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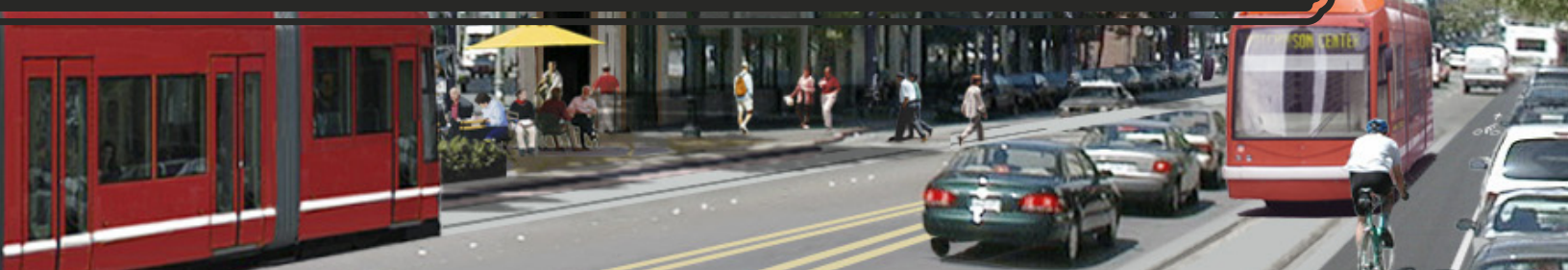
03.01.16

PLAN DOWNTOWN OAKLAND

DOWNTOWN OAKLAND SPECIFIC PLAN

PLAN ALTERNATIVES REPORT



CITY OF OAKLAND

DOVER, KOHL & PARTNERS
town planning

OPTICOS

STRATEGIC ECONOMICS INC.

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INTRODUCTION

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What's ***your*** vision for the future of Downtown Oakland?

The Plan Alternatives Report includes a summary of background information, a summary of the community vision (to date), and a series of plan options and scenarios, compiled together, based on comments, input and ideas from all members of the community that have participated in the planning process to date. Your feedback is essential as the planning process continues.

What is the Purpose of the Plan Alternatives Report?

The Plan Alternatives Report has been compiled based on several months of interaction with a wide variety of stakeholders and citizens. This document begins to formulate initial policy recommendations and illustrates a **draft** vision for the future of Downtown Oakland.

Together, all members of the public can review and comment on the different plan alternatives, with the intention of providing feedback to the City of Oakland on preferences and additional concepts for each neighborhood Downtown. During the review of this report, it is important to consider the following:

- Review the stated vision for the future of Downtown in Section 1 and consider if the description is consistent with your thoughts about the future of Downtown;

- Review the background information in Section 2 to gain an understanding of existing conditions Downtown;

- Review the summary of the public planning process (to date) in Section 3 in order to understand how the draft plan goals and principles were established. For a detailed account of specific meetings that have occurred, please visit the project website. http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/PBN/OurServices/Plans/OAK051133

- Review "What We've Learned" in Section 4, which is categorized around the plan goals and principles, reflecting input from hundreds of stakeholders and citizens. Analyze the ideas for addressing the key opportunities and challenges in the Specific Plan and consider: how can these recommendations become effective policies in the Specific Plan?

- Review the draft illustrated vision in Section 5, analyzing the opportunities and benefits of the described alternatives. Provide feedback on the vision for a specific neighborhood or for the Downtown as a whole; the illustrated vision is a work-in-progress and will be adjusted and refined throughout the duration of the creation of the Specific Plan;

- In Section 6, analyze the plan goals and principles within the context of each alternative when compared to the a continuation of the current trend for the Downtown study area;

- Provide any additional feedback to the City, to be incorporated into the subsequent phases of the planning process.

THE SPECIFIC PLAN

What is a Specific Plan?

A specific plan is a detailed planning and zoning document. The objective of this Downtown Oakland Specific Plan is to provide sound policy guidance on Downtown development, linking land use, transportation, economic development, open space, landscape design, historic preservation, cultural arts, and social equity. The specific plan is well coordinated with the studies and development projects recently approved and underway in and near Downtown.

A program for implementing land use policies and projects is a critical component of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan.

What is the purpose of a specific plan?

The Downtown Specific Plan will guide Downtown Oakland in a direction that improves the quality of life for residents, employees, and visitors. A specific plan includes policies and strategies to create jobs, reduce blight, and maintain and support existing compatible businesses and industry, as well as accommodate housing for a variety of income levels. The specific plan will provide a vision for the future as well as predictability for new residential, office, and retail development.

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be adopted to support the Plan.

How does the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan relate to other plans?

The specific plan process will build on the work already completed in the following planning efforts as well as several others:

- Lake Merritt Station Area Plan
- West Oakland Specific Plan
- Broadway Valdez Specific Plan
- Estuary Policy Plan
- Land Use and Transportation Element of the Oakland General Plan

How are plan goals created and defined?

The foundation of the specific plan and the creation of plan goals comes directly from the public input gathered throughout the course of the planning process. Community involvement comes from residents of all backgrounds and demographics. The specific plan is intended to have as many "hands" on the plan as possible.

As members of the community attend any of the numerous public meetings, they are able to provide their input to the planning team. Contributions can include targeted site and technical suggestions, as well as more general concepts for the long-term vision for Downtown. As the public provides input and the team collects and analyzes the information, specific priorities become clear. The ideas that appear most frequently act as the basis for the Plan Goals. Throughout the course of the project, goals and strategies continue to be refined in response to additional input and public contributions.

Figure A-2: Aerial and study boundary of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan.

VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

In 2040, Downtown Oakland is: a thriving, equitable, mixed-use community that offers a robust range of opportunities for housing, business, employment, shopping, recreation, arts, and culture. Downtown is a place where Oakland celebrates its rich history and vibrant future, and it invites people from every walk of life to share their sense of community. The streets, which act as the community's front porch, connect Downtown's residents and visitors with the natural beauty and recreational opportunities of Lake Merritt and the estuary waterfront. Investment in Downtown has created jobs that residents are well-trained to excel in, and provided a stable source of funding for city services and other public amenities.

Downtown continues to be made up of many districts that are seamlessly connected together and to the surrounding neighborhoods. The Downtown districts have distinct but complementary roles. Within the Downtown, defined neighborhoods such as KONO, Uptown, Lake Merritt Office, Lakeside, City Center, Old Oakland, Chinatown, and Jack London have unique characteristics and together make Downtown the heart of the City. Downtown's urban neighborhoods provide opportunities for a variety of businesses, for unique housing options that appeal to a wide range of residents, and for cultural, educational and entertainment activities found nowhere else in the City.

Families of all types can afford to live in Downtown, and the addition of dense new housing and commercial in key transit hubs brings businesses, restaurants and entertainment venues that make Downtown a fun place for people of all ages to play, shop, learn and work. Buildings use environmental best practices, and are good neighbors, complementing the historic character of the neighborhood and enhancing the public realm. Oakland's legacy of groundbreaking art, diverse cultural and political movements, unique and authentic culture, civic-minded business, and passionately engaged citizens is celebrated and enhanced in the Downtown, both on the streets and in its transparent and participatory government.

Vision Elements

Downtown Oakland is a place where…

Affordability & Equity

Oaklanders with a wide range of incomes live in safe and healthy housing, and a variety of commercial spaces support small and emerging businesses and nonprofits as well as anchor employers. Government and decision-making processes represent the full racial, socioeconomic, cultural, political and demographic diversity of the population, and the City actively seeks the public's voices to guide policy. City government addresses the infrastructure and effects of systematic racism head-on, and proactively supports equity when making land use, resource allocation, project implementation and other planning and policy decisions.

Arts & Cultural Heritage

The community celebrates, preserves, and supports Oakland's rich legacy of artistic innovation, political movements, and cultural institutions. Government and private investment recognize that the arts are the soul of Downtown, and support them to benefit residents, as well as to attract visitors and new businesses. The City actively helps cultivate spaces for artists and makers to work and live, and makes decisions that improve the public realm's beauty and aesthetics.

Built Environment, Preservation & Housing

Downtown's ample housing supply and variety of traditional, flexible and innovative home types house the growing population, allowing families to grow in their own neighborhoods without compromising their spending on healthy food, health care and other basic needs. New residential and commercial development occurs to meet demand while respecting the existing historic character. New development complements the existing buildings, engages with the street, and respects community access to light and views, particularly to views of iconic buildings like City Hall and natural resources like Lake Merritt and the estuary waterfront.

Connectivity & Access

Neighborhoods in the Downtown connect seamlessly to one another, and Oaklanders from the rest of the city and region are easily able to take advantage of Downtown's jobs and services by foot, bike, transit or car. The community has taken full advantage of its excessively wide streets to add protected bicycle lanes, street trees, street furniture and improved lighting, shifting the streets from fast-moving onramps to the freeway to people-focused public spaces. The streets are calm and provide a pleasant environment for retail and other ground-floor commercial uses. Major barriers that once separated Downtown from its waterfront and West Oakland have been softened or removed - providing safe, pleasant and direct pathways between these areas.

Economic Development

Downtown is the economic engine of Oakland, taking advantage of its central location in the region and ample office opportunities to incubate and capture businesses that employ residents with good quality jobs and raise local revenues to pay for needed infrastructure improvements. Public-private partnerships and development agreements expand businesses' ability to locate and thrive Downtown while providing additional community benefits such as public art, open space, and funds for housing development. Education and training for skilled jobs, policies for living wages, local hiring and procurement, and programs that provide financial and technical support for women and minority-owned businesses, worker co-ops and other innovative community wealth-building programs ensure that the entire community benefits financially from the city's economic prosperity. Shops, restaurants and performance venues active during the daytime, evenings and weekends provide groceries, daily necessities, entertainment, and unique goods and foods with Oakland's creative local flavor that appeal both to residents and regional shoppers.

Environmental Sustainability

Downtown Oakland is a leader in sustainable development, with buildings that minimize resource use and pollution, and locate most intensively along transportation corridors and at transit hubs so residents and employees can travel without need for a car. The Downtown incubates businesses in green sectors such as clean energy, and businesses use transportation demand management strategies with their employees to provide alternatives to the old-fashioned single-occupancy-vehicle commute. Streets are lined with trees and bioswales that filter rainwater and give visual relief from the urban environment, and surfaces, including roofs, are green wherever possible. The City considers the impacts to the environment and public health when making decisions about the built environment, particularly supporting the needs of the community's most vulnerable populations.

Open Space & Recreation

Residents travel on foot or by bicycle along a network of waterfront spaces, parks programmed for active recreation, and public plazas for relaxing, socializing, gathering, festivals, art shows and performance. These public open spaces are connected by recreational pathways and streets that act as the city's front porch for social connection, activity and relaxation. In this public realm, street trees and other drought-tolerant landscaping make the street a pleasant and beautiful place to stroll, wide sidewalks provide space for people to sit at outdoor cafés, easy and frequent street crossings help people with all levels of mobility navigate easily, and benches, tables, evening lighting and other amenities support active use of the space.

VISION: PRINCIPLES

The vision and goals that have emerged through a series of small group meetings, large public events, and a nine-day public interactive design charrette are summarized below. These working concepts and goals are: Affordability & Equity; Arts & Cultural Heritage; Built Environment, Preservation & Housing; Open Space & Recreation, Environmental Sustainability; Connectivity & Access; and Economic Development. "Big Ideas" that are related to each of these issue areas are discussed as goals for the specific plan below. These big ideas and goals are discussed in greater detail throughout the report, and will continue to be refined and edited as the planning process continues.

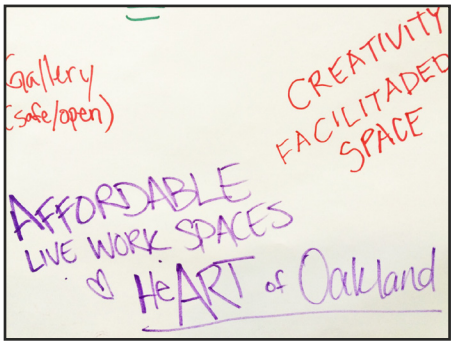


Figure A-3: Residents express their concerns for affordability.

Figure A-4: The Malonga Center and mural celebrate African American and Asian cultures.

Figure A-5: The historic Hotel Oakland has been transformed into affordable senior housing in the heart of Downtown. During World War II, this building served as a hospital.

Affordability & Equity

- Keep Downtown Oakland affordable and accessible to the community by focusing on both housing preservation and growth.
- Keep Downtown Oakland affordable and accessible to the community by focusing on providing a range of building types that cater to a variety of age groups, household sizes and configurations, and income levels.
- Keep Downtown Oakland affordable and accessible to the community by supporting local businesses and artists as well as a range of commerce opportunities.
- Preserve Downtown Oakland's ethnic and cultural diversity by preventing displacement of its diverse community members.
- Prioritize improvements in areas where residents have been historically underserved.

Arts & Cultural Heritage

- Foster creative culture and arts in Downtown Oakland by providing for artist and maker work spaces that serve burgeoning and independent artisans as well as established ones.
- Foster creative culture and arts in Downtown Oakland by providing for community gathering spaces where art walks are organically occurring.
- Preserve and celebrate the historic buildings and civic spaces that have played a significant role in Oakland's history and culture.

Built Environment, Preservation & Housing

- Focus intensity of new development in appropriate areas within Downtown Oakland to preserve the character of other neighborhoods.
- Create walkable and bikeable places that complete healthy, livable neighborhoods.
- House residents of all incomes and family sizes in a wide range of traditional and innovative housing types close to transportation, jobs and services.
- Help to attract a vibrant mixture of uses in Downtown Oakland to generate activity at all times of the day.

Figure A-6: Transportation systems and land use are inextricably linked and critical to the success of Downtown when focused on pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit.

Figure A-7: Careful and strategic development can benefit Downtown.

Figure A-8: Policies and programs will help improve the natural environment.

Figure A-9: A parklet is a way to create small open space.

Connectivity & Access

- Convert most of the one-way streets in Downtown Oakland to two-way streets.
- Ensure that every street in Downtown Oakland is a "complete" street that is safe and comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Ensure that Downtown and the surrounding region are connected by transit to lessen the environmental impact of vehicle emissions, provide equitable access to jobs and services for all residents, and refocus the civic sphere from car traffic to lively pedestrian activity.
- Make better connections to West Oakland, Chinatown, Lake Merritt and Jack London Square.
- Replace I-980 with a civic boulevard and lively development to stitch the fabric between West Oakland and Downtown back together.

Economic Development

- Capture the economic benefits of a strong market to help bring plan goals to fruition and help all Oaklanders thrive.
- Incorporate both public and private mechanisms for achieving the growth that is outlined in the community's vision for the future of Downtown.
- Provide support to and encourage affordable commercial space for small, local and startup business.

Environmental Sustainability

- Ensure that new development and business is environmentally conscious and employs sustainable best practices, including the adaptive re-use of buildings.
- Focus density around transit hubs to reduce the environmental impact of vehicle emissions, and reduce urban sprawl into conservation and preservation areas of the city and surrounding region.
- Ambitiously grow a green network of streets incorporating trees, landscaping and permeable surfaces to shade pedestrians, improve the mental health of urban residents, sequester carbon, reduce noise pollution, buffer pedestrians from cars, and manage stormwater and water quality.
- Ensure that the community's most vulnerable residents are not disproportionally affected by adverse environmental impacts of development (lead paint, freeway emissions, location of industry, highways, etc.).

Open Space & Recreation

- Introduce more gathering places in Downtown Oakland by generating a network of safe, comfortable and well-connected civic and shared open spaces.
- Knit together the unique neighborhoods of Downtown Oakland with tree-lined streets safe for everyone.
- Serve residents of all ages and in all Downtown neighborhoods with safe, well-maintained, and innovatively programmed places to play, exercise, relax, and connect with nature.

PLAZA
BUILDING

EXISTING CONDITIONS

History	2.2
Urban Infrastructure	2.4
Socioeconomic Conditions	2.31
Market Conditions	2.41

HISTORY

The City of Oakland has evolved over the course of time—from a lush environment full of oak trees, to a place with a bustling downtown full of people and economic activity, through a series of historic events, to a city with a dynamic urban core where civic life is celebrated.

Like other American cities over the past several decades, the population in Downtown Oakland has fluctuated, and at present is on the rise. With a unique and diverse community living, working and enjoying entertainment Downtown, the heart of the city is both active and interesting.

The following pages summarize the existing conditions found in Downtown, including maps and imagery that depict the evolution of its urban form, existing infrastructure, demographics, and economic conditions.

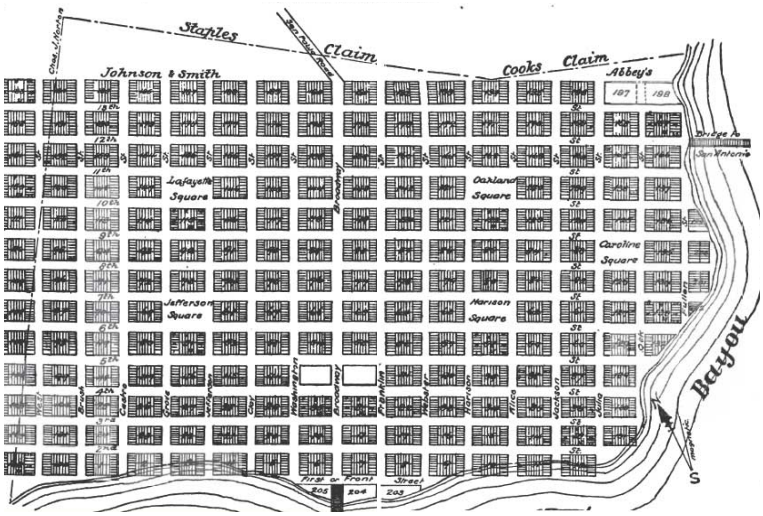
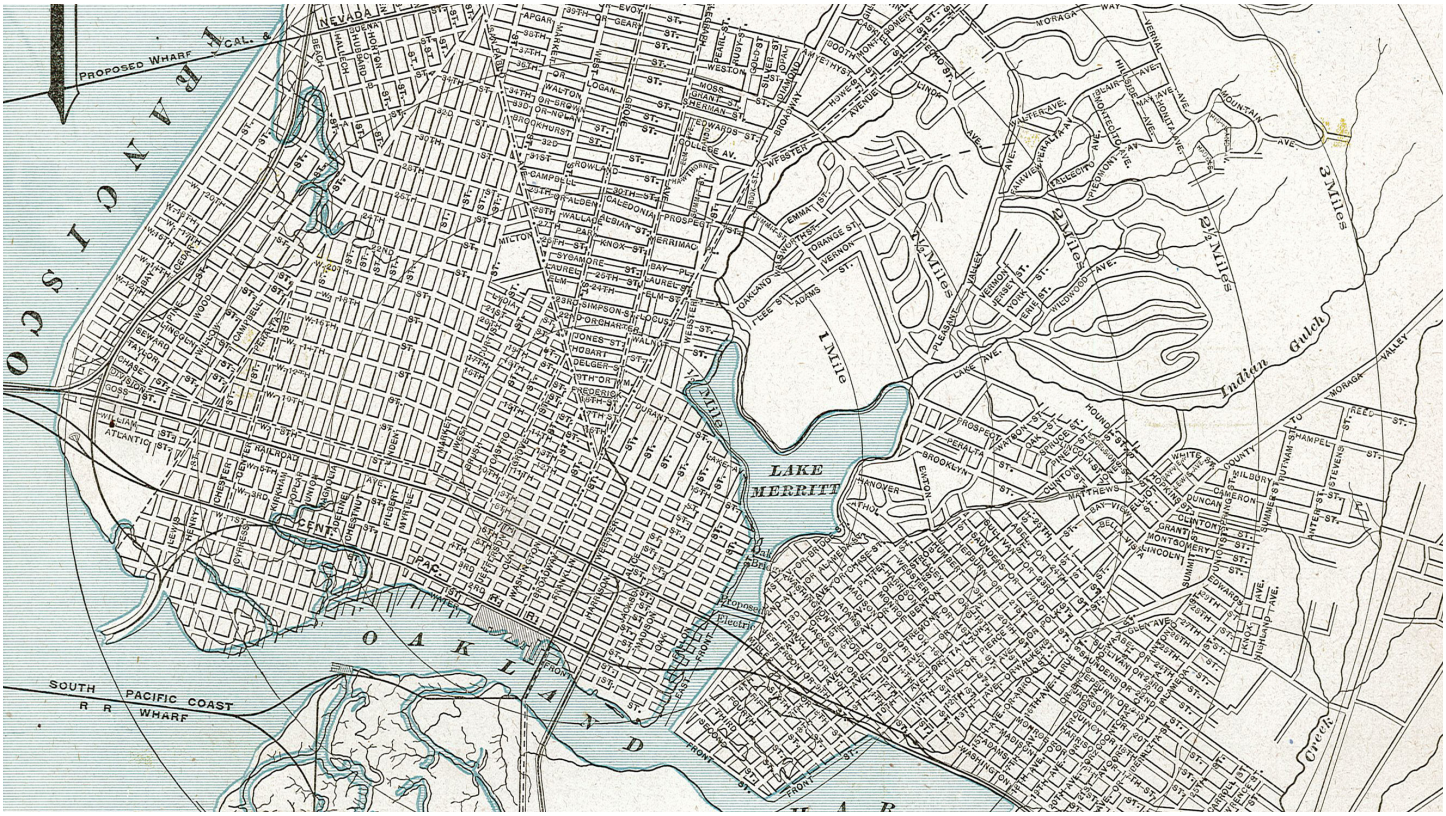


Figure B-2 (right): Kellersberger Map, 1852. This map demonstrates a simple, tight grid for walking and horse riding.

Figure B-3 (below): Historic map of Oakland, c. 1892, depicting the evolution of Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods over four decades..



Figures B-4: Postcard views of San Pablo and Broadway (top photo) and Telegraph Avenue (middle photo), c. 1930. These images depict the dominant role of the streetcar as Downtown rapidly developed. The Key System, as it was known, was short lived between the 1890's and 1940's.

Figure B-5 (below): Historic map of Oakland depicts the extension of the Key Route System Streetcar (1 to 2 miles) that linked Oakland to San Francisco and marked the beginning of local industry

URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan process will consider future land use, urban design, transportation, economics and environmental factors. The Specific Plan process will build on the work already completed in the following planning efforts as well as several others:

- Land Use and Transportation Element (1998)
- Estuary Policy Plan (1999)
- Harrison Street/Oakland Avenue Community Transportation Plan (2010)
- International Boulevard Transit-Oriented Development Project (2011)
- Lake Merritt Station Area Plan (2014)
- Broadway Valdez Specific Plan (2014)
- West Oakland Specific Plan (2014)

There are several ongoing studies occurring in the downtown area that have timelines and content that overlaps with the Downtown Specific Plan. The Specific Plan team will collaborate with each of these throughout the project and ensure that pertinent information is shared between these studies. These active and recently completed projects include:

- Downtown Oakland Parking Study
- Complete Streets Study
- Impact Fee Nexus Study
- Bike Network 2.0
- Transportation Impact Review Streamlining
- Pedestrian Master Plan Update
- Broadway Transit Circulator Study
- Freeway Access Project

Figure B-6: Aerial photograph and neighborhoods of Downtown Oakland

The following pages depict existing urban and infrastructure conditions on a series of analysis maps.

Figure B-7: Figure-ground Plan

building footprints

parcels

Connectivity and Access

Access to Downtown Oakland is provided on transit (via BART and AC Transit); by vehicle along highways I-880 and I-980 as well as along a network of surface roads; and from surrounding neighborhoods by walking and biking. Although the interstates do provide vehicular access, they also serve as barriers to pedestrians and cyclists due to infrequent undercrossings, some of which are poor quality. The rail line in the Jack London neighborhood (and noise associated with it) also create separation between Downtown and the waterfront.

A pedestrian shed is the area within a circle of a quarter-mile radius. This equates to a five-minute walk, which is a benchmark for a neighborhood unit or district that is manageable in size and feel and is inherently walkable. Downtown Oakland consists of multiple pedestrian sheds, centered upon natural gathering places such as Jack London Square and Frank Ogawa Plaza.

A ten-minute walk, or the area within a circle with a half mile radius, is a generally accepted benchmark that the average person will walk to a transit stop. Existing BART stations provide coverage to most of Downtown; the area along the waterfront including Jack London Square is beyond this coverage.

The following pages detail existing infrastructure that provides access and connectivity Downtown, including transit, cycling, driving, and parking.

Figure B-8: Existing Interstates and Rail Line

Figure B-9: Existing BART line and stations

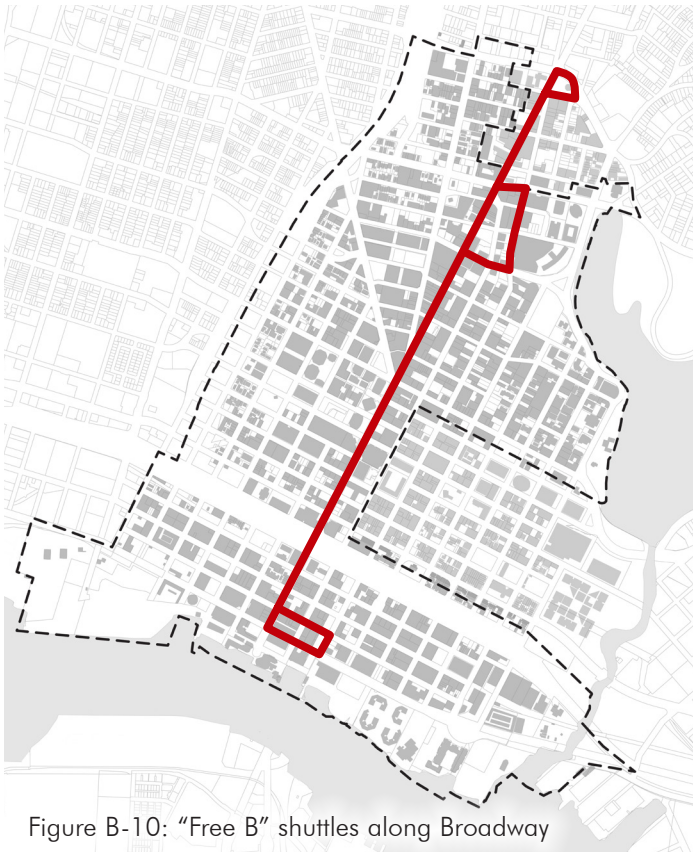


Figure B-10: "Free B" shuttles along Broadway

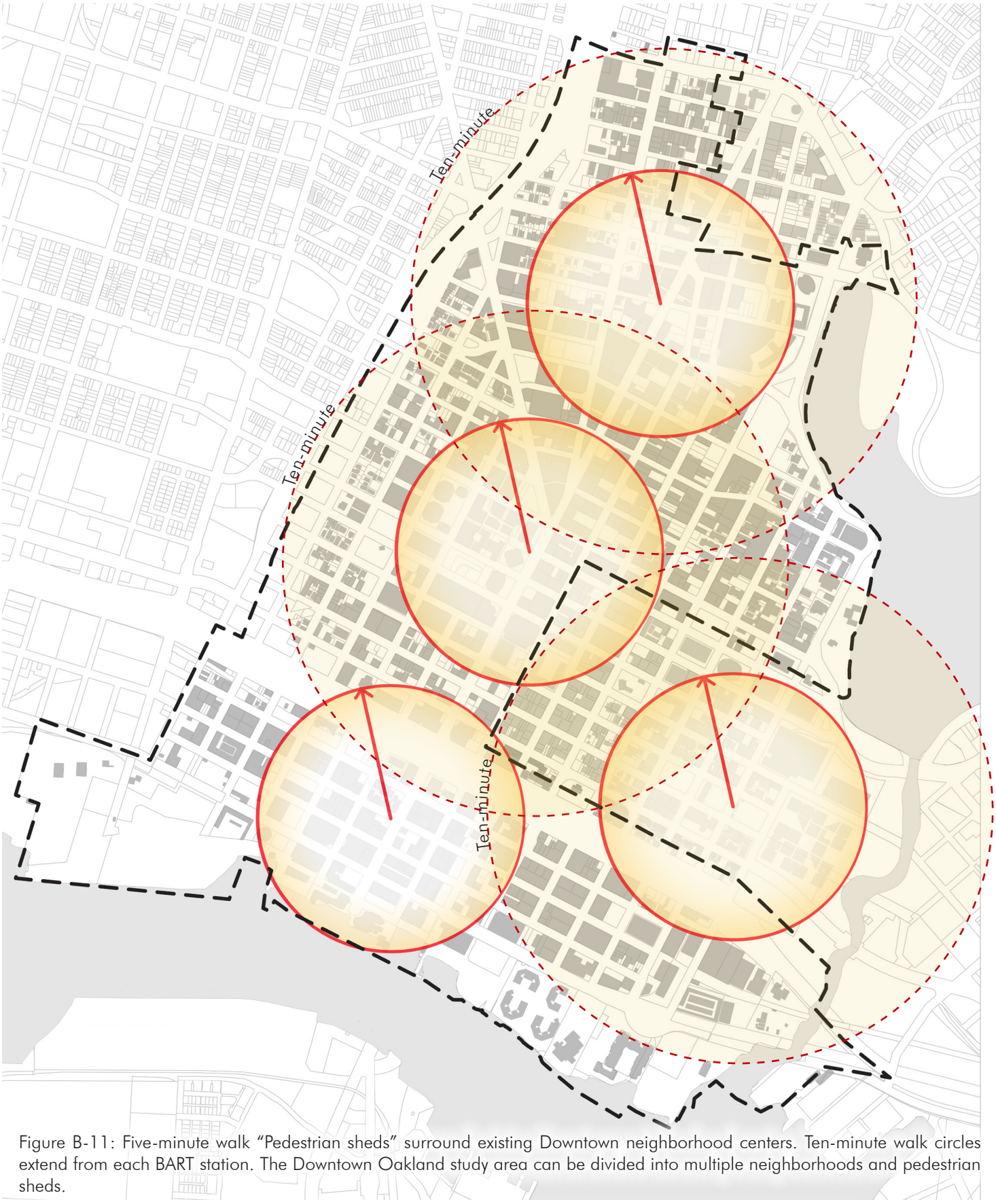


Figure B-11: Five-minute walk "Pedestrian sheds" surround existing Downtown neighborhood centers. Ten-minute walk circles extend from each BART station. The Downtown Oakland study area can be divided into multiple neighborhoods and pedestrian sheds.

