed; artists don't want arts and culture to be wiped out again.

1 Percent for the Arts Program

- Participants expressed concern that:
 - The money is only for visual art around buildings
 - The art can be inside buildings, and then isn't accessible to the public
 - Commissions are not limited to Oakland artists
 - Developers control what art goes on their properties and will treat it as decoration to raise their property values ("art is not necessarily decoration")
 - Need community oversight over what happens with the in-lieu fees
- City staff clarified that the impact fees on new residential development currently being studied would go for affordable housing, transportation and capital facilities to reflect the impacts of the development

Transient Occupancy (Hotel) Tax

- City clarified how the hotel tax supports art:

Zoning and Hearings

- Stakeholders were angered by the zoning changes presented at last week's meeting – document was 617 pages long, some changes were brought at the last minute, there wasn't enough time for review, and zoning changes appeared to be in response to a developer rather than consistent with the zoning that residents have spent years negotiating and agreeing upon
- Only property owners are notified about public hearings – occupants also need notification
- custom manufacturing / industrial fabrication as viable ground floor retail (need to permit this in zoning)

Brooklyn Basin

- Needs to be international and iconic
- Some conversation about the requirement that for affordable housing to come in, there have to be parks first? There is a public art review process to review the art there.

Oakland Unified School District

General

- OUSD provides authorization for charter schools
- Safe Routes to Schools as a good program
- Changes to academy programs at OUSD

Outreach

- Tips for engaging youth and parents - All City Council, PTAs

- West Oakland Outreach
 - Jamoke Hiden Hodge – community engagement
 - Myclymonds Alumni Assoc.
- Chinatown – Lincoln Elementary – Amiee Eng
- North Oakland – Oakland Tech – PTA
- East Lake
 - La Esculita
 - MetWest
- Envision Oakland – talk to principal

Data Needs

- Need audit for every single school; use it to establish a database with different recommendations for different areas
- OUSD would like projections for population and housing and to develop policies for families; how many schools should we be planning for 5, 10, and 30 years

OUSD Faculty Issues

- Affordable housing for teachers
 - SF and OUSD school agreement housing bond (ask Tomeka Moss who to talk to in Mayor Ed Lee's office as an **example for addressing housing**)
- Teacher retention/recruitment difficulties

OUSD Facilities Projects:

- Central kitchen and urban farm at 27th St. and West St.
- Rebuild the administration building

Big Ideas:

- Strengthen relationships between schools and downtown; downtown kids to outlying schools
 - There are recreational opportunities located in downtown (e.g., rock climbing gym and the ice arena and MOCA) and some schools outside of downtown use them; how can we get more schools to use them? Must address access (bus; Alameda County Transportation Commission evaluating a free transit bus; other options: circulator bus or afterschool bus). **See St. Paul Minnesota Circulator Program** (<http://wsco.org/?p=849>) as an **example of youth transit option**.
 - See education partnership committee (led by Councilmember Gallo and Campbell-Washington)
- Greater partnerships between City Parks and Recreation Dept. and Oakland Housing Authority to address issues of housing and park programming
- Measure N career pathways programs passed by voters in 2014 (<http://www.ousd.org/Page/12995>); how can businesses create internships?
- Need seasonal activities downtown

Additional information provided in follow up email:

- housing for teacher and other school district employees, including San Francisco.

<https://www.cabinetreport.com/facilities/joint-development-plan-would-bring-housing-for-school-staff>

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/To-attract-teachers-school-districts-get-into-6591925.php>

Here is more information on our college and career pathways for high school students, including a map of where programs are located currently:

<http://publicportal.ousd.k12.ca.us/Page/9546>

And, if you are interested in the attendance area boundaries of schools in the Plan area, you can consult our school finder and attendance area maps at:

<http://publicportal.ousd.k12.ca.us/Page/332>

Jack London District Stakeholders Group

General: Estuary Policy Plan will be considered, but it may be amended

District Character

- Consider West Oakland uniqueness and Jack London District: confluence of many uses and the priority should be to continue to have and support a broad mix of uses (including uses that may have impacts such as noise from recording studios)
- Adaptive reuse should be pursued
- Want to keep ground floor character of Produce Market (wide covered sidewalks, large warehouse buildings (and big building entrances), zero setbacks, etc.) and build higher above. Existing users of the Produce Market are looking for more modern facilities
- Existing mixture of building stock; historic buildings
- Need adequate buffer to surrounding industrial uses and routes for industrial uses
- Washington St. is better pedestrian entrance to the district (instead of Broadway)
- Question about whether the scale of development should reflect existing fabric. Don't copy old design, but reference character, for example in choice of building materials: brick, metal, etc.
- High rises on freeway block views of water
- Study views of water and hills from streets and freeway
- Good examples of new development (Metrovation/Ironworks)
- Some people think height is okay if done properly (example of good urban development on waterfront from Vancouver)

Transportation

- Review truck zones
- Proposal for 3rd St. as pedestrian street; is this in conflict with this street as a truck route?
- Interface between truck traffic and other uses
- Schnitzer Steel uses Martin Luther King Jr. Way for truck traffic

Howard Terminal

- Have to address State Tides Lands

- Proposal for activation of Howard Terminal (ball park or other development) need to consider how to get people across the rail road tracks on Embarcadero.
 - Railroad volume will increase safety and access issues
- Some people don't like the idea of a ball park at Howard Terminal
- Need to show different concepts and indentify goals generally for site (access, character, financing, etc.)
- Park space at Howard Terminal
 - Probably need development to pay for maintenance and purchase of open space

Zoning Suggestions

- Recommend that in the area of Broadway, west of Brush (maybe housing okay as far as Jefferson St.), no residential should be permitted; it should be permitted to remain "gritty," work live would be okay.
- Need to be careful about regulations (consider impacts from brewing, etc. when permitting housing)

Need to Address Undercrossings of I-880

- Make inviting, attractive, safe
- Will need to exert pressure on Caltrans
- Jack London BID talking to Caltrans about doing a project in lieu of paying property assessment
- Better street design on Broadway will help undercrossing

City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Department Staff

Considerations for Existing Draft Plan Downtown Conceptual Designs

- Must consider the existing long-time uses surrounding the locations for future shared streets and plazas
- Need to address homelessness (and significantly boost mental health services) when planning for new/modified public spaces
- City's Human Services, Parks & Rec and Maintenance divisions need to meet to discuss open space issues
- May need to re-think fountains as focal points for public plazas (drought)

Big Ideas

- Consider roof top open space and gardens (dog facilities in private buildings)
- Focus on connecting Lake Merritt to estuary and Jack London to downtown (green spaces as connections)
- Cash and Carry site (near Jack London Aquatic Center) as potential opportunity site (outdoor theatre, such as Levitts Pavilion)
- Add skate parks to central areas of Downtown (possibly Jefferson Park as skate park (on 7th St. near freeway; example of similarly located park is skate park near Dubose in San Francisco)
- Add a dog beach near Jack London Aquatic Center (add sand to existing rip rap)
- Add outdoor public fitness facilities (great climate!) throughout Downtown
- Outdoor theaters (great climate!)
- Celebrate existing City parks

- Community to take ownership of public spaces and jointly program spaces; public open spaces could be destinations for businesses offering wifi and kiosks with coffee and seating (for outdoor working opportunities)

Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) Preliminary Draft Open Space Priorities

- Parkland dedication (or impact fee) as development takes place – expand inventory of parkland
- Commitment to long-term maintenance of open space (Community Benefits District, etc.)
- Preservation and maintenance of existing Downtown parks
- Connectivity (safe, multi-modal) from Downtown to Lake Merritt and Jack London waterfront
- Connection across I-880 at the Tidal Channel (Lake to Estuary, crossing I-880 and UPRR)
- Maximize opportunities for rooftop open space (on parking garages, etc.)
- Encourage plazas and public space in new development
- General public realm and public space improvements (e.g., Latham Square)
- Public Art
- Recognize needs of key user groups, including dog owners and gardeners
- Use open space/nature to accomplish sustainability objectives such as stormwater quality improvements (bio-swales, green walls, etc.)
- Increase tree planting and urban forest canopy coverage