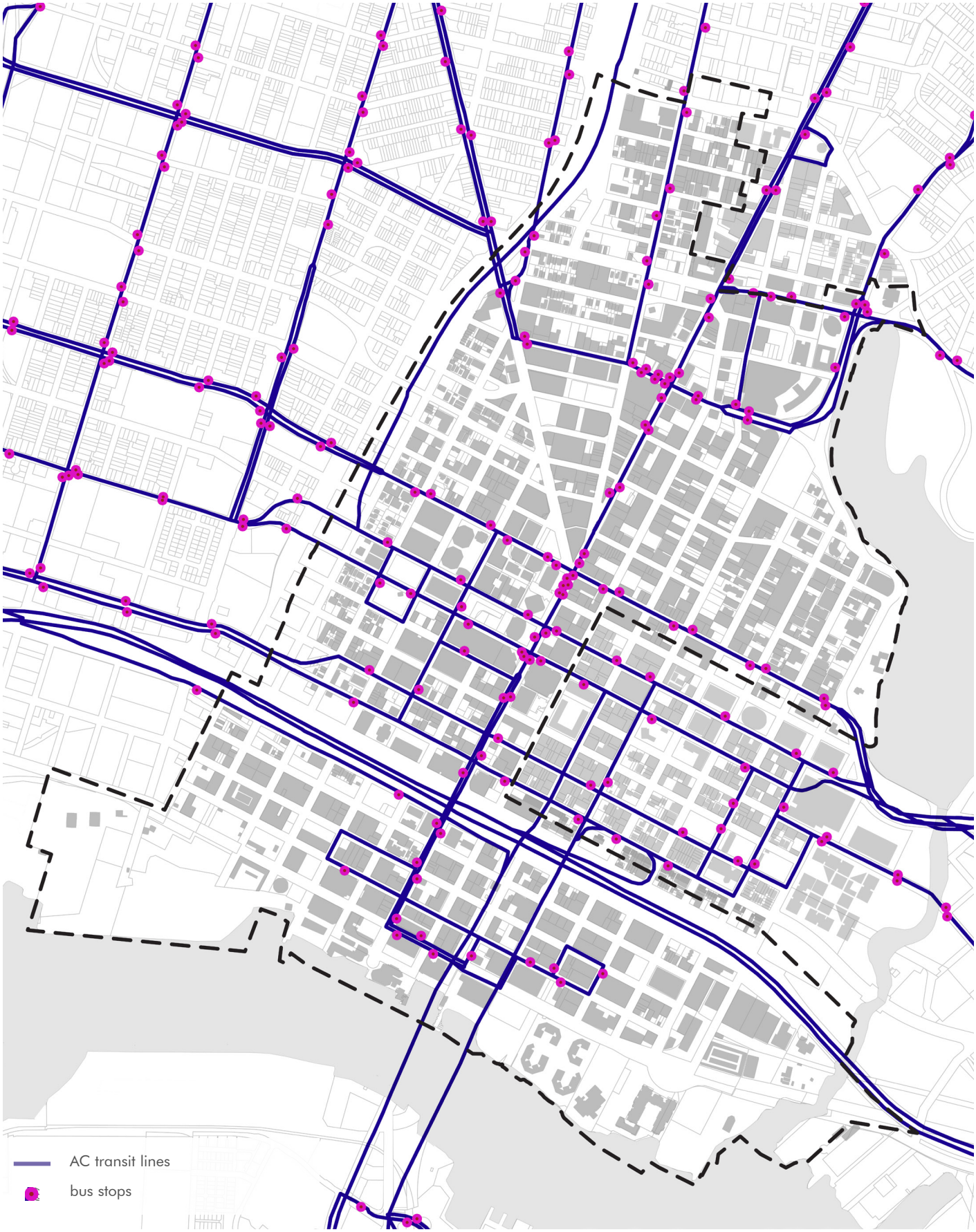


Figure B-12: AC Transit & Bus Stops. AC Transit has extensive coverage throughout Downtown Oakland. The Specific Plan process will assess needs for improvements, which could include upgraded facilities, increased frequency, and/or new routes.

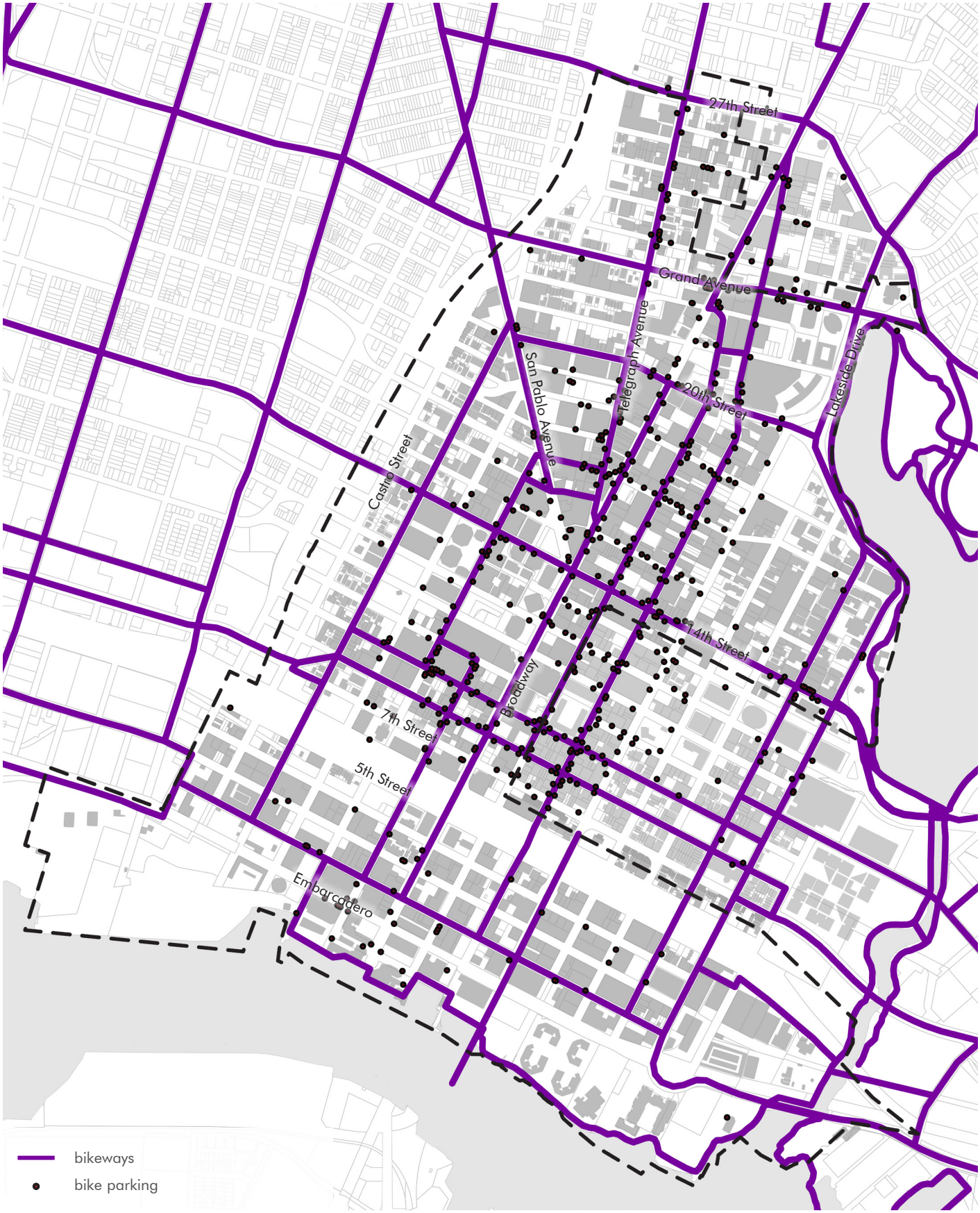


Figure B-13: Bikeways & Bike Parking. Bikeways are key connectors within Downtown and to surrounding neighborhoods; many have existing "sharrows," which indicate shared lanes. New bike infrastructure investments can be prioritized along these routes.

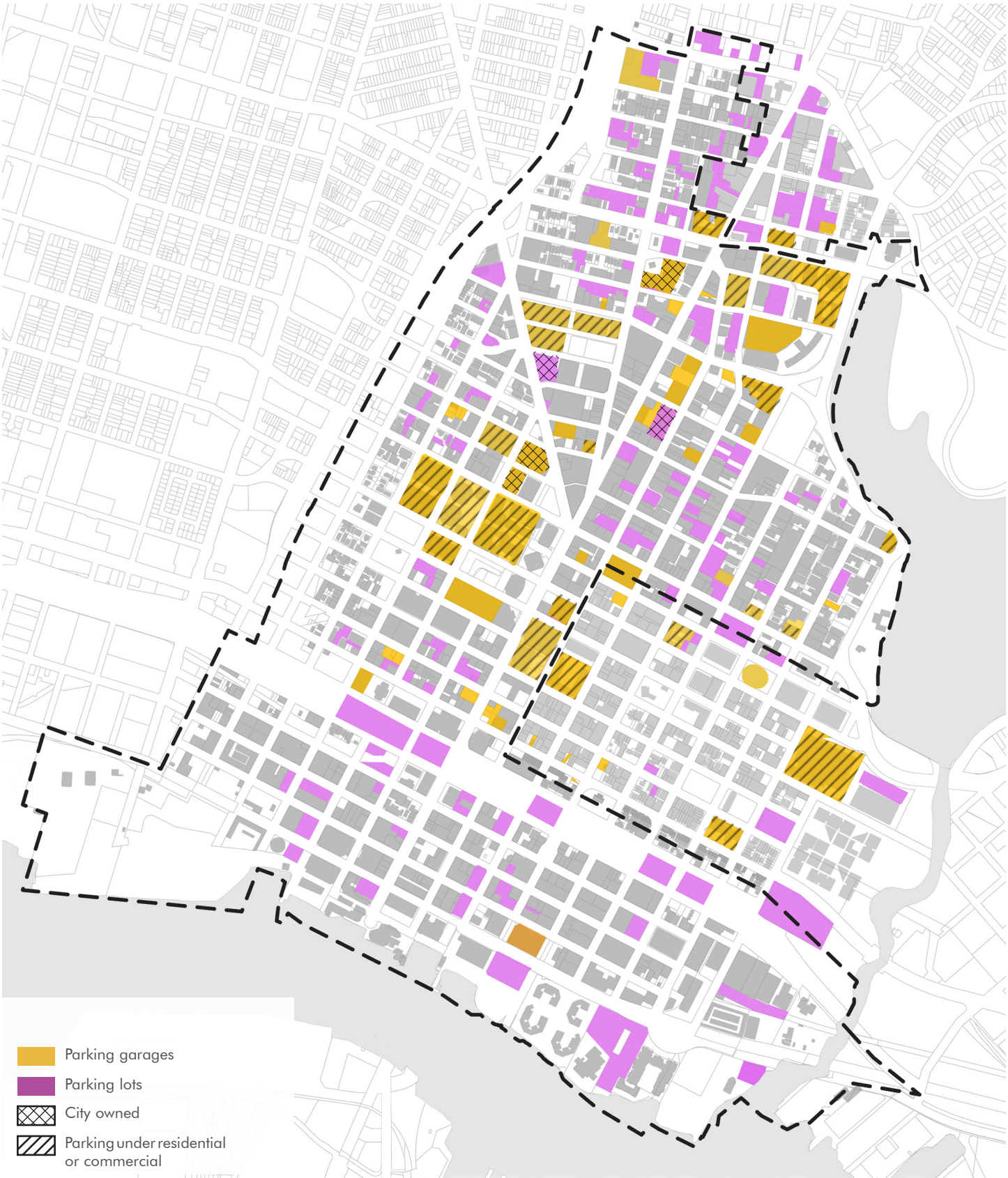


Figure B-14: Off-street Parking. Off-street parking is well distributed throughout the Downtown study area. A parking study is ongoing to determine parking needs and strategy for the future.

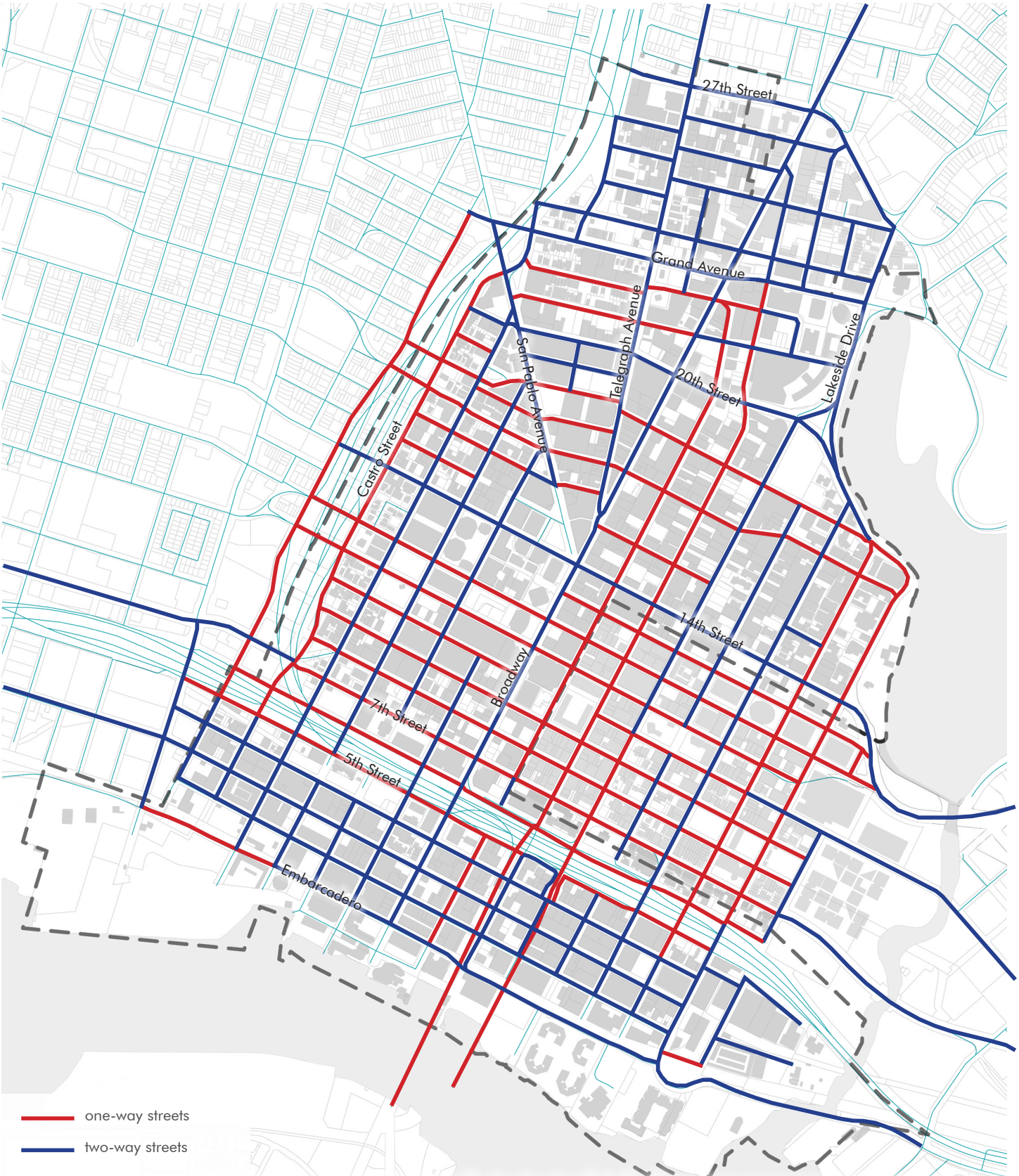


Figure B-15: One-Way and Two-Way Streets. Downtown's street network today has many one-way streets. One-way streets can cause circulation problems as well as a less desirable pedestrian and bike experience due to higher vehicular speeds and increased pedestrian injury accidents.

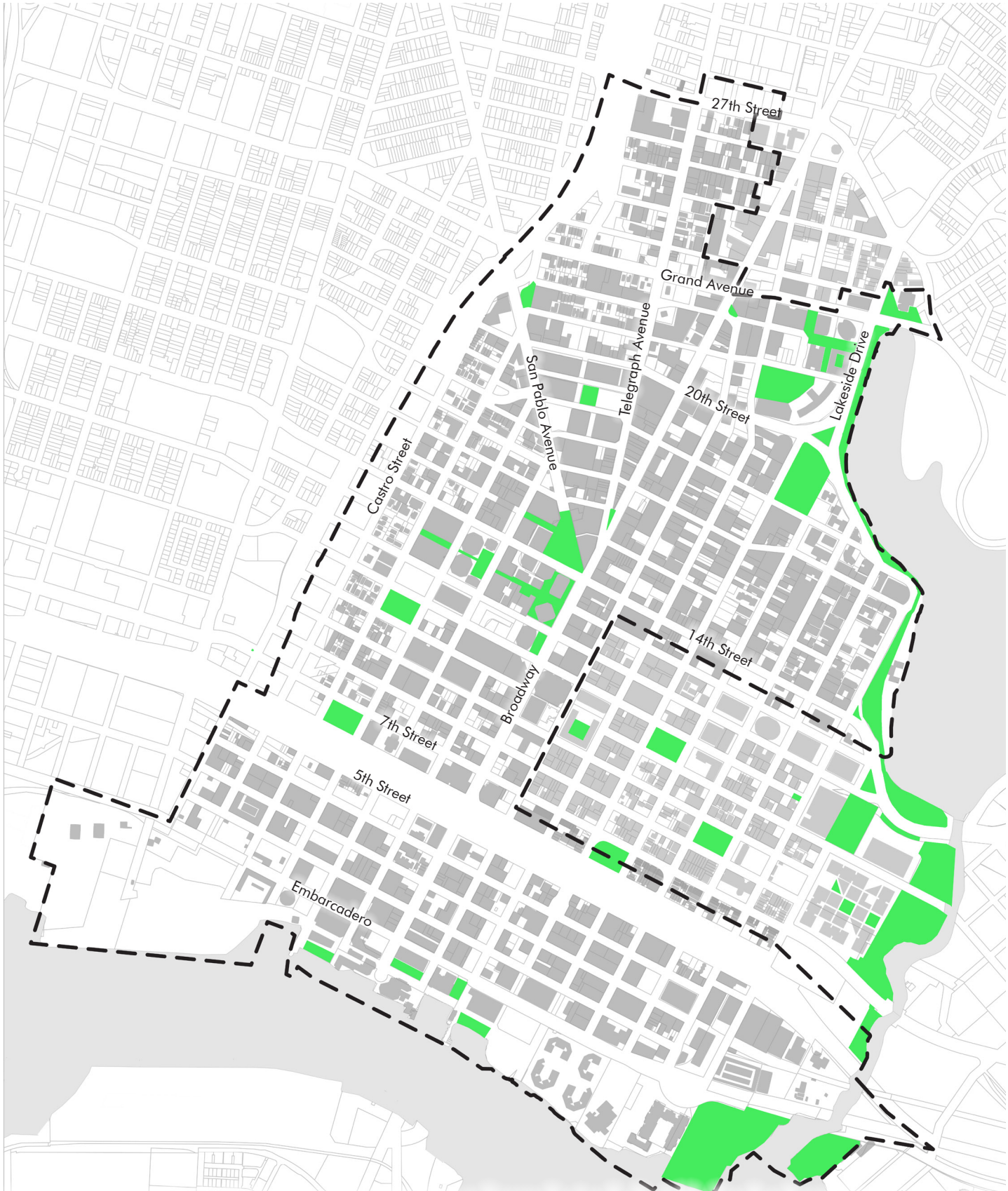


Figure B-16: Open Space: Parks / Plazas. Downtown has a dispersed network of neighborhood parks; additional spaces will be needed to serve Downtown's projected increase in population. There is potential for new public spaces to be added in the Jack London District along the waterfront to increase public access and complement existing parks.

Waterfront Areas

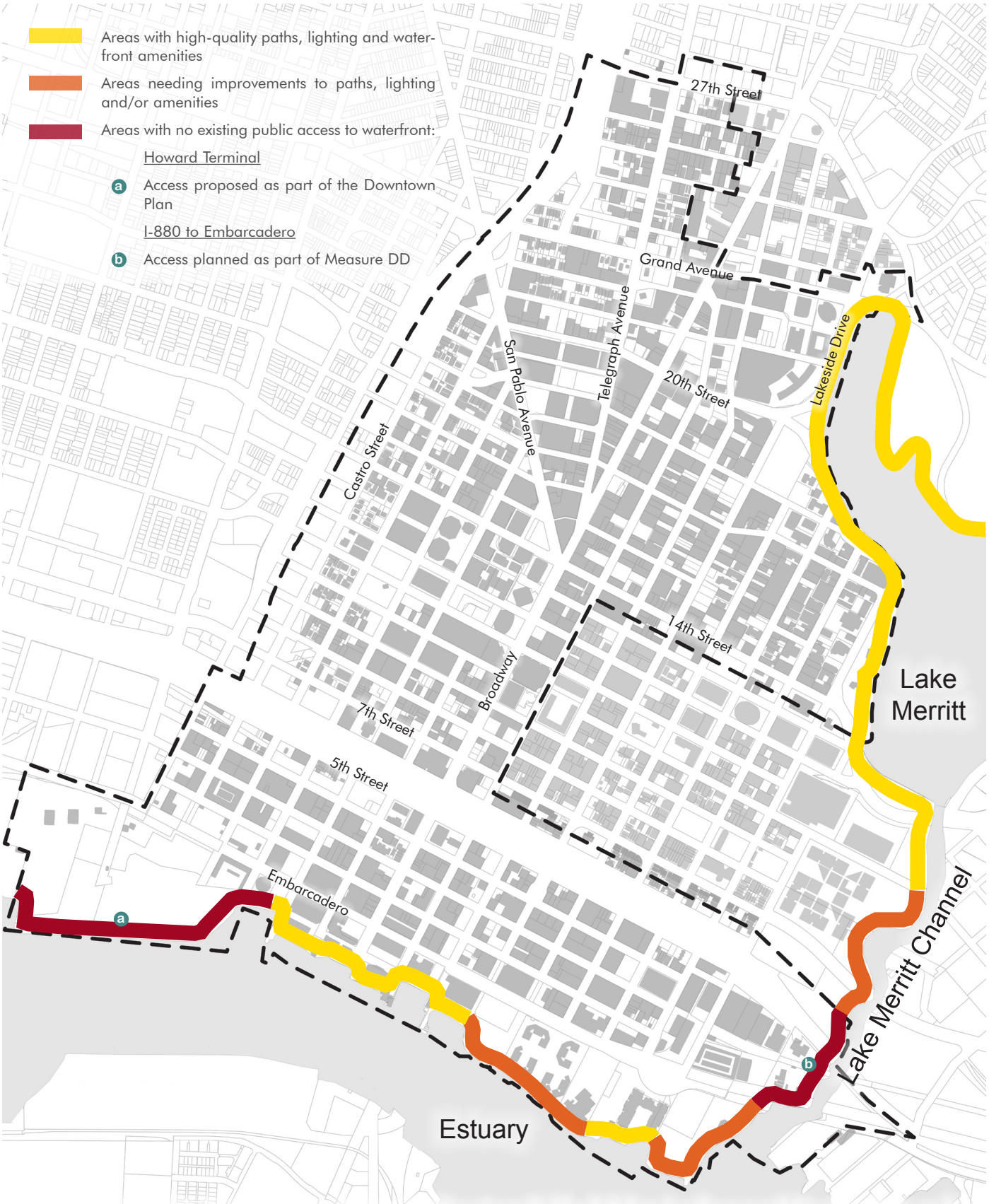


Figure B-17: The Waterfront Areas are a key asset to Downtown Oakland. Enhancing the accessibility, view sheds, and quality of these areas can improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

Historic Preservation

Downtown Oakland has a wealth of historic buildings and neighborhoods; important sites are identified on the following maps.

The Local Register of Historic Properties recognizes the City's most important buildings and districts, including designated Landmarks, Preservation Districts, Heritage Properties, and Areas of Primary Importance.

Areas of Primary Importance (API) are areas that appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, but are not necessarily listed as historic districts.

Areas of Secondary Importance (ASI) are generally sites and districts of local interest.

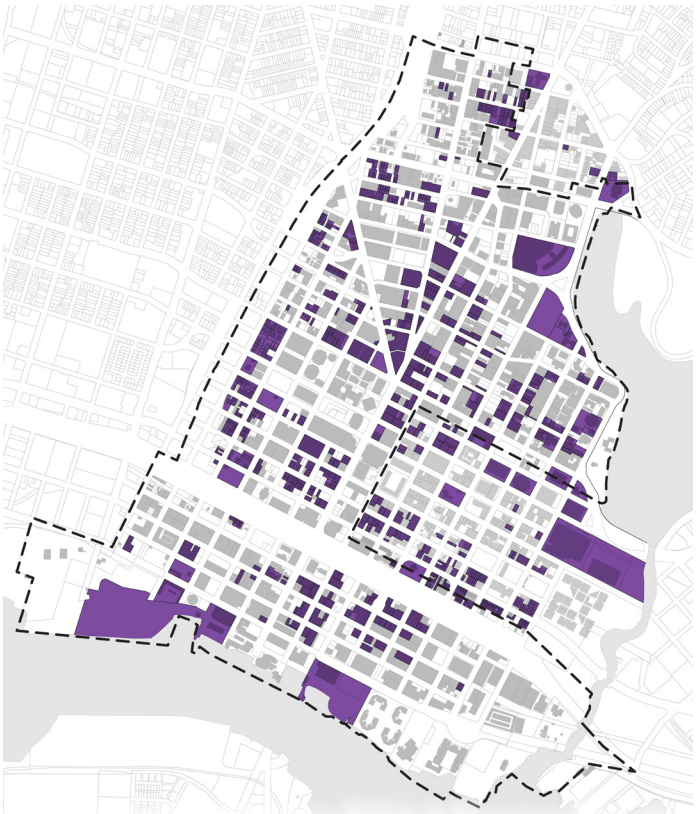


Figure B-18: Local Register of Historic Resources Properties

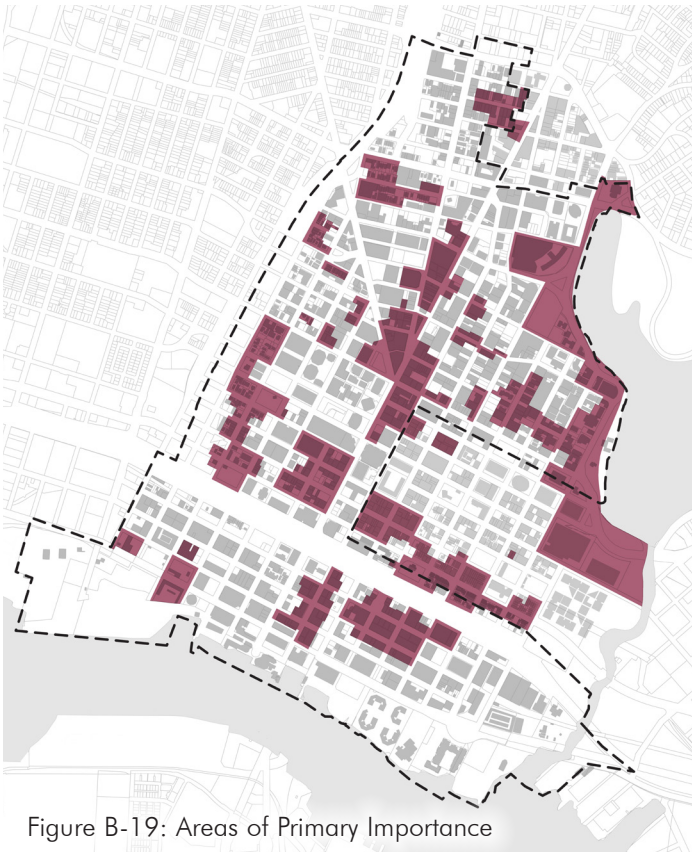


Figure B-19: Areas of Primary Importance

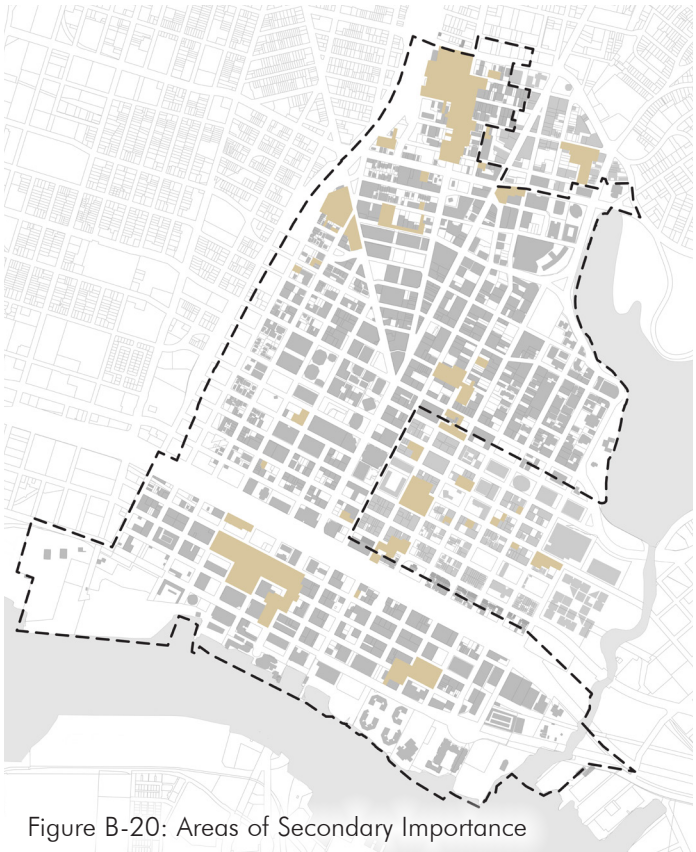


Figure B-20: Areas of Secondary Importance

Historic Preservation Synthesis Map

The Historic Preservation Synthesis Map combines several layers to show a comprehensive view of historic properties.

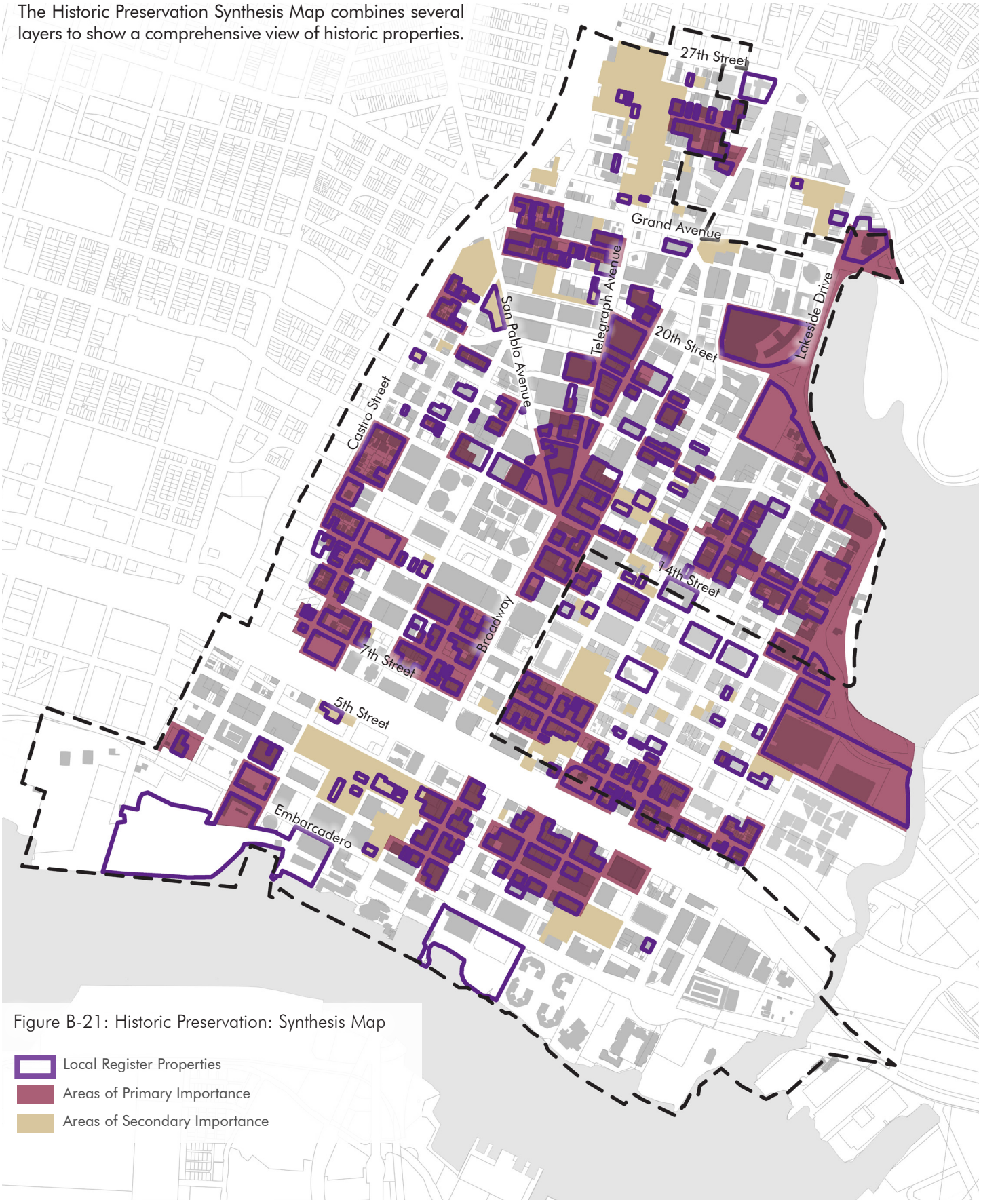
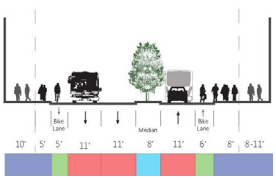


Figure B-21: Historic Preservation: Synthesis Map

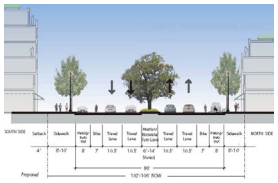
Major Infrastructure Projects

Major infrastructure projects are public improvements that have been proposed or are already underway in the Downtown study area, independent of the Specific Plan.

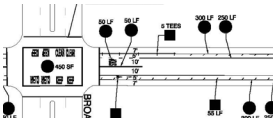
Figure B-22: Major Infrastructure Projects

a 

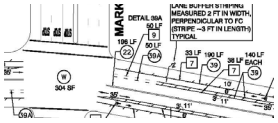
20th Street Complete Streets Study
Road diet w/bike lanes

b 

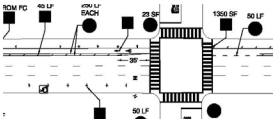
27th Street Gateway
road narrowing &
streetscape improvements

c 

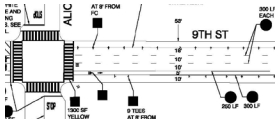
2nd Street Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

d 

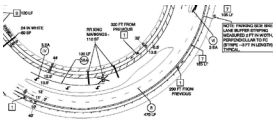
3rd Street Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

e 

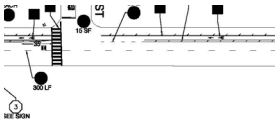
8th Street Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

f 

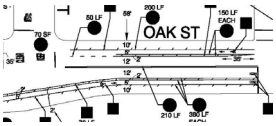
9th Street Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

g 

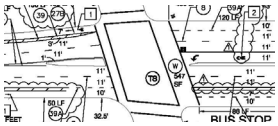
Embarcadero Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

h 

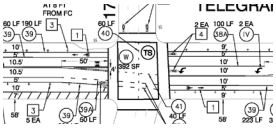
Madison Street
Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

i 

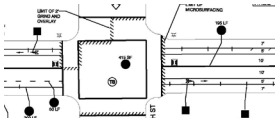
Oak Street Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

j 

20th Street Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

k 

Telegraph Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

l 

Washington Restriping
Bike lane striping plan

m

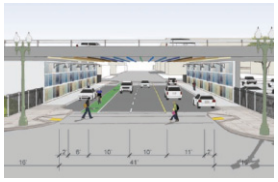
Lake Merritt to Bay Trail
www.lm2bt.com

n

Lakeside Green Streets
Lakeside Park Improvements
streetscape & bike lanes

o

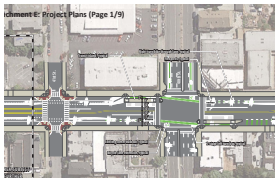
Latham Square
Street & Public Space
Redesign

p 

Safe Routes To Transit
underpass improvements
& intersections around
Lake Merritt BART Station

q

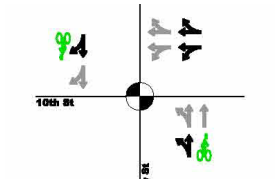
San Pablo Green Street
Green Stormwater Pilot

r 

Telegraph Avenue
Complete Streets
Street Redesign

s

East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Project

t 

Clay Street Study
Road diet w/bike lanes

u

Embarcadero Bridge Reconstruction

Anticipated Development Projects

Anticipated development projects are projects that have already been approved, or that are under review within the Downtown study area, independent of the Specific Plan.

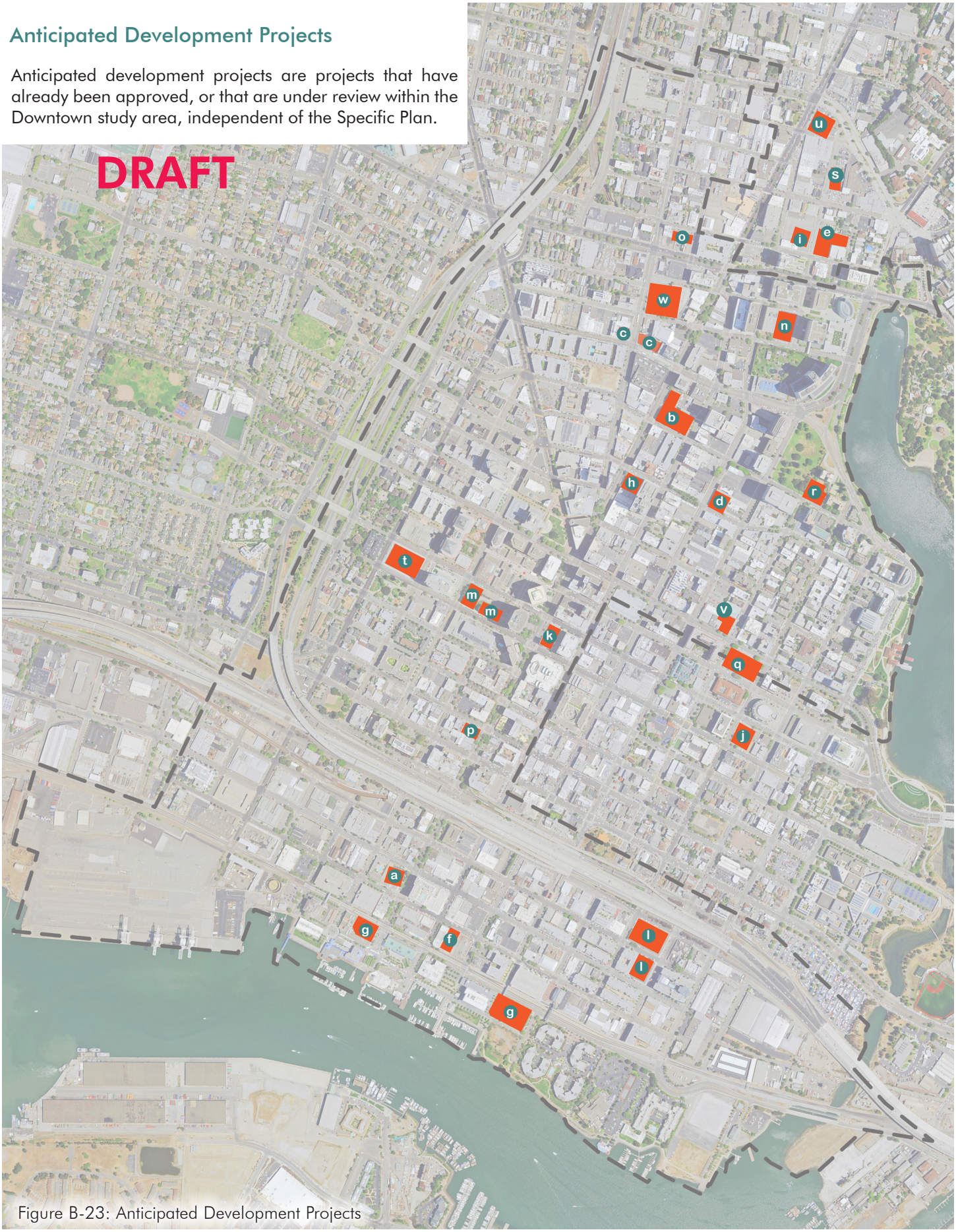


Figure B-23: Anticipated Development Projects

a

201 Broadway
48 residential units
Austen Group

b

1900 Broadway
294 residential units,
11,000 sf commercial
Approved
Seth Hamalian

c 2000 / 2001 Telegraph Ave
Mixed-use residential + retail

d

1700 Webster
250 residential units + retail
Approved
Gerding Edlen

e

2302 Valdez Street, 193 units + retail, Wood Partners

f

377 2nd Street
Mixed-Use
98 residential units
Approved

g Jack London Square, two new residential towers planned, 660 units, CIM Development

h

1640 Broadway
Mixed-Use Tower
254 residential units
Approved

i

Valdez & 23rd Street
235 residential units
Approved
City-owned & ENA w/ Thompson-Dorfman

j

1110 Jackson Street
71 residential units
All affordable
EBALC & Oakland Housing Auth.

k

1100 Broadway, Mixed-Use + Rehab,
310,285 sf office, 9,810 sf retail, approved

l

Fourth & Madison, 430 Jackson
Mixed-Use
330 residential units
Under Review

m

City Center Lot T5/6
Mixed-Use; Strada
Approved for residential (phase 1) and potential hotel (phase 2)

n New office development

o

459 23rd Street, Mixed-Use
114 res rental units
3,000 sf commercial
pre-application

p

459 8th St
Mixed-Use
50 residential units
4,000 sf commercial
Under Review

q 226 13th Street, 258 residential units & mixed use, Wood Partners West Aquisitions, LLC

r

Emerald Views
222 19th St
370 residential units
Under Review
Joe O'Donoghue

s 2400 Valdez, 224 units + retail, Under Review, Hanover Company

t

City Center @ Jefferson
600,000 sf of office
Under Review
Shorenstein

u 2630 Broadway, 253 residential units + retail
Hanover Company

v 250 14th Street, 126 residential units
Bay Development, LLC

w 2100 Telegraph Ave, major mixed-use development, city-owned, under Exlusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with Lane Partners and SUDA, LLC. Scope/magnitude to be determined.

Opportunity Sites Analysis

This opportunity sites analysis builds upon the information on previous maps to identify sites that have the greatest potential for future development. Infill sites are vacant land (including surface parking). These sites are typically developed incrementally over time, rather than all at once. Underutilized sites are those with buildings that could better contribute to the urban realm; for example, buildings with blank walls along the sidewalk fit this category. Anticipated development sites include projects approved or in the approvals process, summarized on the previous page. Major redevelopment opportunities are sites for potential larger interventions, with significant positive impacts for new land uses.

The building frontages impact the safety and activity of pedestrians in the Downtown neighborhoods. "Active" or "strong" frontages have buildings with doors and windows that front the street, activating the sidewalk. "Blank" or "weak" frontages are those that meet the sidewalk with blank walls or parking lots; infill on these sites can improve neighborhood walkability and the quality of the urban realm.

Figure B-24: Infill Sites

Figure B-25: Underutilized Sites

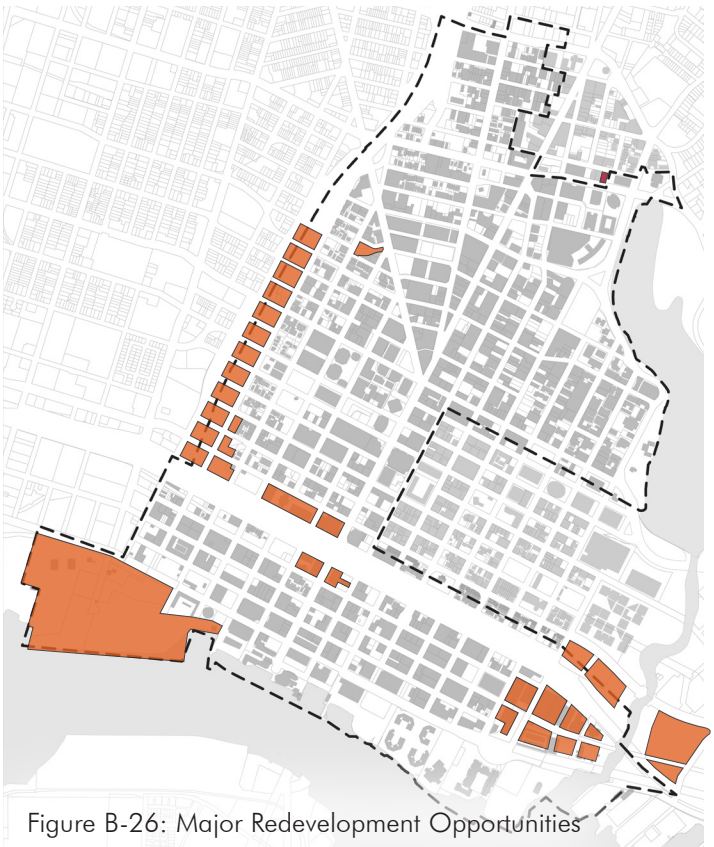


Figure B-26: Major Redevelopment Opportunities

Opportunity Sites Synthesis Map

This synthesis map combines several layers of information to show a comprehensive view of potential development opportunity sites that can be analyzed further through the Specific Plan process.

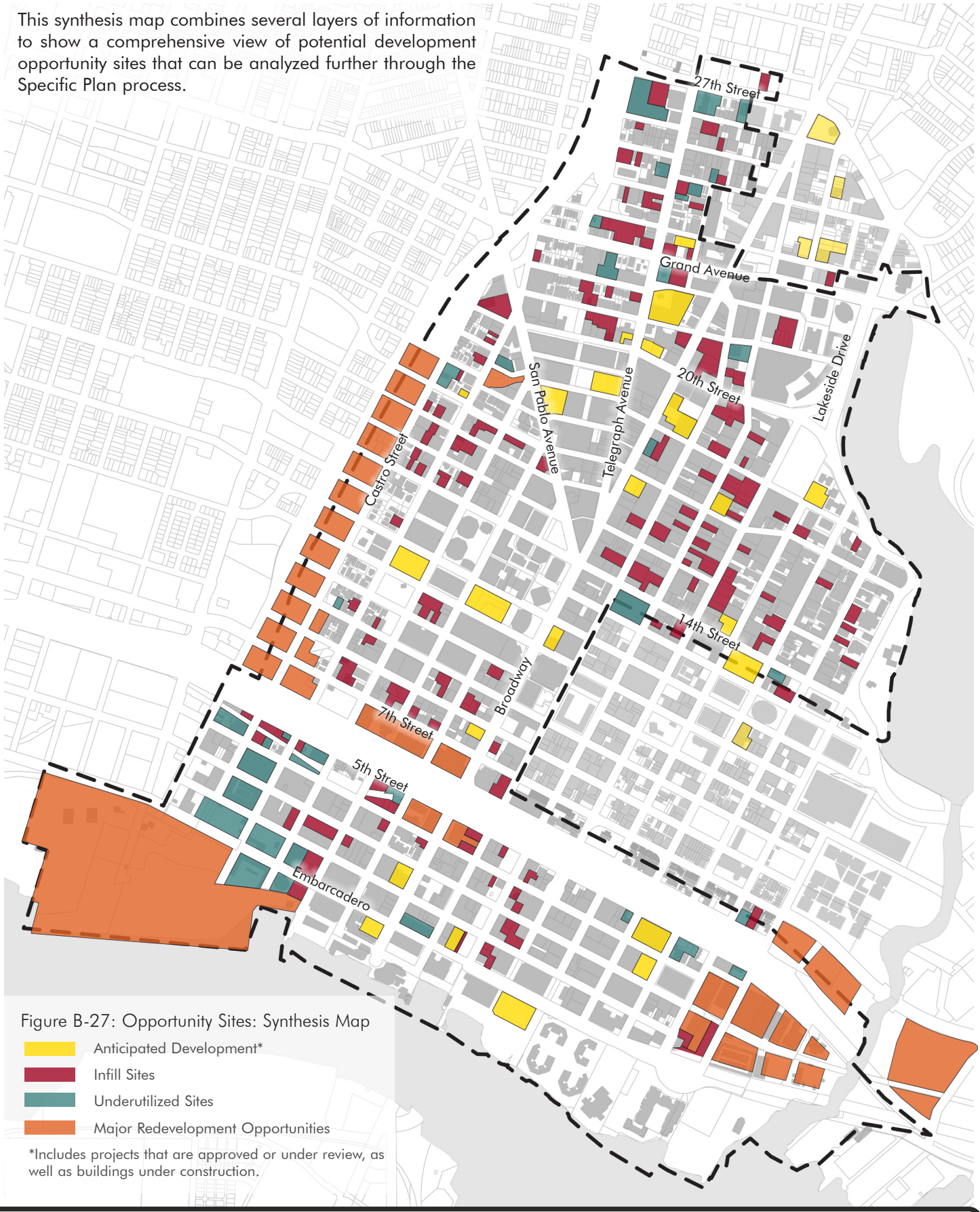


Figure B-27: Opportunity Sites: Synthesis Map

- Anticipated Development*
- Infill Sites
- Underutilized Sites
- Major Redevelopment Opportunities

*Includes projects that are approved or under review, as well as buildings under construction.

Street Trees

Street trees and neighborhood parks and open spaces are a key asset to Downtown's green canopy. Enhancing these components, particularly filling in gaps in the network, can move Oakland toward a more sustainable future as well as enhance placemaking.

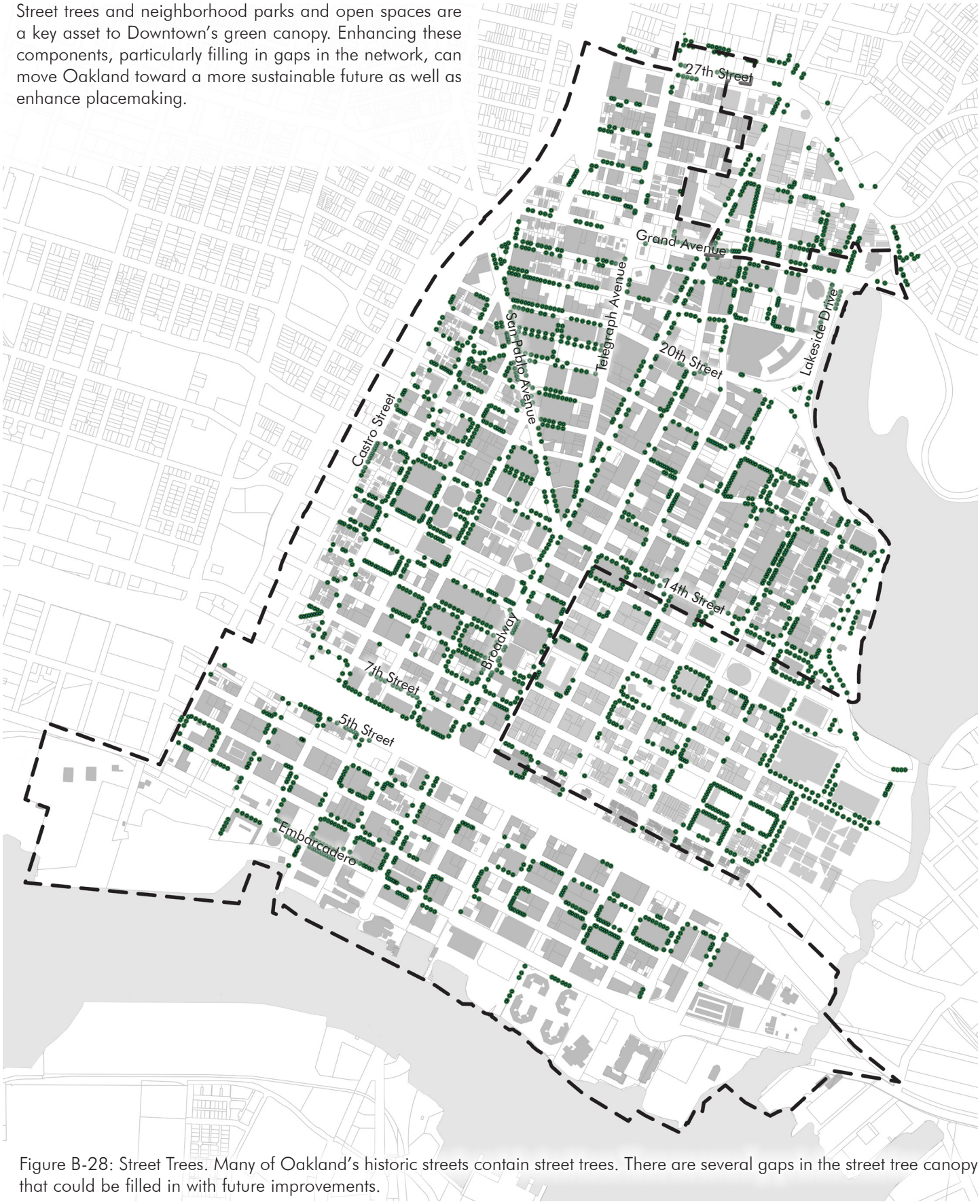


Figure B-28: Street Trees. Many of Oakland's historic streets contain street trees. There are several gaps in the street tree canopy that could be filled in with future improvements.

Sea Level Rise

The levels of inundation displayed on this map are derived from data collected as a part of the Alameda County Shoreline Vulnerability Assessment Final Report which was completed in May 2015.

According to the report, 12 inches of inundation is most likely to occur in the mapped coastal areas by 2050 and up to 24 inches could occur by 2100 (see mapped areas of expected inundation). These estimates of inundation depend on best estimates for storm surge events and tidal fluctuations. The expected inundation can be mitigated by implementing measures such as a sea wall, storm water infrastructure, etc. A series of additional scenarios are described in the report, including a worst case scenario where no infrastructure improvements and maximum storm surge events are assumed, which can be found at the following link. For more information and a detailed discussion of both more moderate and more intense scenarios, refer to the Alameda County Shoreline Vulnerability Assessment.

http://www.adaptingtorisingtides.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/ALA-Report_FINAL_2015.05.26sm_REPORT.pdf

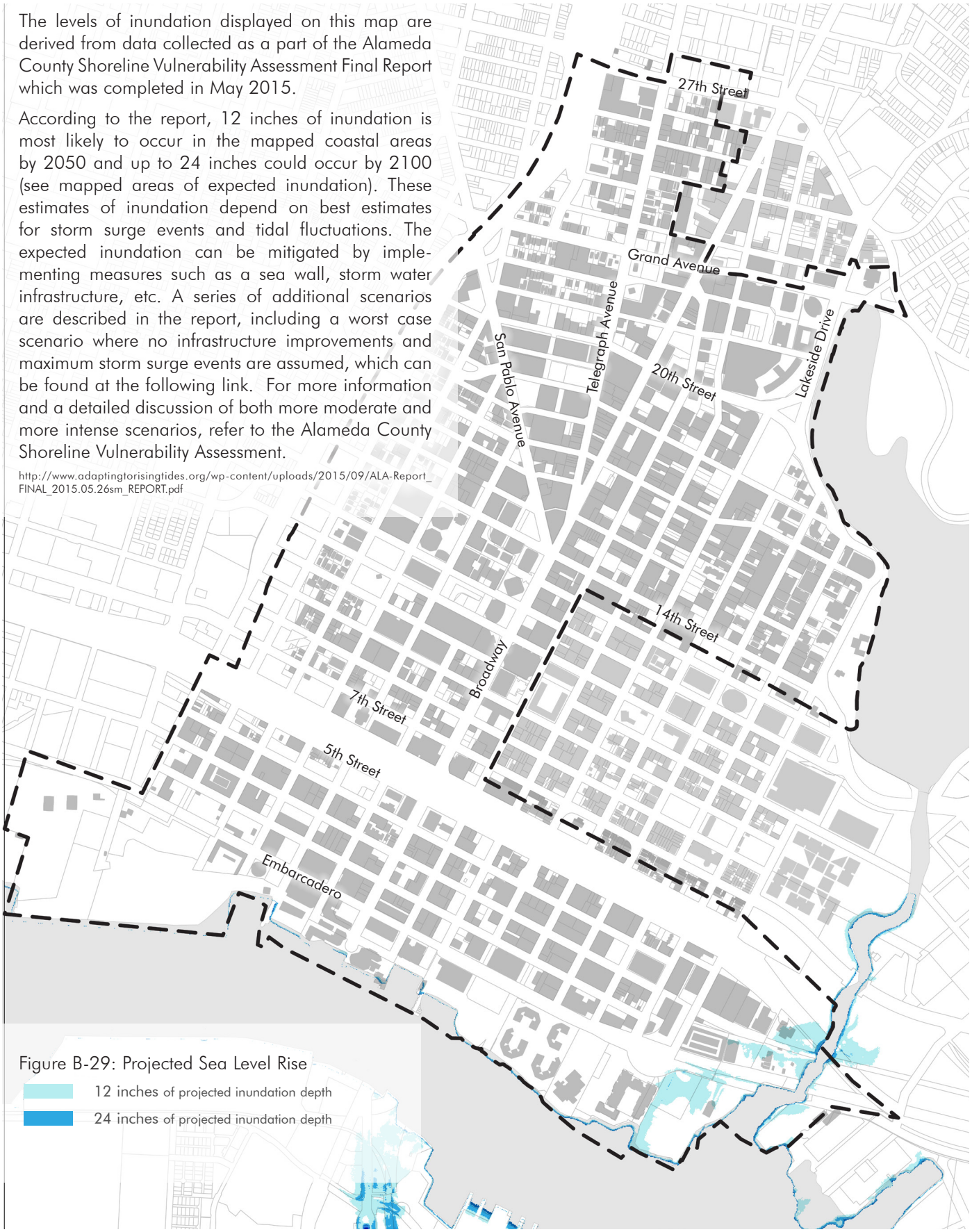


Figure B-29: Projected Sea Level Rise

12 inches of projected inundation depth

24 inches of projected inundation depth

Concepts from Adjacent Specific Plans

The Broadway Valdez District Specific Plan was adopted by City Council in June 2014. The Plan envisions the district as a "complete" neighborhood that supports socially- and economically-sustainable mixed use development; increases the generation and capture of local sales tax revenue; celebrates the cultural and architectural influences of the neighborhood's past and present-day prosperity, and implements a "green," "transit-first" strategy that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and the use of non-renewable resources.

The Lake Merritt Station Area Plan, a Specific Plan for the area around the Lake Merritt BART Station and Chinatown in Downtown Oakland, was adopted in December 2014. The Plan envisions a high-intensity neighborhood around a rejuvenated Lake Merritt BART station. It seeks to reinforce and integrate the cultural and recreational resources that make the area around the transit station unique. The Plan identifies ways that streets, open spaces, and other infrastructure can be enhanced, and establishes regulations for development projects that further the area's vibrancy.

The West Oakland Specific Plan, adopted in 2014, is located west of downtown and south of Emeryville. The plan encourages new transit-oriented mixed income neighborhoods near the West Oakland BART station and the development of cultural and employment centers. The area contains its own BART station, historically designated residential and commercial neighborhoods, a diverse population, and a renowned arts community. The plan envisions increasing employment and economic opportunities for all citizens, improving community health, eliminating exposure to toxic chemicals, providing new housing opportunities for all income levels, eliminating blight and reducing crime, as well as improve the area's streets and infrastructure.

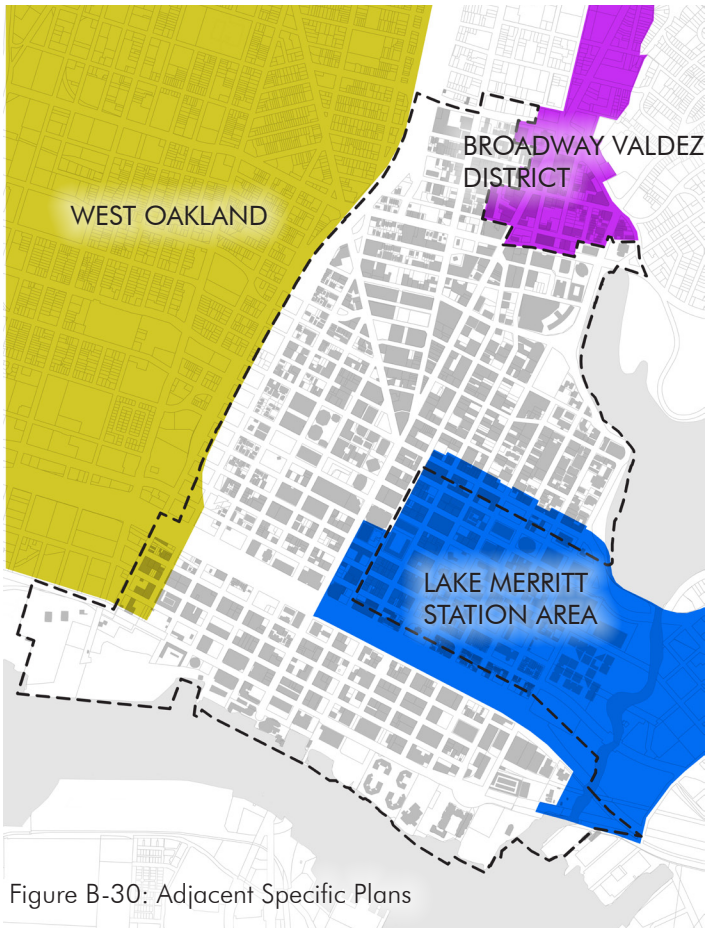


Figure B-30: Adjacent Specific Plans

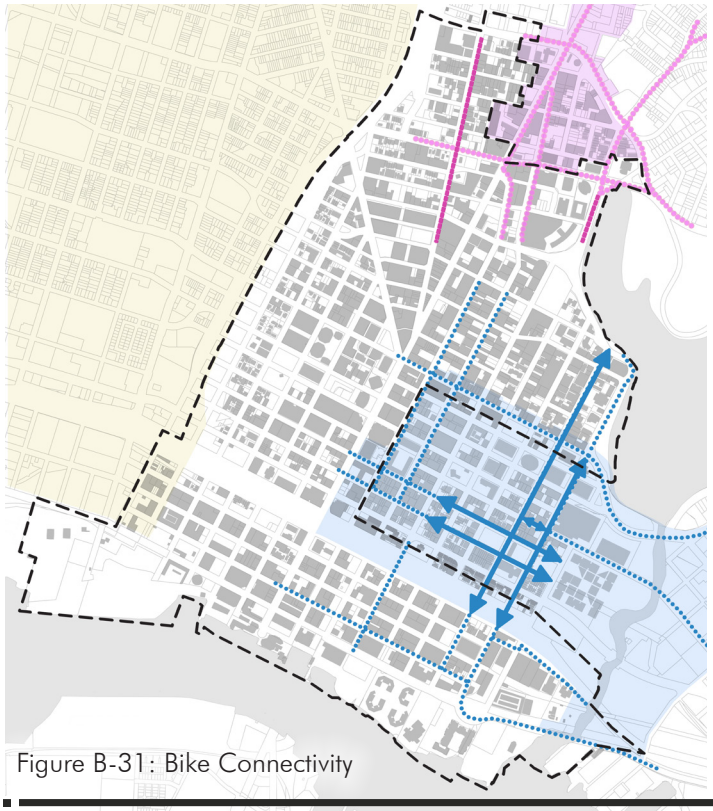


Figure B-31: Bike Connectivity

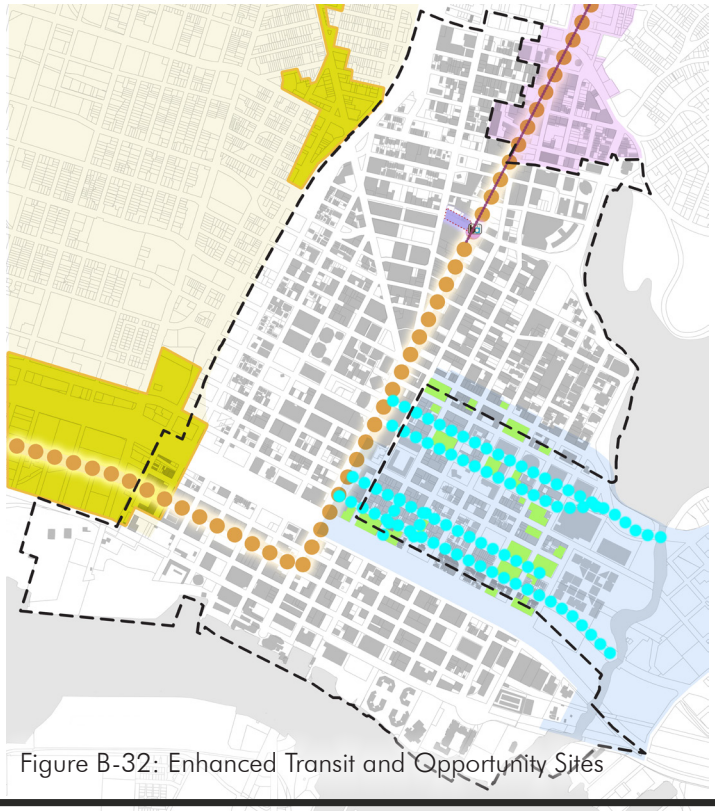


Figure B-32: Enhanced Transit and Opportunity Sites

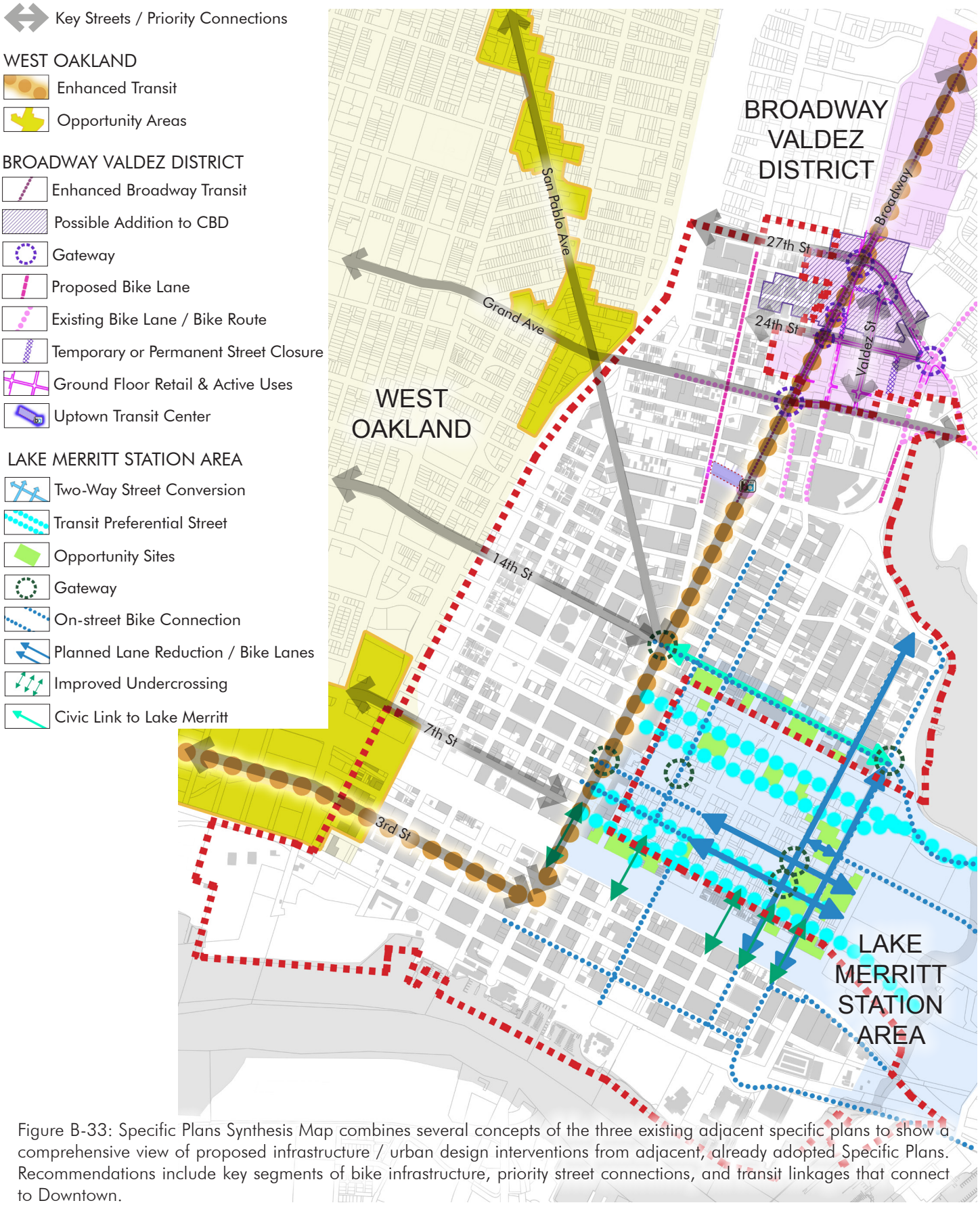


Figure B-33: Specific Plans Synthesis Map combines several concepts of the three existing adjacent specific plans to show a comprehensive view of proposed infrastructure / urban design interventions from adjacent, already adopted Specific Plans. Recommendations include key segments of bike infrastructure, priority street connections, and transit linkages that connect to Downtown.

Cultural Assets

Figure B-34a: Cultural Assets: Organizations and Institutions

Civic / Cultural Buildings

1. A City Obsession
2. African American Museum & Library
3. Bay Area Girls Rock Camp
4. Betti Ono Gallery
5. Bissap Baobab
6. Bust of John B. Williams
7. Byron Rumford Post Office
8. C.L. Dellums Apartments
9. California Revels
10. Cantare Con Vivo
11. Crossburger
12. Don McCullums Statue
13. East Bay Performing Arts
14. Elihu M. Harris State Building
15. Ella Baker Center
16. Feelmore
17. Geoffrey's Inner Circle
18. Imagine Affairs Lounge
19. Joyce Gordon Gallery
20. Kitka, Inc.
21. Living Jazz, Inc.
22. Malonga Casquelord Center
23. Marvin X's Academy of the Da Corner
24. Museum of Children's Art
25. New Karibbean City
26. Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce
27. Oakland Ballet Company
28. Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir
29. Oakland Main Library
30. Oakland POST
31. Oakland Public Conservatory of Music
32. Oakland Youth Chorus
33. Oaktown Jazz Workshops
34. OCCUR
35. Preservation Park
36. Pro Arts
37. Project Bandaloop
38. Quick Bite
39. Ragged Wing Ensemble
40. Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building
41. The Flight Deck
42. The Hatch
43. U'NEXT
44. Uncle Willie's BBQ
45. Unique Braids
46. Venue Nightclub
47. Youth Radio

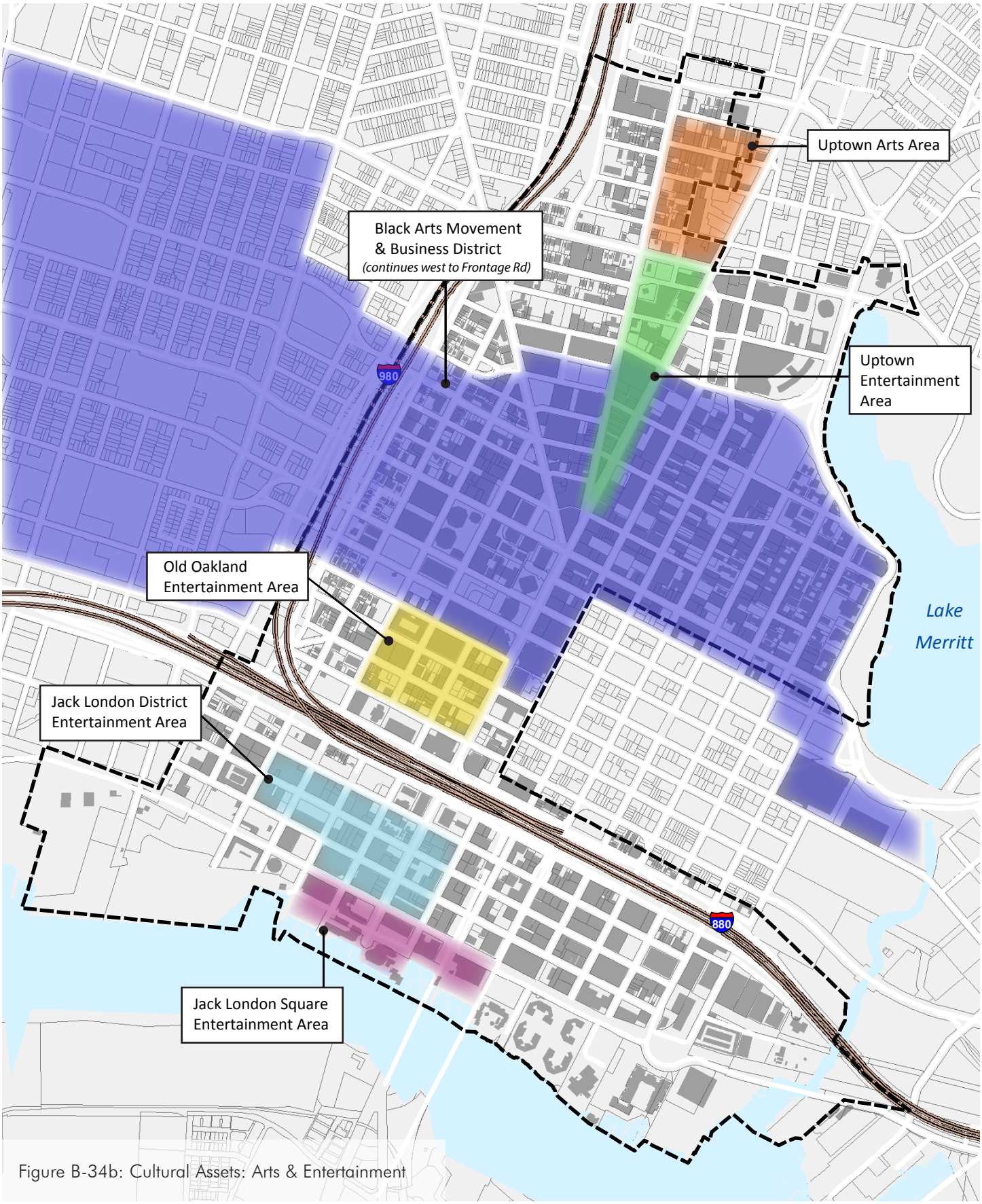


Figure B-34b: Cultural Assets: Arts & Entertainment

General Plan Areas: Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) / Estuary Policy Plan (EPP)

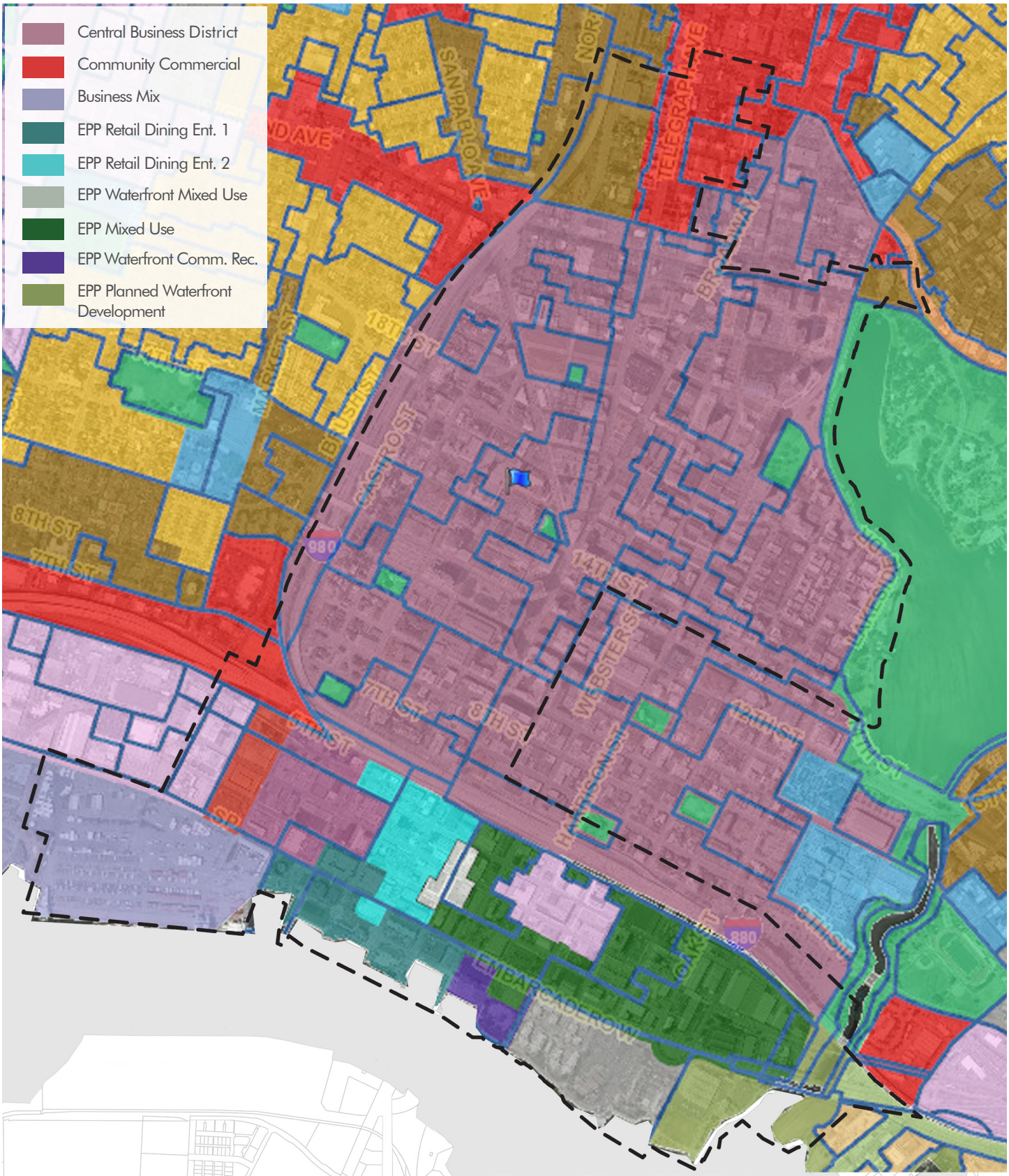


Figure B-35: The General Plan Land Use and Transportation Element and Estuary Policy Plan Areas constitute current planning policy in the Downtown study area; these are described further in Section 6.

URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE ANALYSIS

One of the objectives of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan is to plan for an improved physical realm that meets the community's social and physical goals, such as equitable access, safety, livability, creative cultural space, welcoming character, and environmental sustainability. An analysis of the existing conditions in this chapter identifies opportunities and highlights several topics to be further explored:

Access and Connectivity:

- **Equal Mode Split.** Prioritizing opportunities for safe access to all travel modes (walking, biking, driving, and taking transit) within and between Downtown neighborhoods would improve the character of the streets while offering the community more travel choices.
- **New BART Station.** The existing 12th Street, 19th Street, and Lake Merritt BART stations serve Downtown. Depending on future land uses and intensities planned, there could be an opportunity to add an additional station to serve the Jack London waterfront area, which would bring the entire Downtown within a 10-minute walk of a BART station.
- **Pedestrian Accessibility.** Downtown is comprised of a series of walkable "pedestrian sheds" (defined as the area within a circle of a quarter-mile). There should be a mix of uses, transportation options, and community open spaces within each pedestrian shed to support pedestrian activity.
- **Pedestrian & Bicyclist Safety.** Recent street improvements have included "road diets" which reallocate some street area to pedestrian and cyclist facilities, increasing safety for these modes. Additional opportunities for street retrofit should be explored to slow vehicular speeds and continue to improve safety and access for all modes. Specifically, Downtown's "bikeways" include streets with a sharrow or striped bike facility; these should be viewed as priority streets for enhanced cyclist infrastructure, such as separated (protected) bike lanes or cycle tracks.
- **Two-Way Streets.** The existing system of one-way streets disrupts wayfinding, increases vehicular speeds, and is not conducive to a multimodal, walkable Downtown. Opportunities to convert these streets back to two-way function should be explored.
- **Strategic Infill.** Parking facilities are fairly well-distributed in the Downtown. There is an existing study on-going to determine parking needs and strategy. There appears to be opportunity to infill some surface parking lots with new street-oriented buildings; in addition to providing new business and housing, these buildings can serve to improve walkablility and the experience along the sidewalk.
- **Parking Strategy.** Downtown has many off-street parking facilities, yet businesses are concerned that their customers cannot find parking. There is an opportunity to develop a parking strategy that allows infill of excess surface parking lots while offering drivers better information about and access to more strategically placed and maintained parking.

Green Infrastructure:

- **Street Trees.** Many of Oakland's historic streets include canopy trees that provide shade, improve air quality, and create sense of place. Analysis of the map of existing street trees identifies some gaps in the network that could be filled, including in Uptown, City Center, and the KONO neighborhoods.
- **New Parks.** Oakland contains several signature open spaces, including Lake Merritt and Frank Ogawa Plaza; however, additional park spaces will likely be needed to serve downtown's project increase in population. There is opportunity to include additional public spaces on the waterfront.

Historic Preservation:

- **Preserve Existing Historic Buildings.** Downtown Oakland has a wealth of historic structures, identified on the Local Historic Register, as well as API and ASI Historic Districts.
- **Context-Sensitive Development.** In addition to preservation of specific identified buildings/sites, development on adjacent parcels should consider this historic context and be done in a sensitive way.

Development Sites:

- **Incremental Infill.** The analysis of opportunity sites revealed potential for infill and redevelopment within each of Downtown's neighborhoods. Incremental infill, as opposed to the wholesale redevelopment of the entire blocks that occurred in the past, is possible on small underutilized and vacant lots throughout the neighborhoods, which together can add up to a large positive impact on the public realm. The plan should investigate appropriate design solutions for these small footprint sites.
- **Large Sites.** There are several larger sites to be investigated; these include Howard Terminal and the I-980 corridor which represent opportunities to reuse City infrastructure for a new, improved purpose.

Building Frontages:

- **Active Street Frontages.** A Building Frontage Analysis identified many gaps in "strong" frontages, which refers to buildings with habitable space and doors and windows that face the street to activate the streetspace. These gaps include many buildings with blank walls or exposed parking structures that disrupt the desired safe, comfortable pedestrian environment. Strategic infill on these lots can incrementally repair the urban realm, resulting in high-quality streetspaces.

Cultural Assets:

- **Support of the Arts and Culture.** The Cultural Assets analysis depicts existing cultural assets identified by the Black Culture Keepers, convened by Council President Gibson-McElhaney's office to develop the 14th Street Black Arts Movement and Business District. Additionally, organizations and cultural institutions that have been the recipients of grants from the City's Cultural Arts and Marketing Unit were also identified as cultural assets. The City of Oakland Cultural Funding Program supports Oakland-based art and cultural activities that reflect the diversity of the city for citizens of and visitors to Oakland. This program provides nearly one million dollars in grants to Oakland-based, nonprofit arts organizations and individual artists. The annual call for proposals is in the Spring and is a highly competitive program funded by a portion of the General Fund and the Hotel Tax. The specific plan process will continue to identify cultural assets and identify ways of supporting such resources.

Figure B-36: Buildings with inviting storefronts, such as these historic buildings on San Pablo Avenue, enliven streets by attracting pedestrians.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Demographics

Downtown Oakland is one of nearly 200 Priority Development Areas (PDAs) throughout the Bay Area. PDAs are areas that local communities have identified as possible areas to grow. In October 2015, a Priority Development Area (PDA) Profile Report was created that describes in detail existing population and employment conditions, with a focus on how Downtown Oakland has been changing over time. The PDA Profile Report is a required document for projects that receive grant funding from the Association of Bay Area Government's PDA Planning Program. The PDA Planning Program provides grants to cities and counties to help them develop local land-use plans and policies for areas identified and approved for future growth. The PDA Profile report discusses the role of the downtown within the city and the importance of the downtown as a regional employment center, providing the context for a summary of real estate market conditions.

Due to U.S. Census data limitations, the population, household, and commute information presented in the following section includes the Plan Area as well as Chinatown and a few blocks west of Highway 980 (see map above). The term "Greater Downtown" is used to reflect this expanded geography. All U.S. Census data with a cited year of "2013" refers to 2009-2013 5-year estimates provided by the Census' American Community Survey. These estimates – which provide significantly more detail than current decennial surveys – are designed by the Census to reflect the entire period from 2009 to 2013, rather than a specific year.

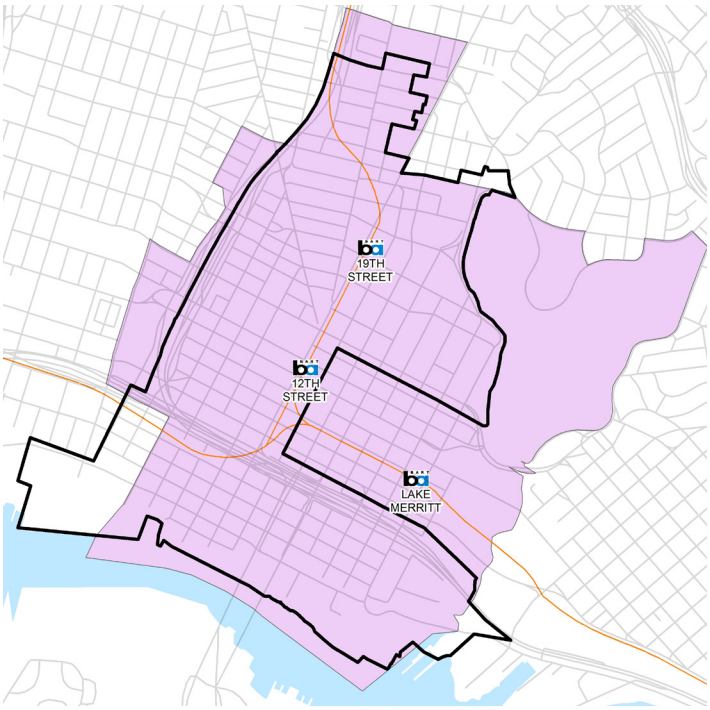


Figure B-37: U.S. Census Block Groups Used for Analysis

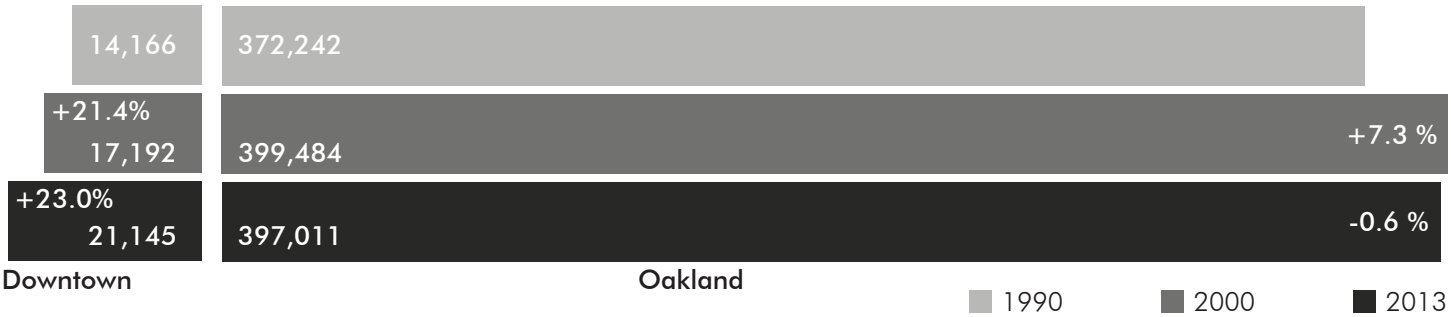


Figure B-38: Population

Sources: US Census, 1990, 2000; US American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013; Social Explorer, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.

Population and Households

The Greater Downtown's population has increased tremendously as it has become a focus for new residential development. Between 1990 and 2000, the area's population increased 21 percent, compared with 7 percent growth in the city. Between 2000 and 2013, it increased by 23 percent. About 5 percent of the City's population lives in the Greater Downtown area (Figure B-38).

Sources: US Census, 2000; US American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013; Social Explorer, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.

Figure B-39: Median Age Downtown

Key Population and Households findings include:

- Greater Downtown's population stood at just over 21,100 residents as of 2013, 23 percent higher than in the year 2000.
- Growth citywide has varied throughout the past several decades. The estimated increase in population for 2015 represents the highest population count in Oakland since 1940. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) projects that the citywide population will continue to increase through 2020 (Figure B-40). In order to accommodate this new population, the Housing Element, HE Policy 1.7 specifies that Oakland will strive to develop at least 14,765 new housing units citywide before June 2023.
- The Greater Downtown has higher proportions of younger adults and seniors compared to Oakland as a whole. Approximately 39 percent of residents are between 25 and 44 years old, compared to 33 percent in Oakland.
- Nearly 20 percent of residents in Greater Downtown are seniors age 65 years and older, compared with 11.5 percent citywide. Overall, the median age in the Greater Downtown area is 42 years compared with 36 in Oakland (Figure B-39).

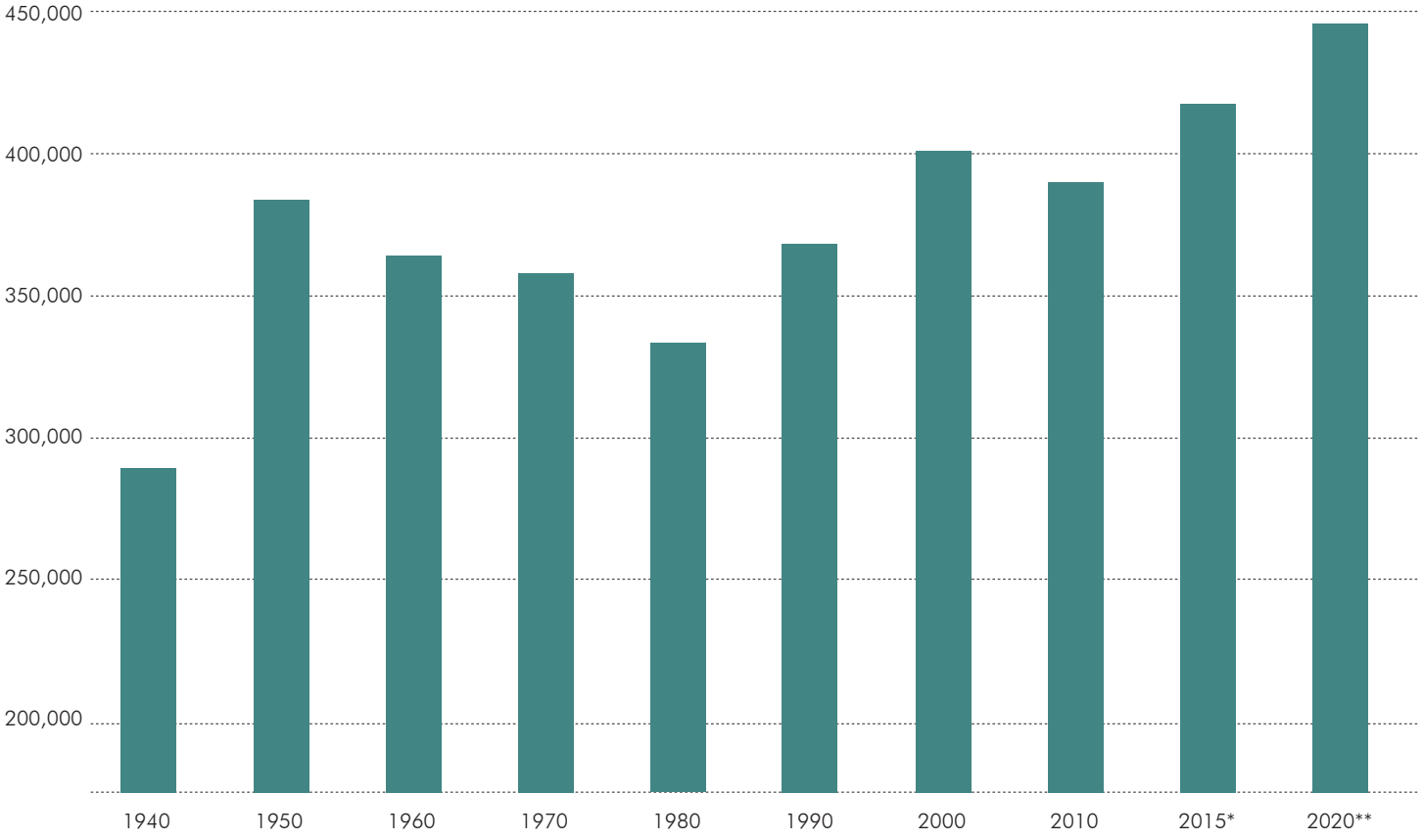
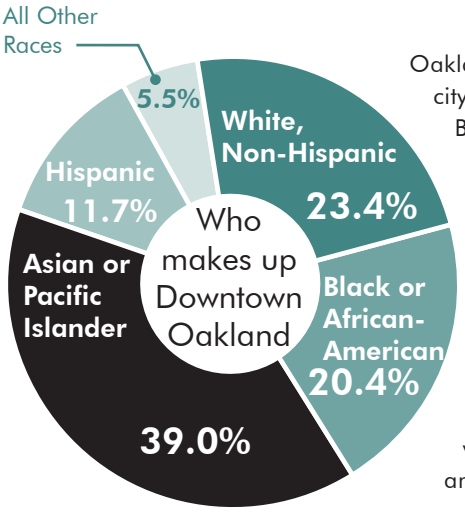


Figure B-40: Oakland Population

*Estimated

**ABAG Projections, 2013

- The racial and ethnic composition of the Greater Downtown is very diverse, but reflects a citywide decline in African American residents.
- Since 1990, the African-American population in the Greater Downtown has fallen in both numbers and share of total population. In 1990, African Americans accounted for 31.3% of the area, while in 2013 they accounted for only 20.4%, with the difference made up by increases in all other racial and ethnic groups (Figure B-41 and Figure B-42).
- The Greater Downtown has a much larger share of single-person households than Oakland as a whole.
- Approximately 60 percent of households in the Greater Downtown are single-person households, while only nine percent are families with children. In Oakland as a whole, 36 percent of households are single person households, and nearly 30 percent are families with children. The distribution of household types in the downtown has remained relatively steady since 1990, with a slight decline in families with children over the period (Figure B-43 and Figure B-45).
- Incomes *per capita* in the Greater Downtown are the same as Oakland as a whole, but *household* incomes are over 38 percent lower than Oakland as a whole. This difference is likely driven by the areas high share of one- or two- person households.
- Adjusted for inflation, the percent of households in the Greater Downtown earning less than $20,000 per year has hovered around forty percent since 1990, compared with approximately 20 percent in all of Oakland. Overall, median household income in the Greater Downtown ($32,297) remains significantly below Oakland as a whole ($52,583).



Oakland is the 3rd largest city in the San Francisco Bay Area. Oakland has had a large African-American population dating back to the 1860s. A steady influx of immigrants during the 20th century brought thousands of port and war-industry workers from all over and all ancestries.

Figure B-41: Race and Ethnicity (2013)

Sources: US Census, 1990, 2000; US American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013; Social Explorer, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.

However, incomes per person are essentially the same in Greater Downtown and the city as a whole, suggesting Greater Downtown's lower median income is driven by its smaller household sizes (Figure B-43 and Figure B-46).

- Sixteen percent of Greater Downtown households earned more than $100,000 in 2013, up from six percent in 1990 (after adjusting for inflation). Higher income households tend to be concentrated in Jack London, which has experienced a significant amount of new residential development during the past two decades. (Figure B-44 and Figure B-46).

Figure B-42: Race and Ethnicity (1990-2013)

	Number			Percent		
	1990	2000	2013	1990	2000	2013
Greater Downtown						
White, Non-Hispanic	3,078	2,849	4,955	21.7%	16.6%	23.4%
Black or African-American	4,432	4,910	4,308	31.3%	28.6%	20.4%
Asian or Pacific Islander	5,472	7,223	8,241	38.6%	42.0%	39.0%
Hispanic, Any Race	1,057	1,522	2,473	7.5%	8.9%	11.7%
All Other Races	127	688	1,168	0.9%	4.0%	5.5%
Total	**14,166**	**17,192**	**21,145**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
Oakland						
White, Non-Hispanic	105,203	93,953	103,603	28.3%	23.5%	26.1%
Black or African-American	159,465	140,139	105,362	42.8%	35.1%	26.5%
Asian or Pacific Islander	53,025	62,259	67,297	14.2%	15.6%	17.0%
Hispanic, Any Race	51,711	87,467	102,090	13.9%	21.9%	25.7%
All Other Races	2,838	15,666	18,659	0.8%	3.9%	4.7%
Total	**372,242**	**399,484**	**397,011**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Sources: US Census, 1990, 2000; US American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013; Social Explorer, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.

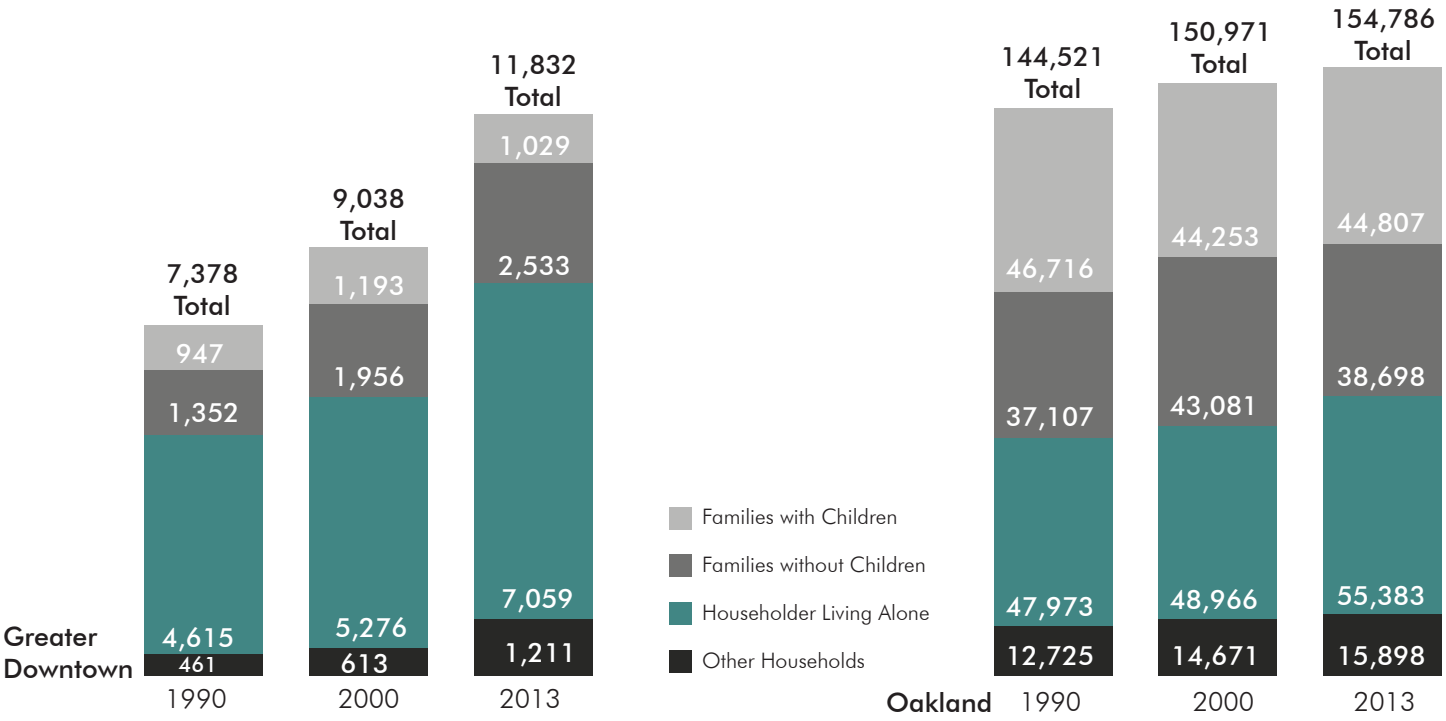
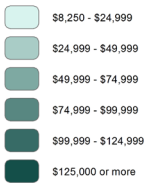


Figure B-43: Distribution of Household Type (1990-2013)

Sources: US Census, 1990, 2000; US American Community SUrvey 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013; Social Explorer, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.

Figure B-44: Median Household Income Downtown & Citywide

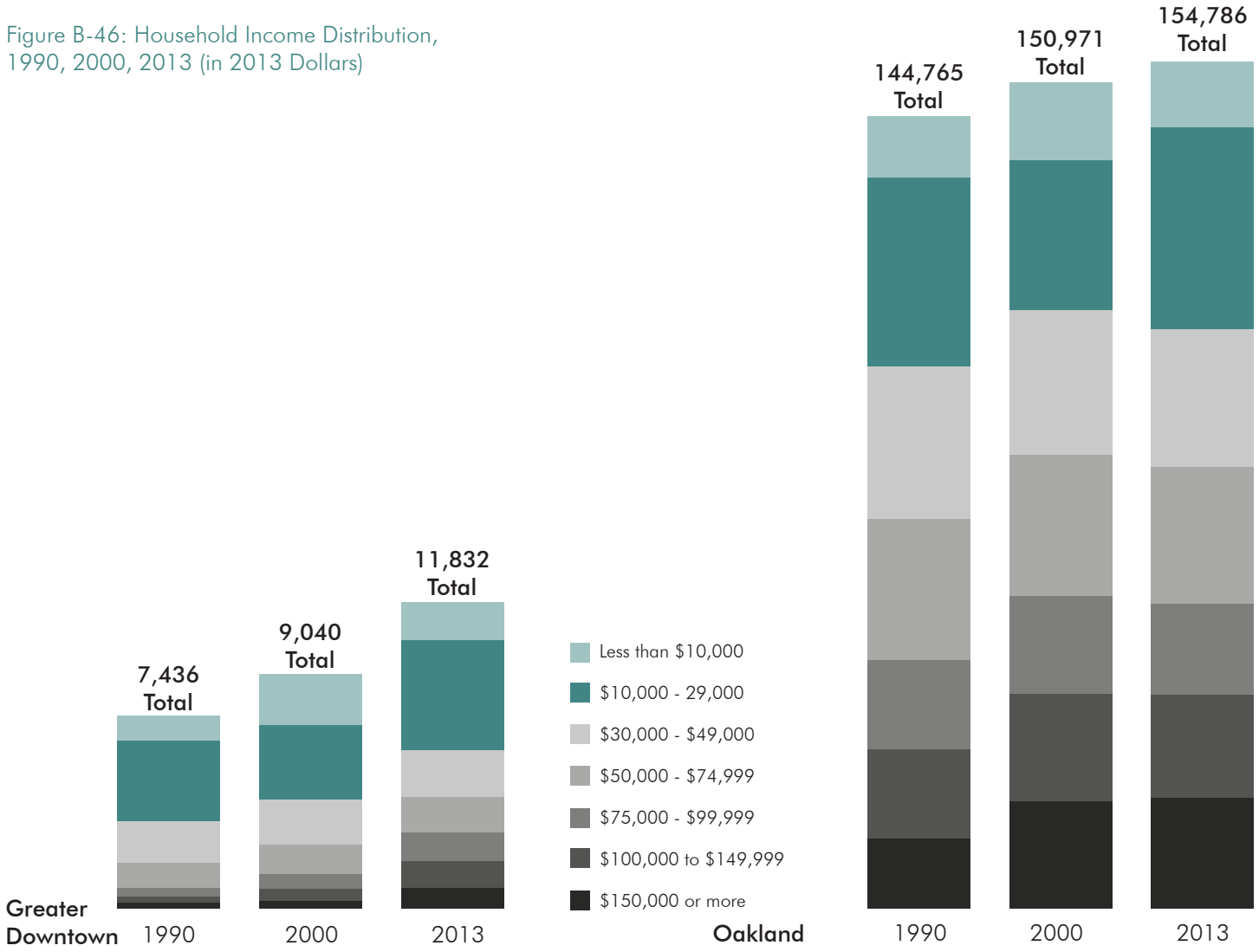


Sources: US American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013; US TIGER Line Data, 2013; Strategic Economics, 2015.

Figure B-45: Household Types Downtown

- Compared to the City of Oakland overall, a slightly higher share of residents age 25 and up in Greater Downtown hold bachelor's degrees or higher (39% versus 38% city-wide), and a higher share of residents have not completed high school (24% versus 20% citywide). The share of Greater Downtown residents age 25 and up with bachelor's degrees or higher grew 4.9 times more quickly than the population overall between 2000 and 2013, compared to 5.6 times more quickly citywide (Figure B-47).

Figure B-46: Household Income Distribution, 1990, 2000, 2013 (in 2013 Dollars)



Sources: US Census, 1990, 2000; US American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013.

Figure B-47: Educational Attainment, 1990, 2000, 2013

				Change, 1990-2013	
	1990	2000	2013	#	%
Plan Area					
Less Than High School	4,444	4,620	4,185	-259	-5.8%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	2,228	2,605	2,953	725	32.5%
Some college	2,777	3,658	3,679	902	32.5%
Bachelor's degree	1,124	1,886	4,396	3,272	291.1%
Graduate or Professional Degree	580	951	2,506	1,926	332.1%
Total	**11,153**	**13,720**	**17,719**	**6,566**	**58.9%**
Oakland					
Less Than High School	62,013	68,097	54,574	-7,439	-12.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	49,404	46,164	47,786	-1,618	-3.3%
Some college	64,880	66,364	67,974	3,094	4.8%
Bachelor's degree	39,126	47,077	59,393	20,267	51.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	26,674	33,700	45,647	18,973	71.1%
Total	**242,097**	**261,402**	**275,374**	**33,277**	**13.7%**

Sources: US Census, 1990, 2000; US American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013.

Neighborhood Stabilization

Neighborhood Stabilization is one of the primary goals of the Downtown Specific Plan. Research underway in the region can help to identify potential tools and policies.

The Urban Displacement Project (urbandisplacement.org) is a research and action initiative of UC Berkeley in collaboration with researchers at UCLA, community based organizations, regional planning agencies and the State of California's Air Resources Board. The project aims to understand the nature of gentrification and displacement in the Bay Area, and focuses on creating tools to help communities identify pressures and take more effective action.

The initiative has analyzed regional data on housing, income and other demographics to better understand and help to predict where gentrification and displacement is happening and may likely occur in the future. This analysis is intended to allow communities to better characterize their experience and risk of displacement and to stimulate action.

There is an interactive map available that defines the following categories which are summarized below:

- Not losing LI households, or very early stages; this does not fall into any of the below categories.
- At risk of gentrification or displacement; if a strong market is present and there is a large employment center, a TOD, or a historic housing stock and appropriate housing policies are not in place to prevent displacement, the neighborhood is at risk for gentrification.
- Undergoing displacement (this category is not present in the Downtown study area):
  - already losing low income households, naturally affordable units, and in-migration of low income residents has declined
  - stable or growing in size
- Advanced Gentrification; these are areas gentrified between 1990 and 2000 or between 2000 and 2013 based on:
  - neighborhood vulnerability
  - demographic change
  - real estate investment

The accompanying report includes Bay Area case studies and data analysis. The case studies can be a valuable source for successful policies and zoning practices to be explored. More information can be found at http://www.urbandisplacement.org/case-studies.

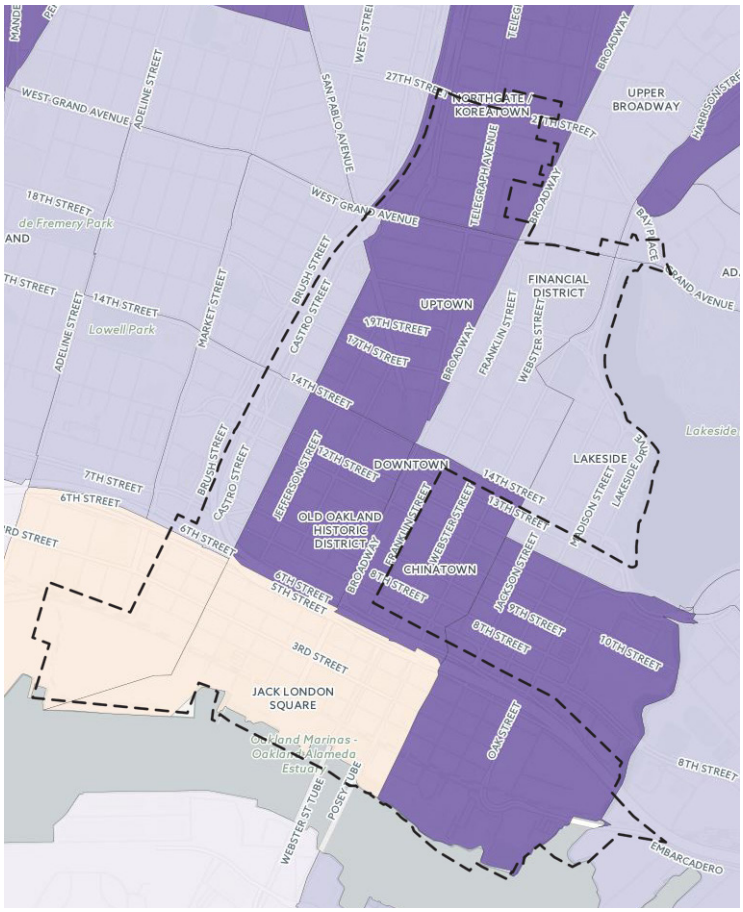


Figure B-48: Identifying Displacement Risk
(source:urbandisplacement.org)

- Not losing LI households, or very early stages
- At risk of gentrification or displacement
- Undergoing displacement (this category is not present in the Downtown study area)
- Advanced gentrification

Employment & Commute[1]

The PDA Profile's economic analysis focuses on a few simplified "industry groups". An overall map of employment density for Downtown reveals several key nodes of employment (Figure B-49). The industry groups (Figure B-50) consist of groupings of standardized industry sectors under the "North American Industry Classification System" (NAICS):

- Education and health services: Includes the industry sectors "educational services" and "health care and social assistance." Jobs in this industry group are often concentrated in institutional settings.
- Production, Distribution, and Repair (PDR): Includes the industry sectors "manufacturing," "utilities," "wholesale trade," and "transportation and warehousing." Jobs in these sectors are often located in industrial buildings or sites. However, the maps in this section indicate a high concentration of these jobs in downtown Oakland's office districts, since businesses in these industries also require office space.
- Office-based: Jobs in this industry group are typically white-collar professional jobs likely to be located in office space. Industry sectors include "information," "finance and insurance," "real estate rental and leasing," "professional, scientific, and technical services," and "management of companies and enterprises."

[1]The plan area and citywide employment estimates described in this section are primarily based on estimates provided by the California Employment Development Department (EDD); this data offers the greatest flexibility and descriptive detail, but comparable data is not readily available for locations outside the city. To paint a fuller picture, this section also cites employment data from the U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics data set (LEHD) where needed.

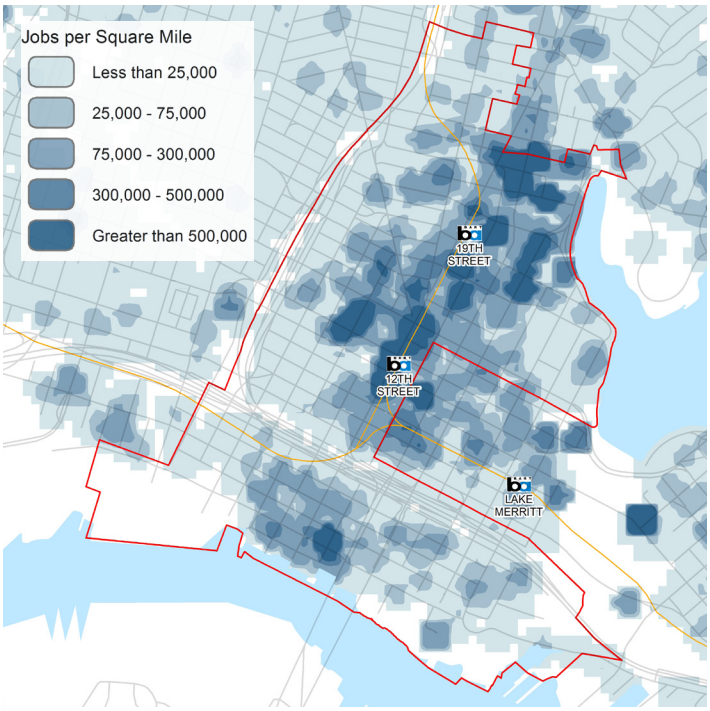
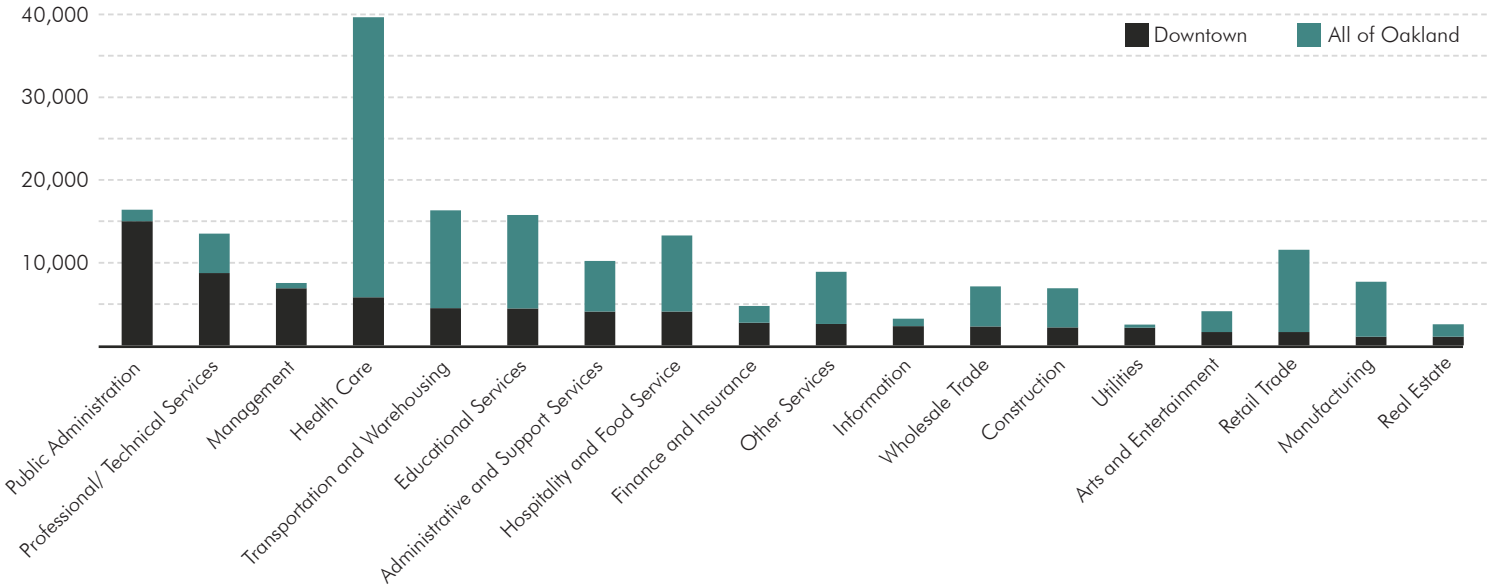


Figure B-49: Downtown Oakland Plan Area Employment Density

California Employment Development Department, 2014; City of Oakland, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.

Figure B-50: Employment by Industry Sector



Source: U.S. Census LEHD, 2013; Strategic Economics, 2016.

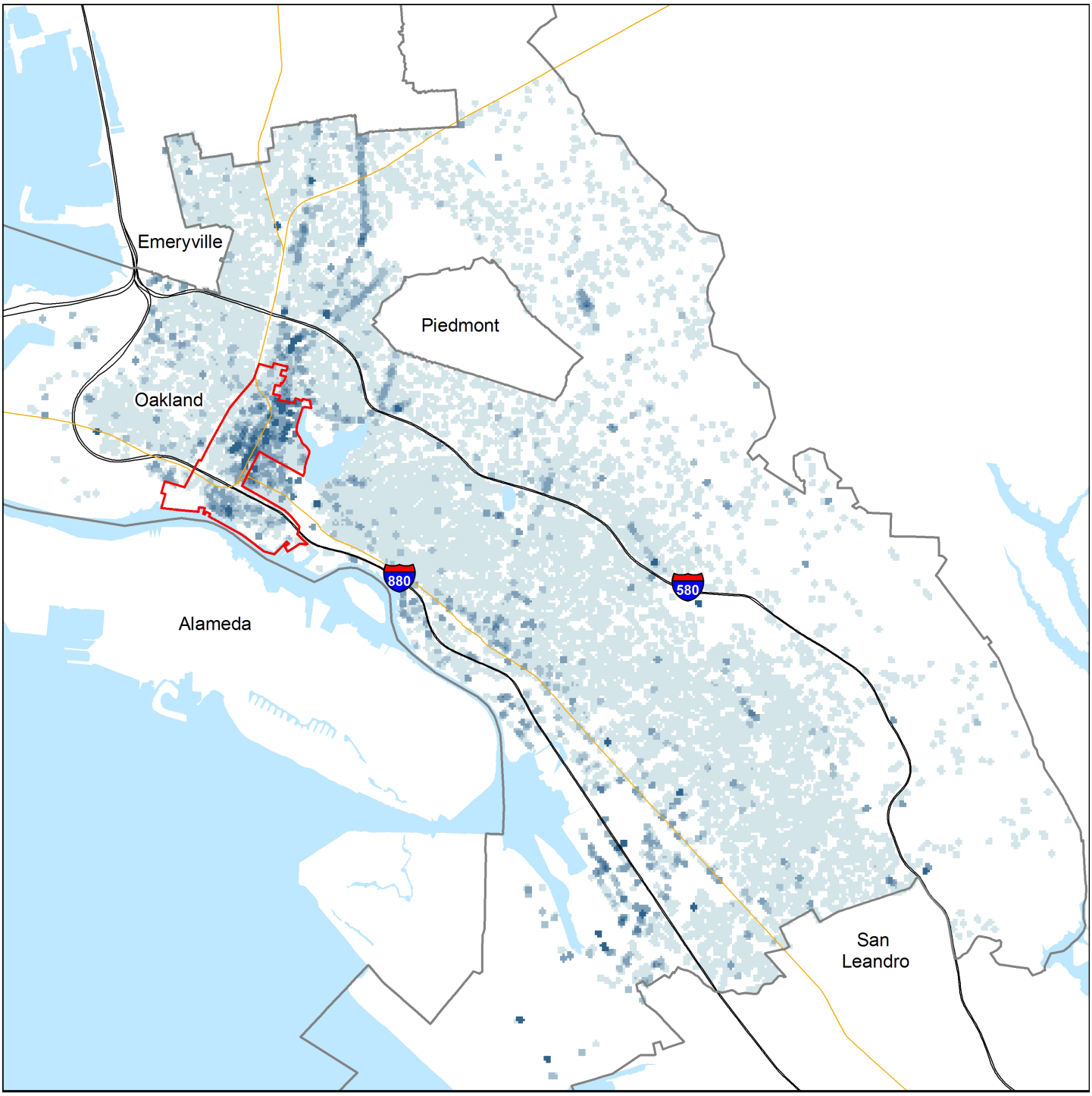


Figure B-51: Oakland Employment Density

Jobs per Square Mile

- Less than 25,000
- 25,000 - 75,000
- 75,000 - 300,000
- 300,000 - 500,000
- Greater than 500,000

- BART Line
- Oakland City Limits
- Downtown Oakland Plan Area

- Retail and entertainment: Includes the industry sectors "retail trade," "arts, entertainment, and recreation," and "accommodation and food services." These jobs are most likely to be located in retail, dining, drinking, entertainment, and hotel establishments.
- Public administration: These are separately-classified public sector jobs. These jobs can span a wide range of types, locations, and duties – from city budget oversight to street maintenance. However, in Downtown Oakland it is very likely that many of the jobs are office-based.
- Other: Includes industry sectors related to natural resource extraction, agriculture, construction, temporary services, waste management, and other personal and professional services.

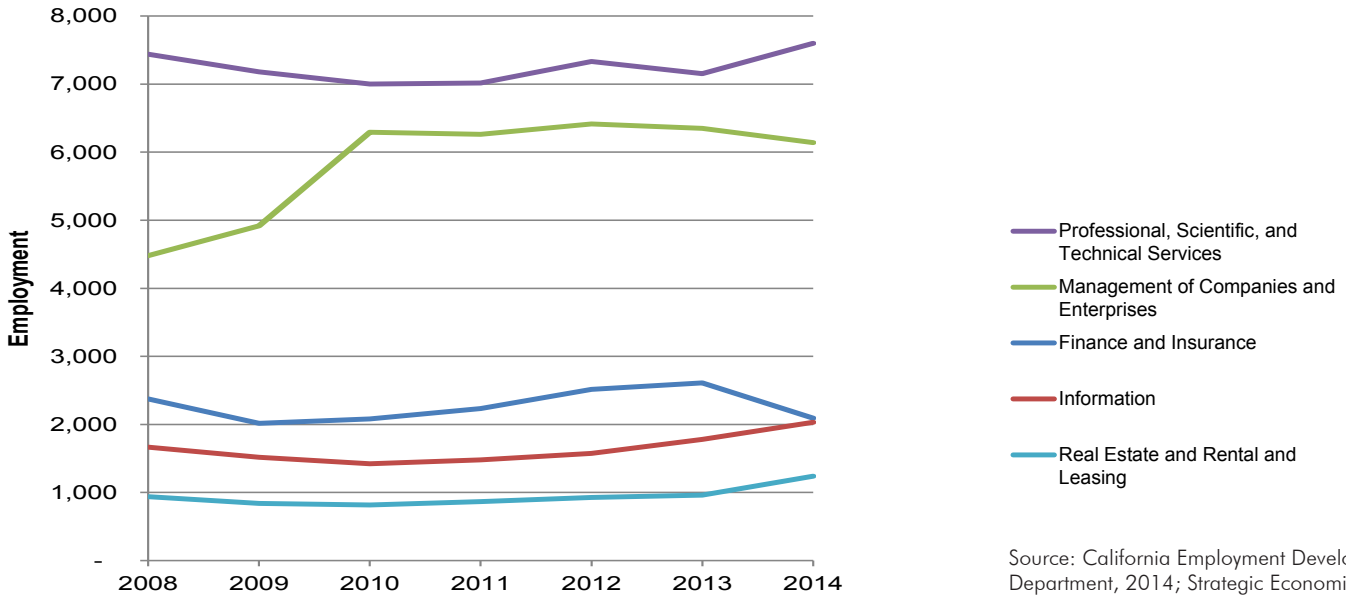
Key Employment and Commute Patterns findings include:

- Downtown Oakland is the largest and most densely concentrated employment center in the East Bay region, and one of the largest employment centers in the Bay Area.
- While Oakland's PDR *industry sectors* are generally concentrated outside of the plan area, pockets of these industries exist in the Jack London / Waterfront area and at the remaining automobile-related uses in the northern plan area.
- U.S. Census LEHD data estimates that approximately 73,000 jobs exist in the plan area and Chinatown (Figure B-52).
- The California Employment Development Department estimates that the total number of jobs in the plan area grew by nearly 12 percent between 2009 and 2014, during the post-recession period.
- The highest shares of plan area jobs are in the office-based, education and health services, and PDR *industry groups*.
- Relative to Oakland overall, the plan area contains concentrations of employment in the office-based and public administration *industry groups*.
- Employment in the office-based industry group has risen steadily in the plan area in recent years, fueled by growth in technology, media/information technology, and real estate firms.

Figure B-52: Existing Employment Downtown

U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, 2013.

Figure B-53: Office-Based Industry Group Employment by Industry Sector, Plan Area 2008-2014



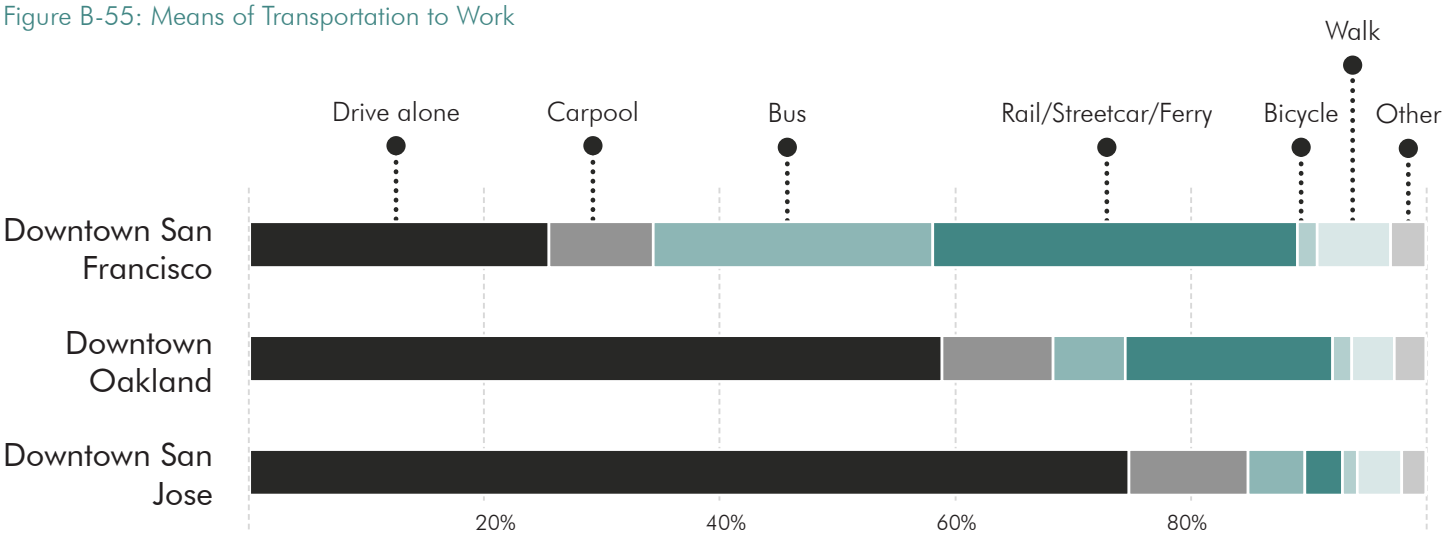
Source: California Employment Development Department, 2014; Strategic Economics, 2015.

- Jobs in office-based industries increased from a low of 16,472 during the recession in 2009 to 19,100 in 2014. This represents an average annual increase of 3.0% over this five-year period. As illustrated in Figure B-53, the professional, scientific, and technical services sector, the information sector, and the real estate, rental, and leasing sectors are all growing. Office-based industry employment in the management and finance and insurance sectors has remained relatively flat in the last several years.
- With the recent relocation of the Oakland Unified School District offices to the Plan Area, education and health services represents the second largest industry category in the Plan.
- Education and health services are growth industries in both the Downtown and in Oakland as a whole.
- The Plan Area draws workers living in communities along the I-80/880 corridor, San Francisco, and eastern Contra Costa County.
- Twenty percent of Plan Area workers are residents of Oakland, and 10 percent live in San Francisco. Weekday BART riders using the two stations in the Plan Area (12th Street City Center and 19th Street) typically travel between San Francisco's and Oakland's respective downtowns This reflects significant cross-commuting between these two residential and employment centers (Figure B-55).
- Major employment destinations for Plan Area residents include Downtown San Francisco, Downtown Oakland itself, Downtown Berkeley, and the University of California Berkeley.

Figure B-54: A large percentage of Downtown workers commute to work by rail.

OVER 40 PERCENT OF DOWNTOWN WORKERS COMMUTE TO WORK BY MEANS OTHER THAN DRIVING ALONE, INCLUDING CARPOOLING, TRANSIT, BICYCLING, OR WALKING.

Figure B-55: Means of Transportation to Work



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006-2010 5-Year Estimates, Special Tabulation: Census Transportation Planning; SPUR, 2015.

MARKET CONDITIONS

Housing Market Conditions

The housing market analysis provides an overview of existing housing supply and development trends in the plan area. It also provides data regarding rents and sales prices, as well as observations about the feasibility of additional new housing development. Key findings are outlined below.

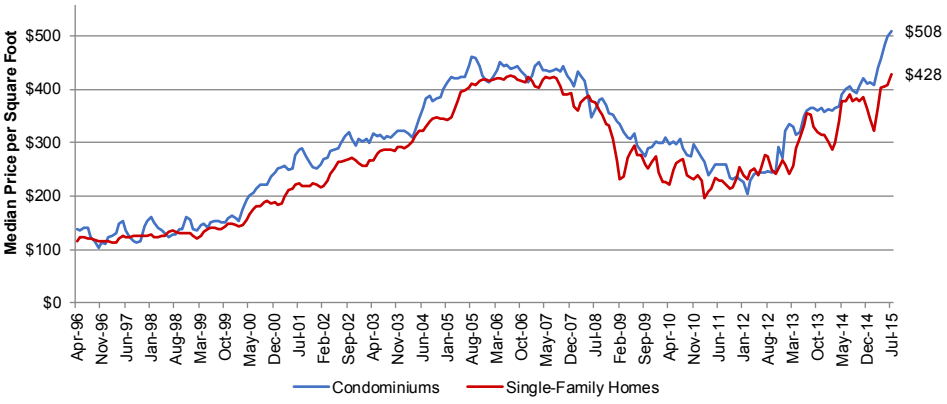
Rents, Home Prices and Affordability

- Ownership housing values in Oakland (citywide) have completely recovered to their pre-recession peaks (Figure B-56).
- Rents have risen dramatically in both the City of Oakland and the plan area since 2010 (Figure B-58).
- Rising housing costs are contributing to a serious affordability crisis.

Existing Housing Stock

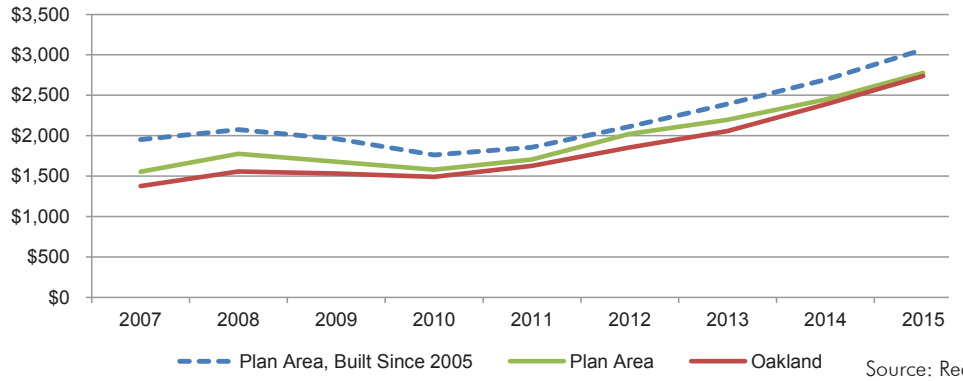
- Downtown Oakland includes a diverse mix of housing, with the character of housing varying widely by location within the plan area (Figure B-57).
- About 13,000 housing units are in the Greater Downtown area, according to the U.S. Census, most in multi-family buildings. Alameda County Assessor records indicate that the exact plan area includes 9,890 housing units (Figure B-57).
- The majority of units in the Greater Downtown are occupied by renters; however, recent residential development has boosted the number of owner-occupied units.
- About one-quarter of the Greater Downtown area's housing stock was built since 2000.

Figure B-56: Monthly Median Condominium and Single-Family Home Sales Prices per Square Foot, City of Oakland, April 1996 to July 2015 (not adjusted for inflation)



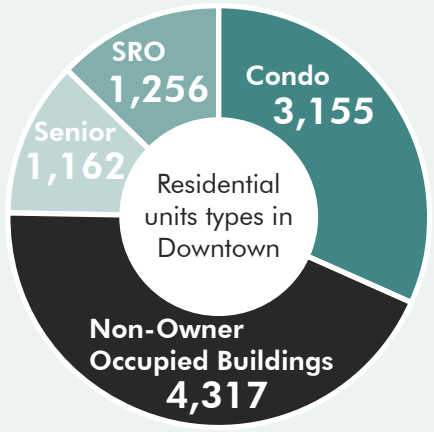
Source: Zillow, 2015;Strategic Economics, 2015.

Figure B-58: Monthly Average Asking Rent per Available Unit, 2007 to 2015



Source: Real Answers, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.

Figure B-57: Residential Units in Downtown Specific Plan Area



TOTAL UNITS: 9,890

Source: City of Oakland, 2016.

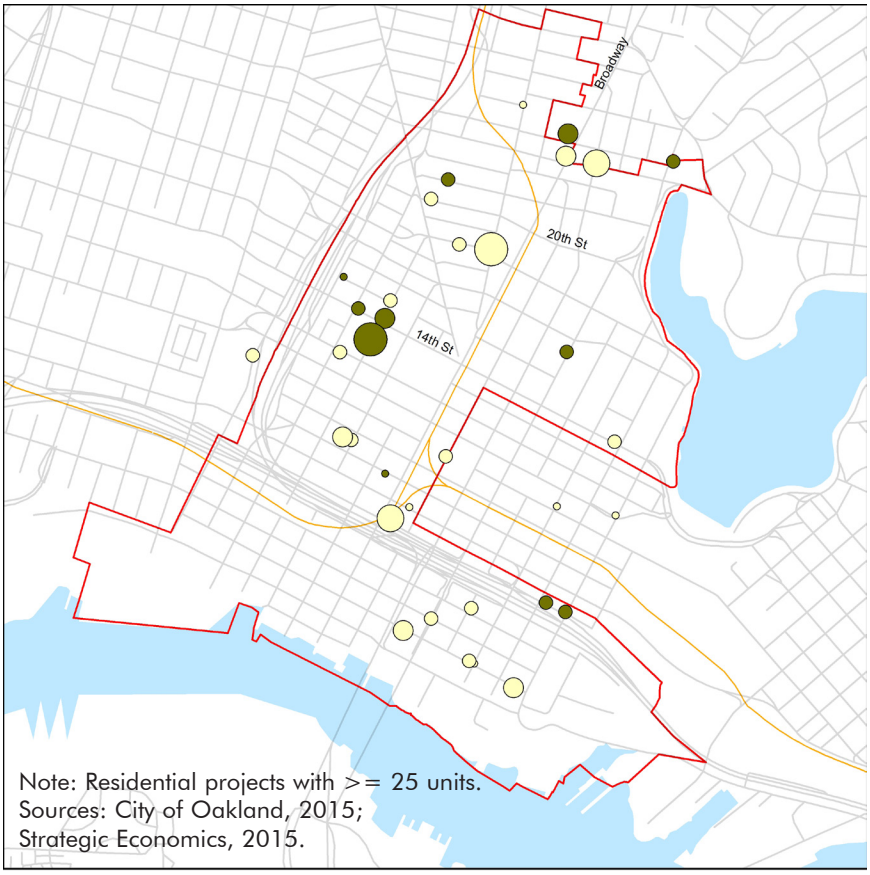


Figure B-59: Major Housing Projects, Completed 2005 to 2015

Year Built: 2005-2009
- 25 - 50 units
- 51 - 100 units
- 101 - 150 units
- 151 - 250 units
- 250 or more units

Year Built: 2010-2015
- 25 - 50 units
- 51 - 100 units
- 101 - 150 units
- 151 - 250 units
- 250 or more units

Downtown Oakland Plan Area

BART Line

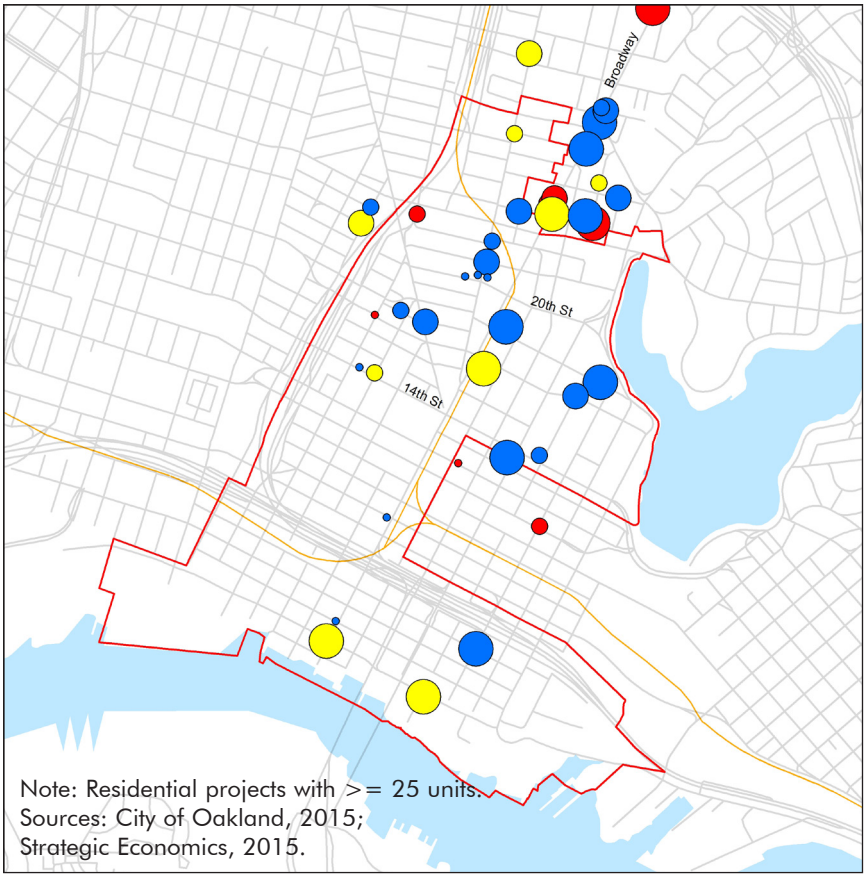


Figure B-60: Major Housing Projects Under Construction, Approved, and Proposed

Approved
- 25 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 200
- 201 - 435

Under Construction
- 25 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 200
- 201 - 435

Proposed
- 25 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 200
- 201 - 435

Downtown Oakland Plan Area

BART Line

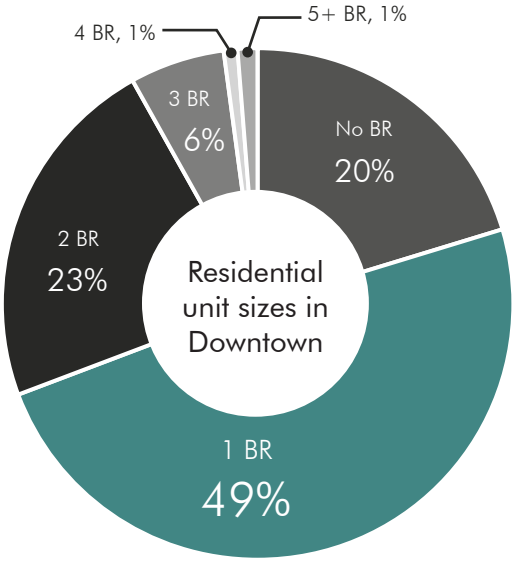
Housing Growth and Development Trends

- Housing permitting activity in Oakland has remained relatively low since the Great Recession, with developers remaining focused on the backlog of planned projects.
- Recent development in Uptown has intensified developer interest in building residential projects in the area.
- The Jack London District continues to be a focus for large housing projects.
- The City Center subarea was a major focus of housing development in recent years, but currently proposed projects seek to construct a mix of development, including office space.
- Recent studies and developer input demonstrate that additional housing development is currently feasible in the plan area, particularly projects under seven stories.
- Asking rents have risen dramatically in both the City of Oakland and the plan area since 2010. The average monthly asking rent for units in the plan area stood at $2,778 in 2015, an increase of 76 percent from 2010. The majority of residences downtown are 1 bedroom units (Figure B-61 and Figure B-62).
- Oakland as a whole has seen a similar increase of 84 percent since 2010, with an average asking rent of $2,740 in 2015. Asking rent does not, however, account for rent-controlled units falling under Oakland's Rent Adjustment Law and Program; rent increases are limited for those units so long as the original tenant resides in the unit. Sources: Real Answers, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.
- As reported in the Urban Displacement Project, a large portion of the plan area is defined to be included in the "advanced gentrification" category. The information at http://www.urbandisplacement.org/case-studies can be used to explore successful policies and zoning practices that enable development without displacement.

Figure B-61: Average Asking Rents by Bedroom Count, Plan Area, 2015

Studio	$2,399
1-Bedroom	$2,511
2-Bedroom, 2-Bath	$3,414
3-Bedroom, 2-Bath	$4,066

Figure B-62: Housing Units by Number of Bedrooms, 2013



Sources: US American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Figure B-63: City Center Pedestrian Mall runs along 13th Street between Broadway & Clay. While active during the day, it falls dormant on weekends and evenings due to the lack of housing.

Office Market

The office market analysis describes the plan area's office inventory, recent performance trends, and opportunities and constraints for further growth. It includes an overview of the unique characteristics of the plan area's different office-oriented subareas (Figure B-64). Where appropriate, conditions in the Chinatown / Lake Merritt Station Area Plan are also described, since the downtown office market encompasses both plan areas. Key findings are outlined below.

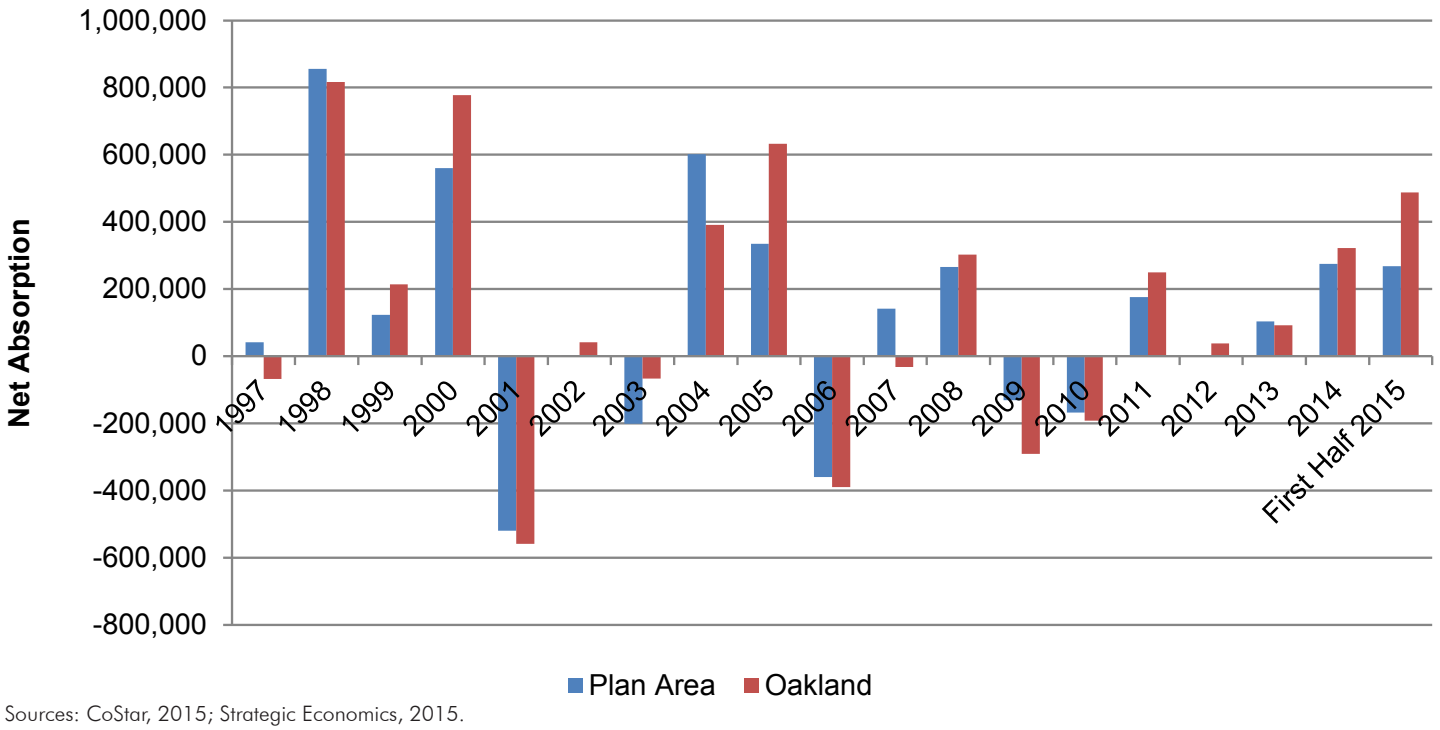
Office Inventory, Rents, and Vacancy

- Downtown Oakland functions as a major regional office center, serving both the I-880 corridor and Bay Area.
- The plan area and Chinatown contain nearly all of Oakland's Class A office inventory, concentrated in the Lake Merritt Office District and City Center areas.
- The Jack London District includes a unique mix of office space compared with the more conventional buildings in other parts of the plan area.
- Office rents in the plan area are dramatically increasing for all product types.
- Local non-profits and social service providers on short term leases are facing increased rents, jeopardizing the valuable role of these businesses.
- Increases in San Francisco Class A rents have greatly outpaced those in Oakland in recent years, but increasing rents in Oakland are now closing this gap (Figure B-66).
- Office vacancy rates fell from 11 percent in 2014 to 5 percent by the end of 2015 (Figure B-65).

Office User and Development Trends

- Downtown Oakland has experienced minimal additions to its office inventory over the past fifteen years and has long struggled to attract private office development.
- Office rents in the plan area are approaching a level at which new Class A space may become financially feasible to construct.
- Downtown Oakland's major office-based employers include government agencies, private sector headquarters, nonprofits and a number of firms that have recently relocated to Oakland due to rising rents in San Francisco.
- The technology sector and other users of "creative" office space represent an increasing proportion of demand for office space in the plan area.
- The Uptown arts and entertainment district is attracting unique office tenants.

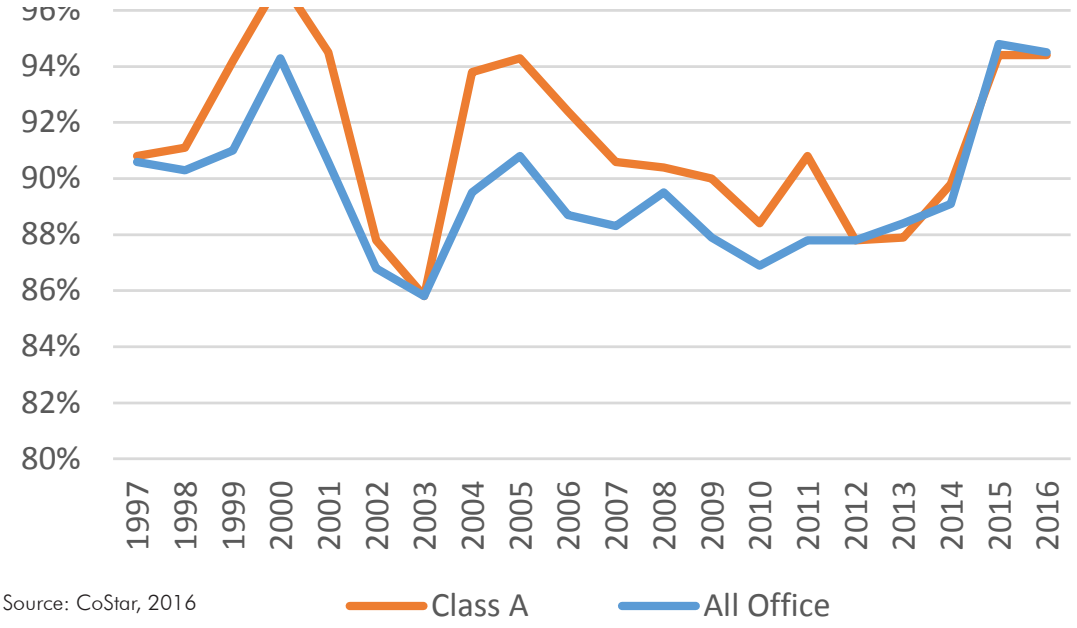
Figure B-64: Average Annual Net Absorption of Office Space in the Plan Area and Oakland



Sources: CoStar, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.

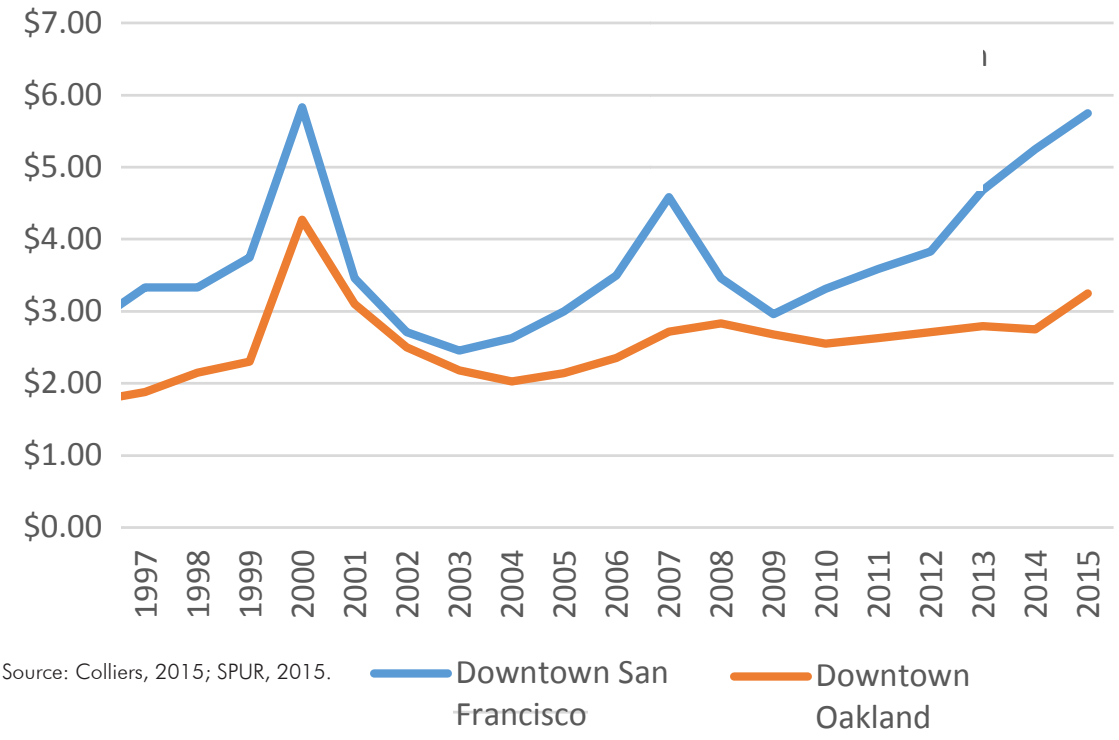
"Net absorption" is the difference between new occupancies and new vacancies of existing office space in the same period. For example, positive net absorption indicates that more office space was filled than became vacant.

Figure B-65: Average Office Occupancy, Plan Area, 1997 to January 2016



Source: CoStar, 2016

Figure B-66: Comparison of Downtown Oakland and San Francisco Average Asking Rents



Source: Colliers, 2015; SPUR, 2015.

Creative Economy

Oakland's arts and creative media community is one of the largest and most diverse in the country. It includes digital arts, music and sound engineering, film production, design, commercial art, fine art, entertainment and advertising. Oakland ranks 17th in the country for the number of artists and ranks 23rd in the country for the number of artists as a percent of the workforce. (Source: National Endowment for the Arts' "Artists in the Workforce 1990-2005.")

- Oakland has gained recognition for its thriving arts scene, solar and green energy cluster, food production and "maker" movement, as well as its unique character and lifestyle reflecting its diverse and engaged population.
- The technology sector and other users of "creative" office space represent an increasing proportion of demand for office space in the Plan area. These activities typically involve the rehabilitation and repurposing of pre-existing space for office uses. When historic warehouse buildings are the target of this rehabilitation, the specific plan must address which warehouse clusters should remain light industrial and "maker" space, versus which areas can transition to office and commercial space.
- The specific plan for Downtown will embrace and help to gain widespread support for the Mayor's Artist Housing and Workspace Task Force recommendations related to real estate financing and acquisition, financial assistance, and technical assistance to stabilize vulnerable artists, arts organizations and institutions.

Cultural Heritage

National income inequality has risen over the last two decades and California has the nation's highest rate of poverty. These larger economic forces manifest locally in Oakland as large income gaps by both demographic and neighborhood, as Oakland's poverty rate remains unchanged while wealth grows.

- Although downtown is diverse, its African American population has steadily declined since the 90s reflecting similar citywide trends.
- The specific plan can help to gain widespread support for the Mayor's equitable economic development initiatives that seek to incorporate 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.

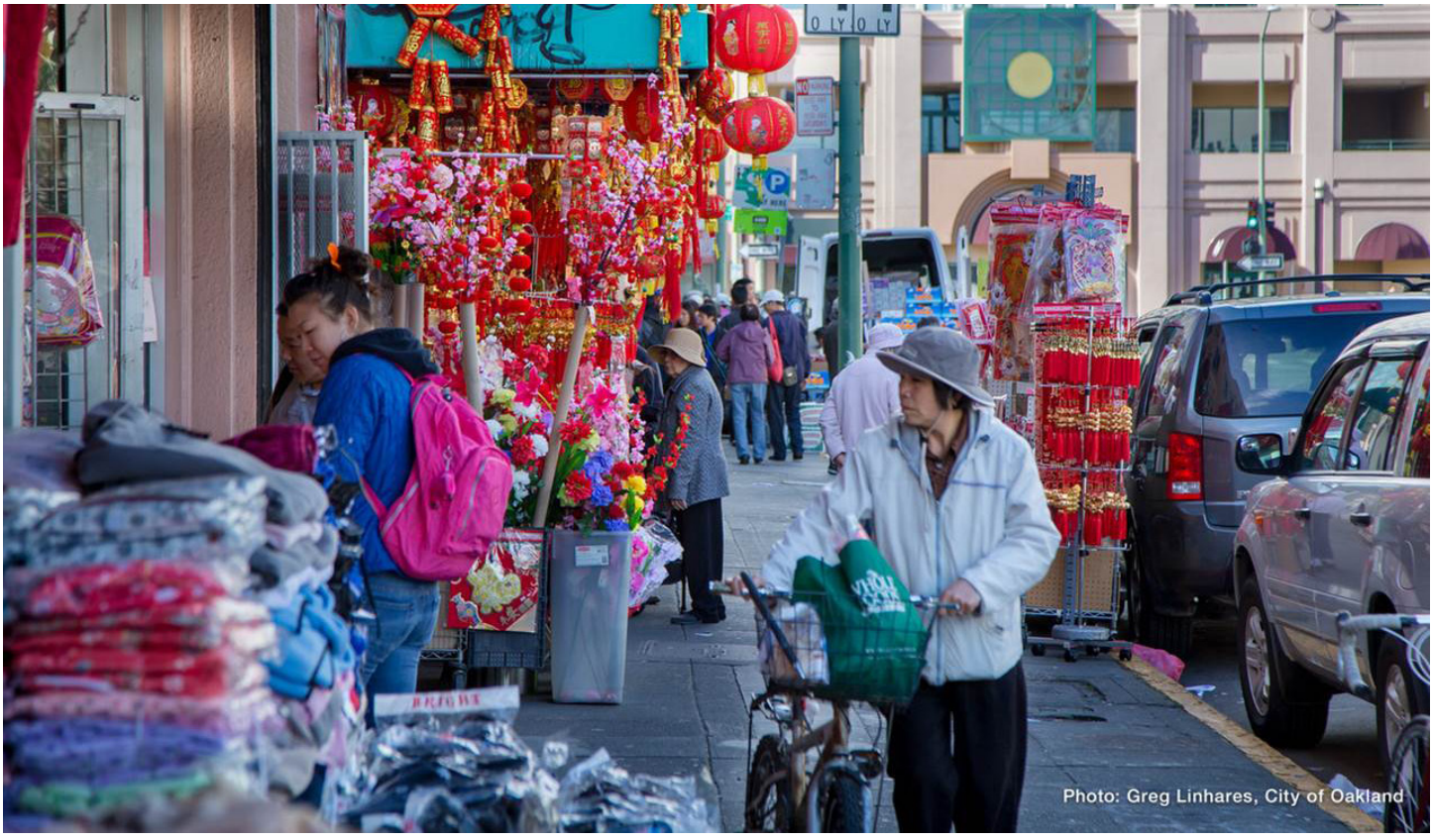


Figure B-67: Chinatown is a major cultural and business asset in Downtown Oakland.

Retail Market Conditions

The Downtown retail market was recently closely examined in the 2013 study "Market Assessment of Retailing Along the Broadway Corridor in Downtown Oakland," authored by Hausrath Economics Group for OBDC Small Business Finance (an organization focused on developing local entrepreneurship through loans, technical assistance, and research). The study documented retail conditions and opportunities in ten subareas surrounding the Broadway corridor, eight of which are similar to those in this study and include the bulk of the active retail locations within the plan area. The retail market analysis summarizes key findings from the previous market assessment and provides updated information and additional insights into current conditions based on updated market data and interviews with brokers, developers, and business district representatives.

Retail Overview

- The plan area retail mix is shifting toward "experience-oriented" dining, drinking, and entertainment businesses.
- The plan area's retail space is well-leased and attracting high rents.
- There remain significant gaps where ground floor spaces are not used for active consumer-oriented businesses.
- Population growth in the plan area is also increasing demand for neighborhood amenities.
- The plan area has limited potential to capture national comparison goods retailers – particularly in larger store formats; growth of comparison goods retail with large store formats are targeted to the Broadway/Valdez District Specific Plan area.
- The plan area's dining, drinking, and entertainment-oriented districts each emerged in different time periods, and remain somewhat isolated from each other.

Retail Locations and Trends

Each of the plan area's subareas contains a unique mix of retail (including entertainment, restaurants, and bars/lounges), market niches, trade areas, and performance. The subareas are outlined below; the Lakeside district is not discussed in detail since it is mainly a residential neighborhood with small amounts of dining and neighborhood-serving convenience retail.

Koreatown Northgate (KONO)

- KONO retail consists of a mix of Asian-oriented convenience retail along Telegraph Avenue, automotive repair garages related to Broadway's historic auto row, and a mix of arts uses including galleries and an independent movie theater.
- KONO is rapidly evolving as its uses transition toward dining, entertainment, and arts uses and away from industrial, automobile-related uses.

Figure B-68: Retail in Downtown has significantly increased over the last 10 years to include dining, drinking, and entertainment businesses.

Figure B-69: Retail is quickly changing to include more dining, entertainment, and arts.

Uptown

- Uptown is a vibrant nightlife district, including a high concentration of dining, drinking, and entertainment establishments.
- Uptown has lost sales in comparison goods shopping (defined as apparel, accessories, shoes, home furnishings, appliances, specialty goods, electronics, and office supplies) since 2001, including the loss of Sears. However, the district has undergone a rapid transformation into its status as a dining and nightlife district, anchored by the Fox Theater and Paramount Theater.

Lake Merritt Office District

- Retail in the Lake Merritt Office District primarily consists of convenience retail and eating and drinking establishments, with much of the retail targeted to local office workers.
- Retail and restaurant establishments in the Lake Merritt Office District have benefitted from the expanding Downtown workforce and new activity along Broadway and Grand Avenue.

Old Oakland

- Old Oakland is both a dining and entertainment district and a specialty and convenience retail area.
- Old Oakland's overall mix of businesses is well-established and stable.

City Center Area

- City Center retail primarily consists of convenience shopping and daytime dining establishments serving local office workers, though it also includes some drinking and dining establishments open later.
- City Center retail is well-established and generates high overall sales, but suffers from limited activity outside of weekday office hours, though it also includes some drinking and dining establishments that are open later.

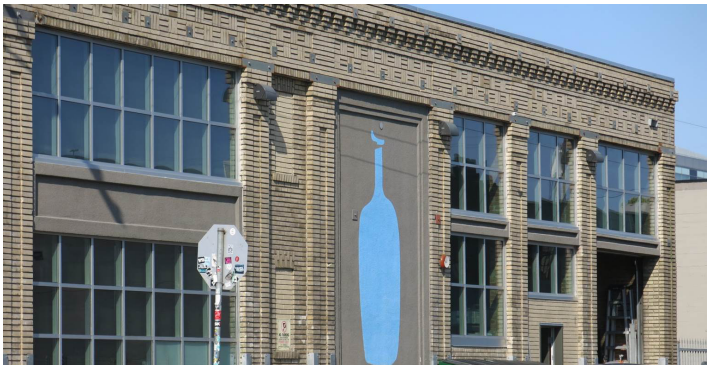


Figure B-70: Jack London District is a regional destination with its mix of restaurants, clubs, entertainment, retailers and events.

Jack London District

- This area is a regional destination, with a mix of restaurants and clubs, entertainment, and comparison goods retailers.
- At the time of the OBDC/Hausrath study, the Jack London District was suffering from significant retail losses, including the Barnes & Noble book store and difficulties tenanting the newly-built market hall at the Jack London Market Building. The area is now recovering, with the addition of Plank and planned opening of the Water Street Market, an upscale multi-vendor food marketplace. These uses are not traditional comparison goods retailers, but instead serve as "experience-focused" destinations offering interactive and unique experiences. Their additions complement other experience-focused retail outlets, such as restaurants, the movie theater, and Yoshi's Oakland jazz club and restaurant.
- Access, visibility, and lack of a major daytime anchor remain an ongoing concern for the viability of smaller retail in the Jack London District. Without a consistent daytime anchor to draw shoppers to the area, brokers report weakness in retail performance within the waterfront Jack London Square project itself. Some of these barriers may be overcome with continuation of the free Broadway Shuttle connection (or other enhanced connections), planned opening of Water Street Market, and continued growth of the local resident and worker population. The planned mixed-use housing and commercial development on 64 acres at neighboring Brooklyn Basin – immediately southeast of Jack London District – will also dramatically increase the local base of customers in the area.

Chinatown

- Chinatown, Oakland's historic and thriving Asian commerce, cultural and residential center attracts shoppers from all over the East Bay. Chinatown's commercial uses are concentrated in the four city blocks bounded by 7th and 9th Streets, Franklin and Harrison. Chinatown remains one of the city's most vibrant neighborhood retail districts representing the city's fifth largest neighborhood retail district in terms of sales. However, Chinatown faces increased competition from suburban stores targeting this customer base and from the growing suburbanization of the East Bay Asian population, thus maintaining the district's vitality should be an important City goal. Historically, food sellers and other convenience goods merchants have been the most successful retailers in Chinatown, including restaurants, shops selling prepared food and grocers. More recently Chinatown's merchandise mix has broadened to include comparison stores (those that sell apparel, home furnishings, home improvement, and specialty goods).

Hotel Market Conditions

The PDA Profile hotel market analysis presents a summary of hotel inventory in the plan area relative to the City of Oakland and the broader East Bay. It also describes trends in hotel inventory growth and the strength of the current hotel market in Oakland. Key findings include:

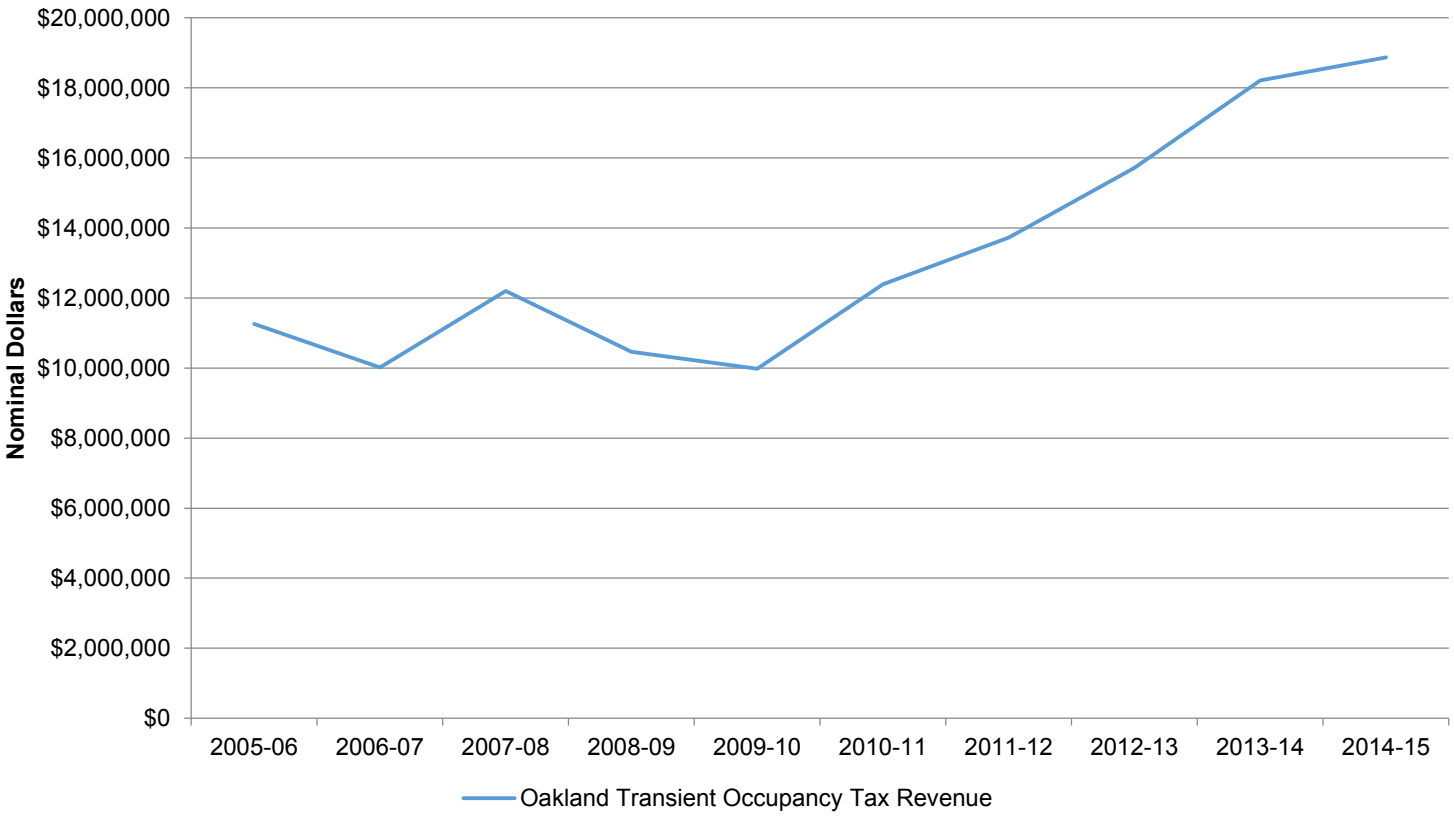
- Seven major hotels are located in the plan area (Figure B-71).
- Hotel performance is at a record high, driven by the strong economy and increased tourism (Figure B-72).
- Downtown Oakland is positioned to add hotel rooms in the near future. Although no major hotel has been constructed in Downtown since 2002, the strength of the current market and limited existing options are driving heightened interest by hotel developers. There is currently a proposal to construct a 6-story Hampton Inn hotel adjacent to the City Center area. While the economics of hotel development are challenging, long-term regional demand growth will result in gradual additions of new hotels to Downtown over the Plan's lifespan.

Figure B-71: Plan Area Hotels, by Class and Subarea

Name	Class	Rooms
City Center		**715**
Oakland Marriott City Center	*Midscale*	*489*
Courtyard Oakland, Downtown	*Upscale*	*162*
Clarion Hotel	*Midscale*	*64*
Jack London		**353**
Jack London Inn	*Midscale*	*110*
Waterfront Hotel	*Midscale*	*145*
Inn at Jack London Square	*Upscale*	*98*
Old Oakland		**47**
Washington Inn	*Upscale*	*47*

Sources: Smith Travel Research, 2014; Strategic Economics, 2015.

Figure B-72: Oakland Transient Occupancy Tax Receipts by Fiscal Year (not adjusted for inflation)



Source: City of Oakland, 2006 to 2015; Stategic Economics, 2015.

Industrial Market Conditions

The industrial market analysis briefly examines inventory and trends in industrial – or "production, distribution, and repair" (PDR) space within the plan area. This space includes manufacturing facilities, warehouses, and other uses which require relatively unfinished and open space. The analysis also examines "flex" space, which typically consists of a mix of office and PDR space, depending on user needs. Key findings include:

Industrial Inventory and Performance

- The Plan Area includes 1.6 million square feet of PDR space and 390,000 square feet of flex space, concentrated in the Jack London and KONO areas.
- A relatively small proportion of Oakland's industrial space is within the plan area (estimated at 4.8% by CoStar Group).
- Demand for PDR and flex space is strong, both within the plan area and Oakland generally; however, attainable rents are much lower for office and residential uses.

PDR/Flex User Trends

- Jack London Square'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.
- KONO's automobile-related uses are slowly phasing out as buildings are repurposed for arts and retail uses.

Figure B-73: Many older industrial buildings, such as the building above on 25th Street are currently being repurposed for other uses, such as art studios, incubator spaces, and retail uses.

SUMMARY: OPPORTUNITIES & ISSUES TO EXPLORE

Implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan will span decades, so the policies contained within it will need to help Oakland weather the ups and downs of the local and wider economy. The hot real estate market that the Bay Area is currently experiencing provides opportunities for Oakland to leverage growth for community benefit; but at the same time, rising costs have increased displacement pressures on many existing residents and businesses. These opportunities and pressures will continue to arise in the future, as Downtown Oakland is positioned to capture greater shares of regional growth in the coming decades. The Specific Plan can help the City build community wealth, while also responsibly guiding growth to meet the community's social goals for equity, opportunity, and a livable Downtown. An analysis of the existing conditions described in this chapter suggests challenges and opportunities to address in the Downtown Specific Plan.

Demographics:

- **Serving diverse age groups.** Downtown includes high proportions of young adults and seniors. The plan must accommodate the mobility and amenity needs and preferences of a wide range of age groups.
- **Maintaining racial diversity.** The Greater Downtown area features a racially diverse population, with no racial or ethnic group comprising a majority of residents. However, as is occurring in the rest of Oakland, Black and African American residents are the only group undergoing a decline in population.
- **Preventing displacement.** Although per capita incomes in Downtown are similar to the city as a whole, the share of high income households has dramatically increased. Continued demand for Downtown housing and amenities from high-income households is creating displacement pressures on comparatively low-income households.
- **Providing housing for diverse household sizes and types.** Downtown features a high share of single-person and smaller households. While high-density urban settings are often most appealing to smaller households, Downtown may also require greater diversity in housing types and amenities to accommodate a wide range of household sizes and types.

Employment & Income

- **Educational Attainment.** The share of Greater Downtown residents age 25 and up with bachelor's degrees or higher grew 4.9 times more quickly than the population overall between 2000 and 2013, compared to 5.6 times more quickly citywide.
- **Center of employment.** Downtown Oakland is one of the largest employment centers in the Bay Area. The Specific Plan should consider a variety of methods for accommodating anticipated employment growth.

Housing:

- **Attractive Location.** Rapid residential growth and the current trend of rising rents, low vacancies, and significant planned development demonstrate Downtown's ongoing attractiveness as a housing location. Rising rents are making it possible for the planned development to occur.
- **Ongoing Market Strength.** Downtown is likely to remain a desirable housing location through subsequent market cycles due to regional growth pressures, Downtown's increasing base of retail and entertainment amenities, its strong regional transit connections to jobs, and its convenient location within the core of the region.
- **Housing Shortage.** The ongoing demand for housing in Downtown Oakland suggests a need for strategies to preserve existing housing and expand affordability while also sustaining development of a range of new housing types for a wide range of income levels.

Office:

- **Sustained Office Growth.** Historically, Downtown Oakland tended to attract a large base of office tenants that were either governmental agencies or non-profits, in some cases office users that were forced to leave San Francisco during economic growth periods. This pattern held true in the beginning of the most recent economic expansion, however there are indications that the market is shifting to favor Oakland in a more sustained way.
- **New Office Construction.** One big outstanding question is whether development of large new office space will occur before the current strong regional economic market cycle cools. Demand is strong, rents are rising, and vacancies are low. However, new construction of a large office building will require a commitment from a major anchor tenant, as well as high expected rents.
- **Strong Growth Prospects.** Regardless of whether large new office development occurs in the current market cycle, Downtown Oakland's long-term office growth prospects are strengthened by its diversifying base of office businesses, excellent regional access, increasing retail and entertainment amenities, and the general increasing preferences for professional businesses to locate in the region's core and urban areas.
- **Office Zoning and Standards.** Given the historical challenge of building new office space in Downtown and office use's sensitivity to location (especially favoring prime sites near regional transportation connections), the Specific Plan must consider whether it is appropriate to prioritize particular sites for office use in future, and the appropriate form and intensity of new office development. While residential

development demand may be stronger than for office use, the Specific Plan needs to accommodate a sustainable, healthy balance of jobs and housing.

- **Nonprofits.** Nonprofits, which occupy office space and often provide important services Downtown to Oaklanders, particularly struggle to hold on to their leases when prices rise. Their services are often critical to Downtown residents, and also to Oaklanders citywide, who can access them best when they are in downtown locations well-served by transit.

Retail:

- **Retail and Entertainment Destination.** Downtown retail includes a diverse array of independent stores, entertainment destinations, restaurants/cafes, and bars. Downtown has a growing reputation as a destination for nightlife, dining and entertainment, and local retail also serves the growing residential and worker population. The Specific Plan should consider:
  - *Nightlife*. Nightlife often causes conflicts with surrounding uses, particularly. Appropriate locations should be found for entertainment, cultural and nightlife uses, and those uses should be protected and encouraged in the appropriate areas;
  - *Local Serving Retail*. Oakland as a whole is under-retailed relative to the purchasing power of its residents and workers. The specific plan should ensure it contributes to efforts to attract household-serving uses such as grocery stores, dry cleaners, and general shopping needs, to serve local residents;
  - *Balanced Retail*. Oakland has the opportunity to balance potential long-term interest from national chains with support for the long-term health of small, local and independent businesses.
  - *Diverse Customers*. Downtown's residents and other users have a wide range of cultures and incomes. A successful local economy will provide businesses that serve a diverse customer base.

Hotel:

- **Strong Hotel Market.** Downtown has a very strong hotel market right now, and new hotels have been proposed for development; Downtown is likely to gradually add new hotels over the coming decades.
- **Hotel Locations.** The Specific Plan should consider appropriate locations for new hotels, as well as their intensity and form.

Industrial:

- **Change of Uses.** The plan area is experiencing an ongoing loss of industrial space, with buildings transitioning to arts, retail, and office uses able to support relatively higher rents.
- **Preserving Industry.** The Specific Plan should consider strategies to preserve industrial uses and the diversity of jobs they provide, and to determine appropriate means of preserving other businesses – such as arts uses – that have thrived in industrial buildings yet may be unable to compete with higher rents for office conversions.

Cultural Change:

- **Cultural Concerns.** Changes in the racial, cultural, educational and income makeup of Downtown have raised concerns about cultural displacement, led to clashes between newer and more established residents, and initiated discussions about the equitable treatment of community members.
- **Creative Economy** Oakland's arts and creative media community is one of the largest and most diverse in the country. Digital arts, music and sound engineering, film production, design, commercial art, fine art, entertainment and advertising are each a distinct part of the creative economy. Maintaining and growing the creative economy should be a priority throughout the development of the Specific Plan.

PROCESS AND COMMUNITY INPUT

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INPUT SHAPES THE VISION

A public design charrette was the centerpiece of the public participation process with tours, stakeholder meetings, surveys and community workshops that provided opportunities for group brainstorming and input. Leading up to the charrette, the Community Kick-Off Meeting officially announced the Specific Plan and collected initial public feedback. The charrette was advertised in local newspapers, electronic newsletters, and via flyers posted in local business, community centers, residential hotels and other public venues. During the charrette, an open studio and open house 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 week, allowing anonymous written feedback for the team. Finally, a virtual "town hall" was created on the Speak Up Oakland website to facilitate participation from anywhere, of any time of day. The charrette kicked off an intensive public engagement effort that has continued throughout the planning process.

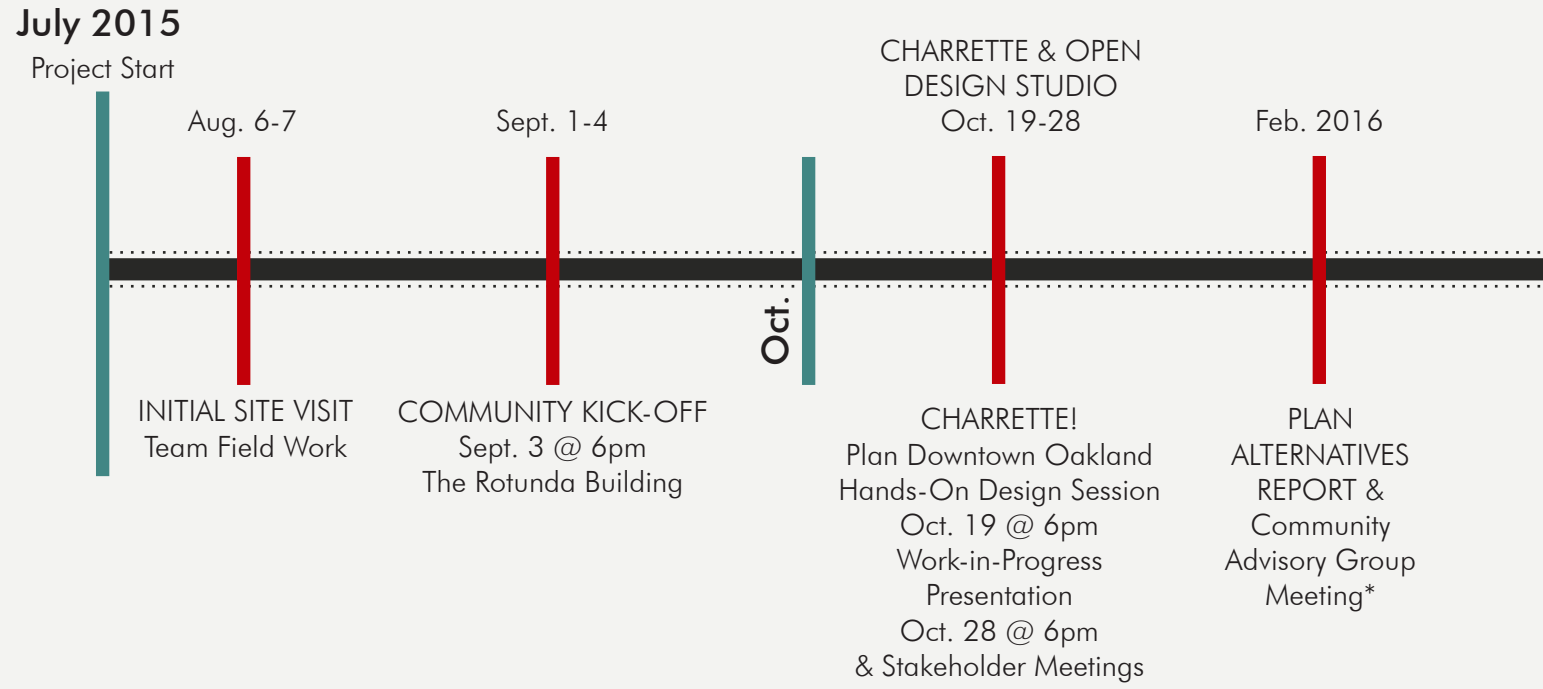
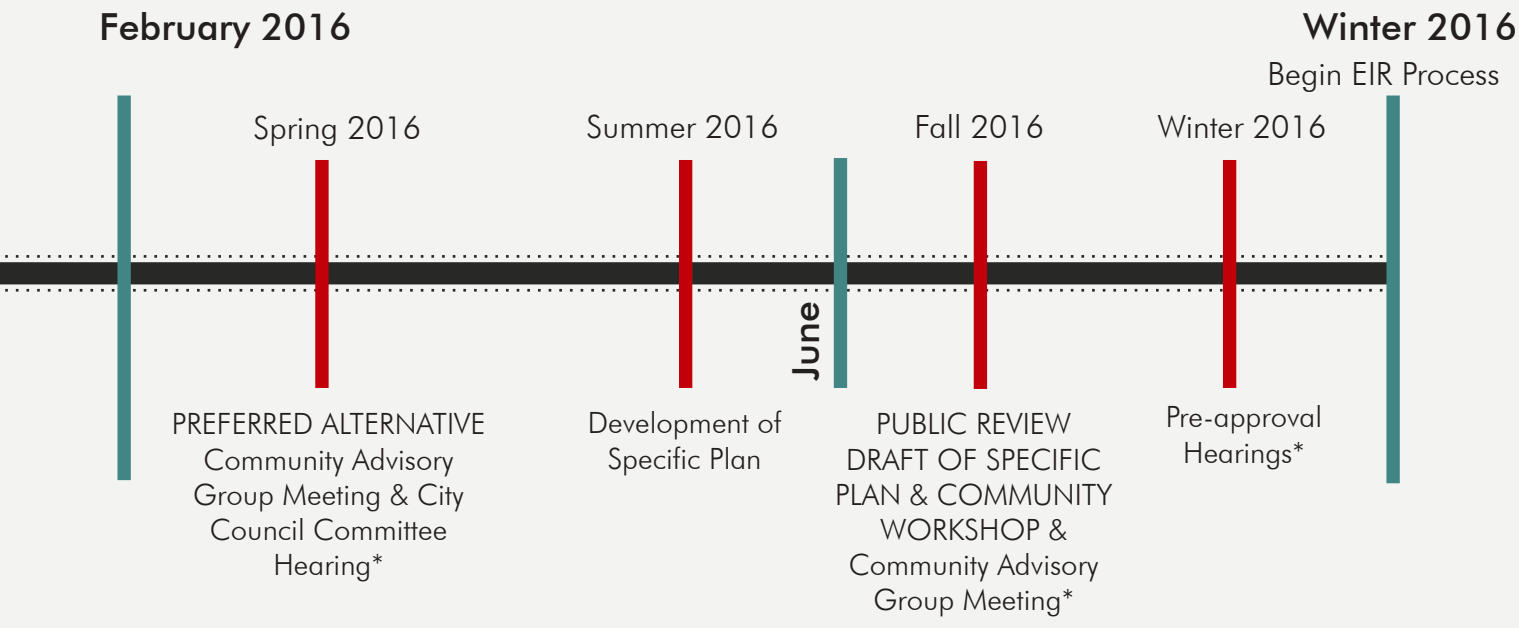


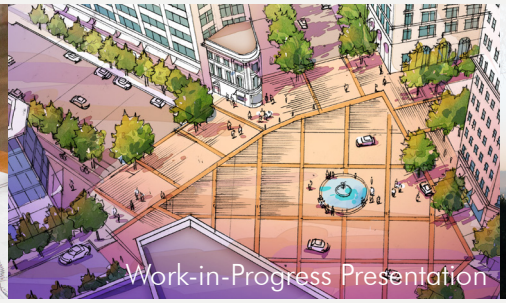
Figure C-3: Images from the Planning Process

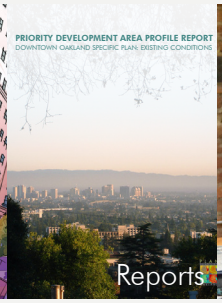
Figure C-2: Oakland Creative Neighborhoods Coalition voicing concerns about artist displacement outside the Hands-On Design Session



*Additional Meetings w/ Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board; Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission; Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee; Planning Commission & others.

Design Studio


Work-in-Progress Presentation



Reports

Stakeholder Meetings

COMMUNITY KICK-OFF

In order to kick off the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan with the public, the City held a community-wide event on September 3, 2015, in the Rotunda Building Downtown. More than 200 people attended.

The Specific Plan team presented an overview of the project schedule to members of the public, highlighting opportunities for public input. In addition, project themes were presented, including initial observations related to street design, public spaces, livability, walkability, historic preservation, affordable housing, the environment, economics, social equity, sustainability, architecture, landscape design, and a brief discussion of the evolution of Oakland's urban form.

During and after the presentation, participants were asked to contribute initial thoughts and feedback regarding their vision for the future. Surveys were handed out, and citizens completed them, offering a variety of ideas, including increasing the stock of affordable housing, preventing displacement, considering the environmental effects of future development, and ensuring that transportation and mobility in Downtown Oakland strengthens walking, biking, and transit use.

Downtown Oakland, In One Word

Participants were asked to write their vision for the future of Downtown Oakland on a one word card. Words like "inclusive", "diverse" and "vibrant" were popular responses.

Figure C-4: Kick-off meeting

HANDS-ON DESIGN SESSION

Hands-On Design Session

Members of the community gathered around workgroup tables at the Hands-on Design Session to mark the start of the Charrette in October 2015. Each table had a map of Downtown Oakland and groups were encouraged to draw on the maps to illustrate their ideas.

At the end of the workshop, one person from each table summarized "three big ideas" from their conversation to the entire assembly.

After the Hands-on Design Session, the planning team reviewed the participants' maps and feedback forms to create a synthesis map, summarizing common ideas and input.

Figure C-5: The Hands-on Design Session

Figure C-6: The Synthesis Map was created from the community's ideas and input

IN THE FUTURE:

Community Image Survey Results

At the Hands-on Session, participants were asked to place red and green dots next to a series of images; green dots meant participants liked the image, red dots meant they did not like the image. From this exercise, the design team learned basic community design ideals such as a desire for engaging ground floors and well-designed facades.

Figure C-7: Examples from the Community Image Survey

"Big Ideas" from the Hands-On Design Session

Using the "big ideas" that workgroup wrote down at the Hands-on Design Session, the planning team summarized the input into common themes. The number following each ideas indicates how many times the 22 groups listed the idea in their top three.

TRANSPORTATION

- Fill-in or improve 980 (20)
- Walkable bikeable places downtown (15)
- Better connect to West Oakland and Jack London District (7)
- Multi-generational, diverse community (5)
- Improve underpass (5)
- Convert 1-way streets to 2-way streets (4)
- Protected bike lanes on key corridors, bike network (4)
- Safety: personal safety and bike/ped safety (3)
- Light rail and/or BRT (3)
- Need better sidewalks (2)
- Provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access
- Shared space for multiple modes
- Separate the train tracks at Jack London Square
- Broadway: make it a better main street
- Better connections to lake and to waterfront

CULTURAL HERITAGE & ARTS

- Create Arts District; preserve the arts (6)
- Gateways – in and out of downtown (3)
- Need more community services (3)
- Need community or rec center (3)
- Restore Cultural Arts Commission! (2)
- Cultural identity - downtown, uptown, Jack London Square
- Historic Preservation
- People-first places
- Arts fee for development
- Save warehouse buildings
- 14th Street as an extension of West Oakland Street: arts, culture, heritage
- Celebrate Humanist Hall
- Art Walks: 15th and 17th, San Pablo galleries

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, PRESERVATION & HOUSING

- Affordable Housing (12)
- Diversity of housing stock (4)
- Mixed-use development with active, safe streets (4)
- Need places for family (3)
- Homeless: need policies (2)
- Credit availability: taxes, subsidy, microfinance, creative solutions
- Keep High-rises to one location with step-down
- Density along highway?
- Housing for veterans

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 24-hour activity; downtown needs to be open later (4)
- Jack London District grocery store and/or anchor retail (4)
- Creative space, maker space, affordable rent, artist space (3)
- City center as a destination (2)
- Retail: everyday shops (2)
- Produce market as entertainment area
- Neighborhood-serving activity
- Fill vacant buildings that face other major access routes, revitalizing the area

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

- Free open space areas and more parks (7)
- More trees and better maintenance of trees (5)
- Open spaces as performance spaces (5)
- Turn unused space into parks
- Safe open spaces
- Parklets, or other uses, for on-street parking spaces

OTHER

- Need more community services (3)
- Need community or rec center (3)
- Need logic in building heights and transitions (2)
- Bring back elegant density
- Density along highway?
- Dispersed/shared parking downtown
- Save warehouse buildings

AFFORDABLE HOUSING was mentioned by 12 tables

BIG IDEAS FROM STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Meetings and work sessions with local organizations and groups were held at the Open Design Studio during the nine-day design charrette. Several overlapping issues and themes were brought up during the meetings.

City of Oakland Public Works Staff

Plan Downtown Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

Affordable Housing Developers & Advocates

Small Businesses in Downtown Oakland

City of Oakland Economic Development Staff

BART Staff / AC Transit Staff

Commercial Real Estate Developers

Market-Rate Real Estate Developers (residential & commercial)

Historic Preservation

County Arterial & County Transit

Transportation Projects In and Around Downtown

Museum and Hood Design

City Council District 3

Plan Downtown Community Stakeholder Advisory Group (CAG)

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

Oakland Unified School District

Jack London District Stakeholders Group

City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Department Staff

OPEN SPACE

- Celebrate existing city parks
- Expand inventory of parkland
- Preserve and maintain existing parks
- Consider senior programming in parks
- Allow community 'own' public spaces & jointly program spaces
- Send more money/in-lieu fees for pocket parks & maintenance
- Develop to pay for park space and maintenance at Howard Terminal
- Add skate parks to central downtown areas
- Create outdoor working spaces with wifi and seating

TRANSPORTATION

- Dedicate car sharing parking
- Encourage a dense bike share network
- Prioritize shared vehicle use like car share, van pool, shuttle
- Create dynamic pricing for parking house and durations
- Improve bike/ped safety and prioritize pedestrians downtown
- Make "transit corridors" a real designation
- Review truck zones in Jack London District
- Reduce private parking requirements
- Revert 1-way streets to 2-way

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Include policies to achieve affordable housing goals
- Target goal for a requirement for affordable housing
- Encourage more mid-rise housing near BART
- Strategize using the Housing Equity Roadmap
- Save between 10 and 12 percent with modular housing
- Address housing & park programming with Parks/Rec and Housing Authority partnerships
- Work with developers to identify how Cap & Trade scoring system impacts financing
- Consider "natural affordable housing"
- Demonstrate commitment to affordable housing with new development
- Introduce senior housing for the Gold Coast

ARTS & CULTURE

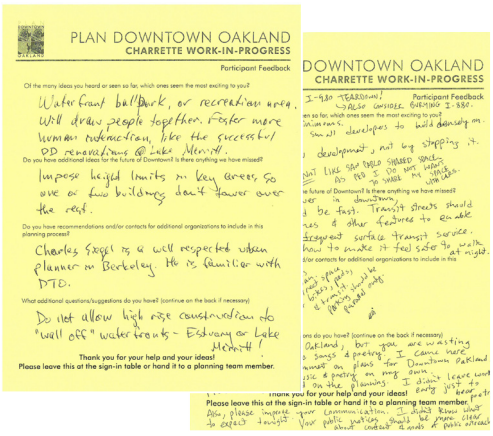
- Define & list benefits of arts districts
- Initiate creative, artistic sidewalk garbage storage areas
- Re-program Art & Soul and coordinate with Mayor's Arts Task Force
- Create rotating art installations in downtown
- Add programs for youth that are coupled with artist housing
- Make the museum as the anchor for the 14th Street African American Cultural and Arts District
- Include environment, architecture, and nature to create art
- Invest in intentional arts and true diversity, parity and cultural equity
- Map existing arts communities & cultural institutions to track retention & growth
- Treat arts as an industry and support youth pathways to arts industry jobs
- Anchor arts district around Malonga Center and Joyce Gordon Gallery
- Designate an arts zone all over Oakland
- Create an arts commission/department to get federal funding and other grants for arts

OPEN HOUSE

Mid-way through the charrette week, draft concepts were pinned up on boards and easels. Planning team representatives spoke with attendees to gather their feedback and reactions on the draft illustrations. Community members were also encouraged to write their responses to questions on boards, such as

What does "arts district" mean to you?
What kinds of housing types do we need?
What kinds of open spaces should we have?
What kinds of streets do you want?
How should the City solve affordability?

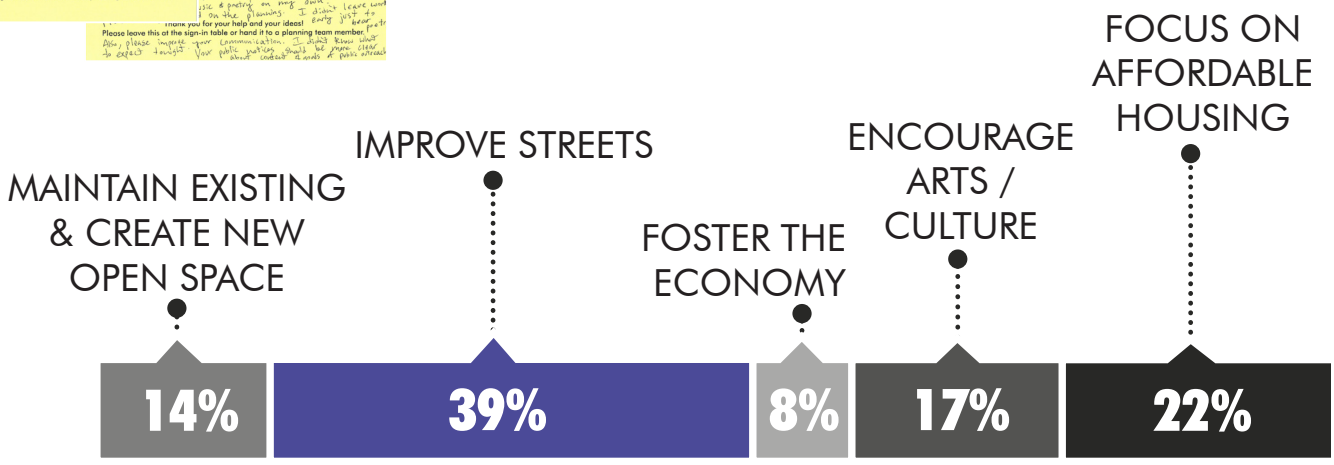
Figure C-8: Open House attendees commenting on draft plans



Participant Feedback Forms

Throughout the charrette week, 70+ community members expressed their opinions through written participant feedback forms. Below is a summary from the Work-in-Progress presentation of common themes in response to the questions,

"Of the many ideas you heard or seen so far, which ones seem more exciting to you? Do you have additional ideas for the future of Downtown? Is there anything we have missed?



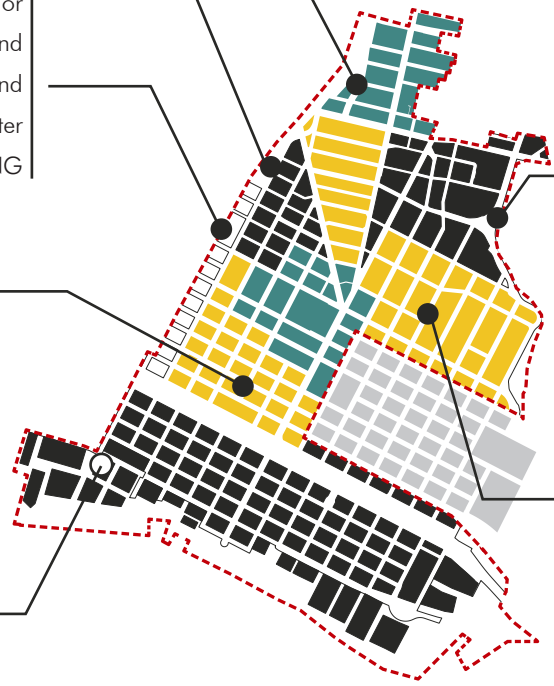
WORK-IN-PROGRESS

At the presentation of the draft plans, members from the community were given the chance to mark up draft plans and renderings using post-its and markers. Comments included:

Ceate a SAFE, HUMAN-SCALE 15th Street
SMALL SCALE infill
PARKLETS in front of older setback buildings
Replace city hall garage with PUBLIC PLAZA/PARK
Convert 16th Street to TWO-WAY

Parking lots into AFFORDABLE HOUSING or GALLERIES
Clean up blight and graffiti and give BACK TO THE PEOPLE
Close Northgate for a PROMENADE, MARKETPLACE or PARK
ARTS COMMUNITY and ART PARK
TREES on Telegraph with PLANTER BOXES in bikeway
COMPOST collection & EDIBLE LANDSCAPES
Permanent FARMERS MARKET & COMMUNITY GARDENS

REPAIR not gentrify on the corridor
AFFORDABLE housing on new developable land
Replace with SURFACE STREET & develop land
Make WALKING experience better
Make bridge more interesting with COOL LIGHTING



MIXED-USE, not office
SMALL (historic buildings) scale
BENCHES along walkways
SAFE streets
AFFORDABLE commercial space
Raised CYCLE TRACK w/ separate lanes BRT/LRT station & cars

Research other cultures' PRECEDENTS & UNDERSTANDING in Latin America
Separate LANES for bike/car/transit on Broadway

SAVE THE CRANES and have open space
SPORTS AREA for the public
BALLPARK on waterfront
MORE GREEN between buildings and waterfront
PED/BIKE BRIDGE to Alameda
Attractive & maintainable ART & LIGHTING and GREENWAYS to underpass sidewalks
CLIMATE RESILIENCE around waterways

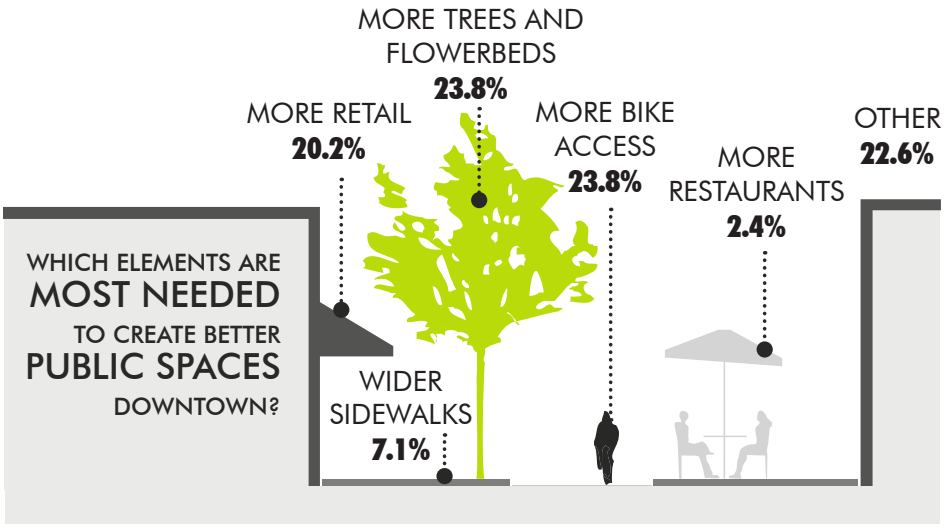
AFFORDABILITY
1-ways to 2-WAYS & bike lanes
Create SMALLER blocks
MAKER SPACE retail and BLACK ARTS FORUMS along 14th St
Improve LIGHTING along Harrison

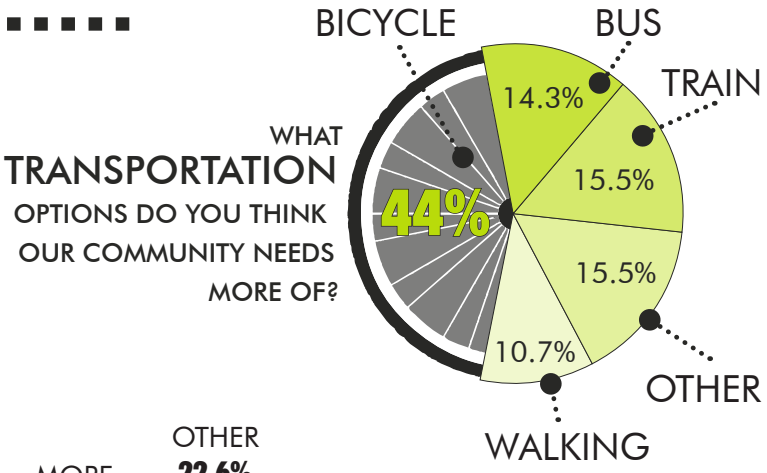
Figure C-9: Community members commenting on draft plans and renderings

ONGOING CONVERSATIONS

Speak Up Oakland!

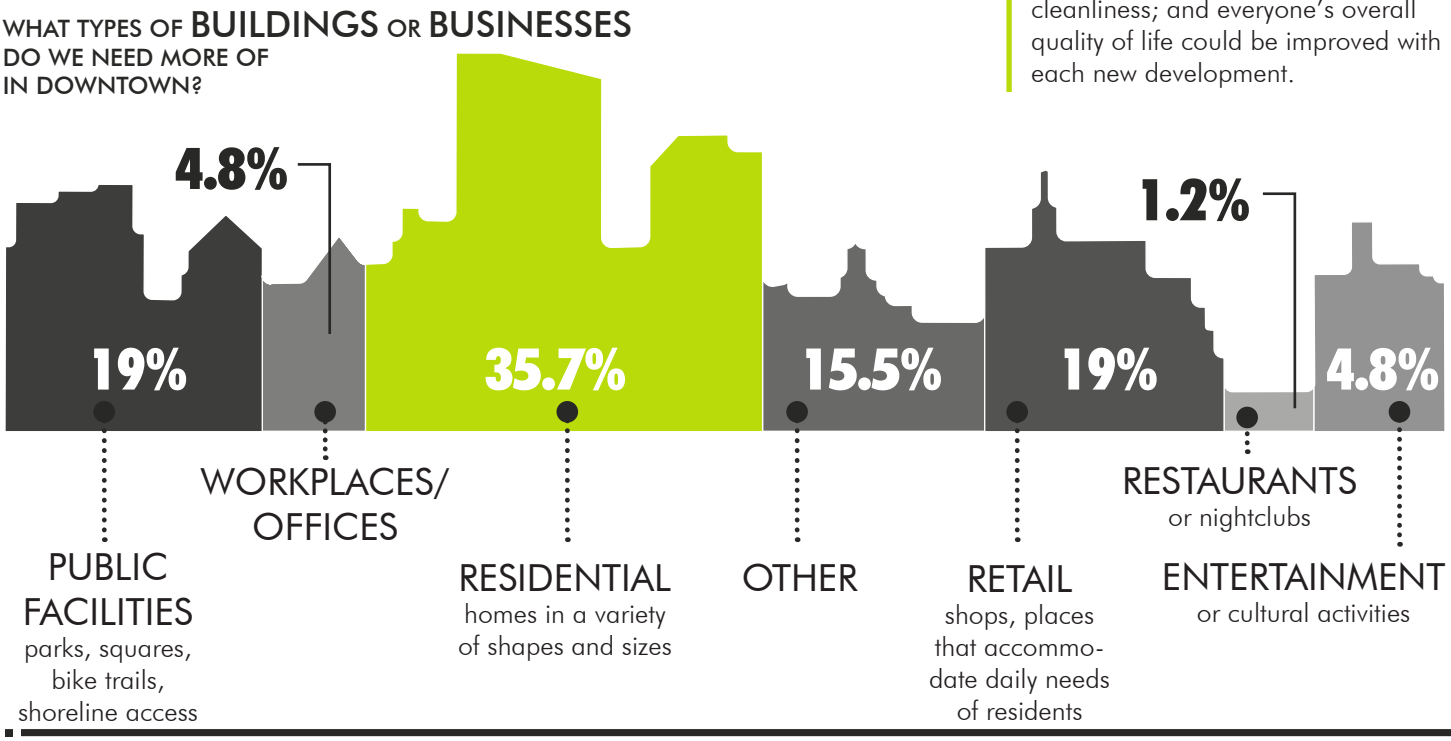
The community conversation is beyond public meetings; over 120 responses have been received on the online forum, **SpeakUpOakland.org**. Key statistics of who is participating and results from online polling are illustrated below. Interested community members can visit the website to see all of the ideas and comments shared.





PRETEND YOU HAVE A MAGIC WAND. HOW WOULD YOU CHANGE DOWNTOWN? WHAT ONE THING COULD WE IMPROVE ON THE MOST?

The majority of respondents expressed their concern about the minimal benefit they felt the community receives from new developments in Downtown. Improved safety; youth activities; cleanliness; and everyone's overall quality of life could be improved with each new development.



Ongoing Informational Display

The process of receiving input and generating more ideas continues at an open display in the lobby of the Planning & Building Department. Community members are encouraged to visit and share their ideas by submitting a survey.

A variety of local meetings that target specific themes and issues are on-going. Below are groups and organizations that have participated so far.

To make it easier for more people to participate, City staff are proactively and by invitation attending community group meetings to explain the plan and get input from community members. Groups to date include:

- Oak Center Neighborhood Association
- Urban Strategies Council
- Youth Service Organizations
- UC Berkeley Center for Cities & Schools (Y-Plan)
- Art Murmur
- Chinatown Coalition
- 14th St. Black Arts Movement and Business District
- 25th St. Area Galleries, Businesses and Residents
- Policy Link
- People United for a Better Life in Oakland (PUEBLO)
- Jack London District
- Qilombo
- Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE)
- Oakland Creative Neighborhoods Coalition
- Insight Center for Community Economic Development
- ISEEED
- Alameda County Department of Public Health Place Matters
- Old Oakland Neighbors (Walking Tour)
- Alameda County Public Health Department (Place Matters)
- UC Berkeley Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society
- Institute for Sustainable Economic, Educational and Environmental Design (I-SEEED)

Figure C-10: Stakeholder meeting

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT

The planning process conducted to date has presented many opportunities for the Oakland community to get involved and provide input on their Downtown Specific Plan, including charrette presentations, hands-on workshops, continued small group meetings, an open design studio, and an online forum. This chapter has summarized feedback from these various events and multiple sources; the input identifies many issues and ideas to be investigated through the Specific Plan.

The ideas, concerns and suggestions heard have been organized into several common themes:

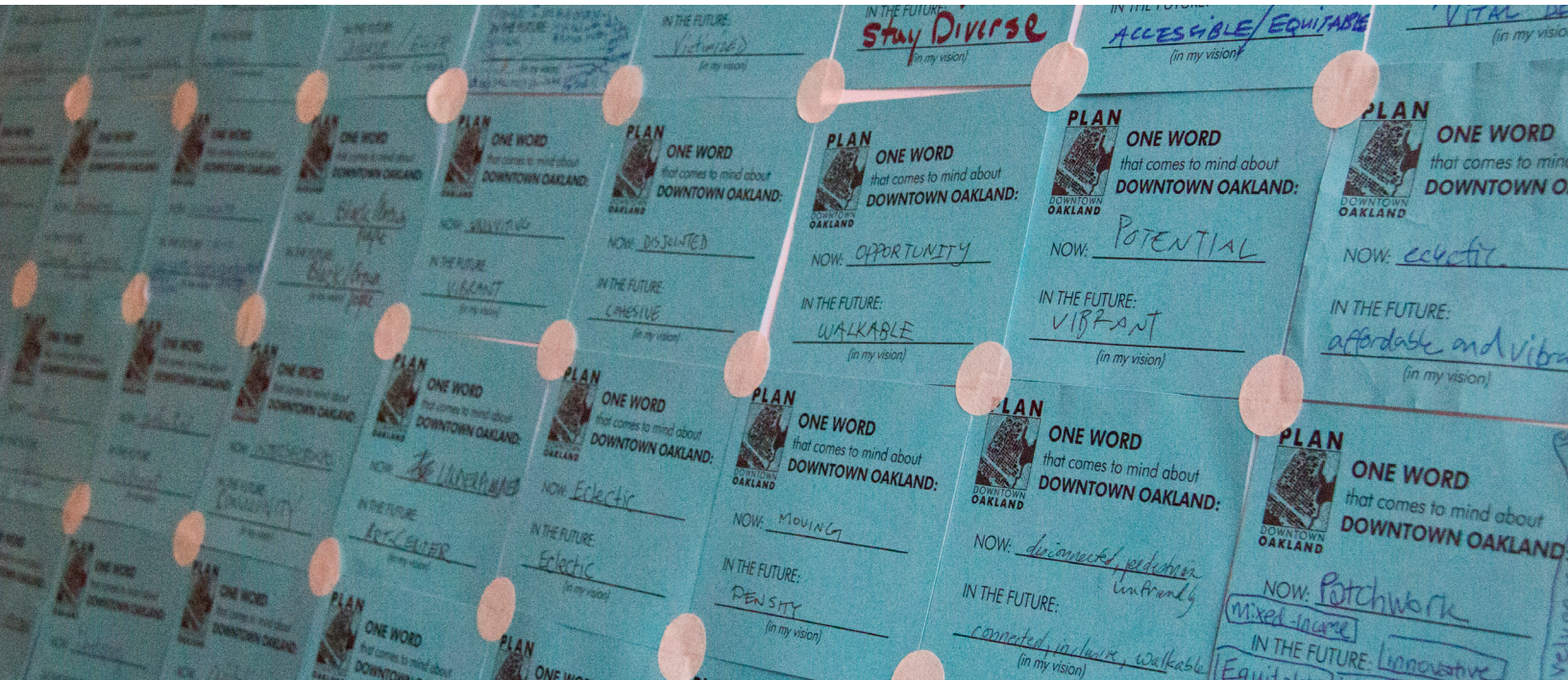
- *Affordability & Equity*
- *Arts & Cultural Heritage*
- *Built Environment, Preservation & Housing*
- *Economic Development*
- *Connectivity & Access*
- *Environmental Sustainability*
- *Open Space & Recreation*

There is significant overlap between these categories. For example, equity should be used as a lens to view each of the other goals, and environmental sustainability goes hand in hand with a more multi-modal transportation system and a more urban built form.

These themes form the basis of the planning goals for the Specific Plan. The next section discusses each in further detail, including a summary of opportunities and challenges for each topic as identified through analysis of existing conditions and the community input described in this chapter. The next section also suggests initial ideas about how these issues can be addressed through the Specific Plan.

PLANNING GOALS

Creating the Vision & Goals	4.2
Affordability & Equity	4.4
Arts & Cultural Heritage	4.8
Built Environment, Preservation & Housing	4.10
Connectivity & Access	4.12
Economic Development	4.20
Environmental Sustainability	4.22
Open Spaces & Recreation	4.24



CREATING THE VISION & GOALS

Guiding Principles and Goals

The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan process began in the fall of 2015, with a series of stakeholder meetings, a well-attended public kick-off event, and a nine-day-long interactive design charrette at the end of October. Since the conclusion of the design charrette, the City of Oakland has continued to meet with local organizations, institutions and stakeholder groups. The meetings are focused on crafting the vision for the future of Downtown.

A draft set of plan goals has resulted from these discussions and these are explained in detail on the following pages. These goals are a work-in-progress, and will continue to be refined and edited throughout the planning process. This section presents the "big ideas" from each of these categories of goals, as well as an initial series of recommendations for future policies. The goals are derived from concepts that we've heard from all members of the community that have participated in the process so far. The initial recommendations are the groundwork for policies that will be created for the final specific plan, after additional community feedback and input has been incorporated.

The creation of a specific plan involves two distinct but interrelated components, which are equally important to the success of the document. The first is the vision and illustration of the future of Downtown and is related to city design and the physical characteristics of the built environment. What will the built environment look like? How would you like the public realm to be? What should the parks, streets and plazas look like? Getting the urban design "right" is a crucial part of defining the vision for the future.

Figure D-2: Community members review and provide feedback on draft goals and concepts during an open house in October.

Figure D-3: Stakeholders and citizens gather during the charrette to discuss future goals and policies for the specific plan.

The second component, complementary to the urban design component, is the policy in the specific plan that outlines the implementation of plan goals related to transportation, the environment, arts, culture, social equity, affordable housing, economic development, open spaces and historic preservation. The future must be both designed and illustrated, as well as shaped by policies.

Within the discussion of the draft plan goals in this section, a summary of "What We've Learned" (so far), highlights big ideas that have been collected via community input. After discussing major ideas, a series of recommendations for future policies is listed.

The big ideas that have been expressed from stakeholders and community members over the past few months are representative of opportunities and challenges occurring now in Downtown Oakland. Issues such as affordability, displacement, sustainability and historic preservation must be addressed in the vision for the future. It is also important to understand how we got here. Decades of historic disinvestment in downtown has resulted in the displacement of residents and businesses. Until recently, policies like impact fees and ideas like development without displacement, were not seriously considered to be a part of the solution. In Oakland, and in many downtowns around the country, city centers have been through a long period of decline and disinvestment.

Many of the big ideas and themes in this section 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 the city should look in the future, coupled with a series of policies and recommendations for implementing the vision, is essential for Downtown. With a clear plan, when and where growth occurs is predictable. For example, an overall goal that has resulted from Plan Downtown is the aim for development without displacement. In essence, new growth (including an expanded housing supply) and revitalization is desired, so long as the people, businesses and institutions that have made Downtown Oakland iconic are able to remain a part of the future.

AFFORDABILITY & EQUITY

What We've Learned

Affordable housing is a top priority for all of Oakland, and particularly Downtown Oakland. Housing production is not keeping pace with increased market demand, particularly for housing that is close to transit, and Oakland residents are increasingly being priced out of the housing market.

With rents and sales prices continuing to rise, stakeholders are concerned about displacement and want to ensure that Oakland residents can continue to afford housing Downtown. Some specific issues raised by participants throughout the process and evident in the analysis of housing market conditions are listed below.

- Some residents who have lived Downtown for decades can no longer afford to do so due to rapidly increasing rents.
- A hot real estate market is fueling rent increases for commercial, office and residential space.
- Cultural conflicts are occurring between some existing residents and some new residents.
- "Naturally Affordable Housing" or housing that is affordable by design, like the historic single-room occupancy residential hotels (SROs), fills a need for well-located housing that is affordable without a subsidy. Many of these are at risk of conversion to higher-end residences or hotels.
- More housing of all sizes (not just studios and one-bedroom units), is needed in Downtown to ensure sufficient housing for families as well as singles.
- Housing is needed Downtown that is affordable to households at a range of incomes, (an affordable housing payment is considered one that is less than 30 percent of household income).
- Subsidized housing is a particularly useful tool for the populations who need the most care and services. However, a recent report by California's nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) states that these programs are likely limited in their ability to meet the magnitude of the overall

Figure D-4: Residents present their big ideas for downtown during the Hands-On workshop in October 2015.

need, since their funding requirements are orders of magnitude larger than existing programs. At the root of the affordability problem, the LAO report finds, is a lack of housing supply, typified by the current real estate market, where the number of households seeking housing exceeds the number of units available. Households must therefore compete for scarce housing, driving up prices and rents. The report concludes by encouraging a substantial increase in the supply of non-subsidized housing to help alleviate this competition and, in turn, place downward pressure on housing costs. The report also states that this crisis is a long time in the making, the culmination of decades of shortfalls in housing construction. And just as the crisis has taken decades to develop, it will take many years to correct. There are no quick and easy fixes.

- Downtown lacks residential units that have more than one bedroom, which are necessary to accommodate families. More housing with a variety of sizes of units and building types would better accommodate a wider range of residents.
- Use the Plan Downtown process to spur citywide policy and action to support equity and affordability.
- Downtown is comprised of neighborhoods with dramatically different median income levels. Its amenities need to serve and be accessible to all these residents.
- Downtown's racial demographics are shifting concurrently with displacement and immigration.
- Youth have expressed that there are not enough affordable and welcoming spaces for them in Downtown; they go instead to neighboring cities for recreation and entertainment.
- The statewide dissolution of redevelopment agencies has left the City of Oakland with a small fraction of the funding that it was able to use in the past to subsidize affordable housing development.

Figure D-5: Single-room occupancy residential hotels (SROs) currently provide affordable housing downtown.

How Can the Specific Plan Address Issues of Affordability & Equity?

Rising housing costs are causing challenges throughout the City, and multiple initiatives are currently underway to address the need to ensure that housing is available for Oakland residents at all income levels. The Specific Plan offers an important opportunity to evaluate the critical role the Downtown plays in providing housing for Oakland residents, and to consider how citywide initiatives can be targeted to address the Downtown area. The Downtown currently includes over 2,100 subsidized housing units, representing about 21% of the city's stock of income-restricted housing. Downtown is especially important as a location for affordable housing because of its good access to transportation, ability to live a more affordable lifestyle without a car (or with fewer cars per household), and it is within walking distance of services, shopping, and entertainment. The Downtown is also a critical place to consider ways to focus efforts to prevent displacement, preserve existing affordable units, and leverage future development to help meet housing goals.

The City is considering a number of citywide policies and initiatives in an effort to address affordable housing needs in Oakland. In October 2015, the City Council approved the policy framework described in *A Roadmap Toward Equity: Housing Solutions for Oakland, California.*[1] The report recommends a wide range of strategies designed to protect existing residents, build new affordable housing, and improve existing housing while maintaining affordability. The Mayor has also created a Housing Cabinet and tasked it with making recommendations about implementation. Additionally, local advocacy organizations such as SPUR and Causa Justa :: Just Cause have developed reports that contain recommendations to help mitigate the effects of the housing shortage.

Some of the actions that are being considered include the following:

- Encourage increased housing production to stabilize rents and prices.
- Protect existing tenants by expanding tenant protection laws and focusing on improved enforcement; ensure safe conditions for low income tenants through a Safe Housing Inspection Program and adoption of new seismic retrofit requirements; provide a single point of entry through the newly created Homeless Families Coordinated System, for homeless families in Oakland, to access homeless resources such as shelter, transitional housing and the new Rapid Rehousing funds.
- Create new resources for housing by adopting development impact fees, utilizing the state Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities "Cap & Trade" program, and exploring the possibility of a Regional Housing Bond.
- Build new housing by developing a new Public Lands Policy, creating more lenient secondary unit requirements, and expanding the City's pilot Vacant Lot program (which creates a pipeline for nonprofit developers and owner-occupants to purchase abandoned properties).
- Add a social equity component to the specific plan that would ensure that policies are developed to address the physical environment and economic conditions for all people, including those who have been historically disadvantaged through the promotion of participatory engagement and positive social change.

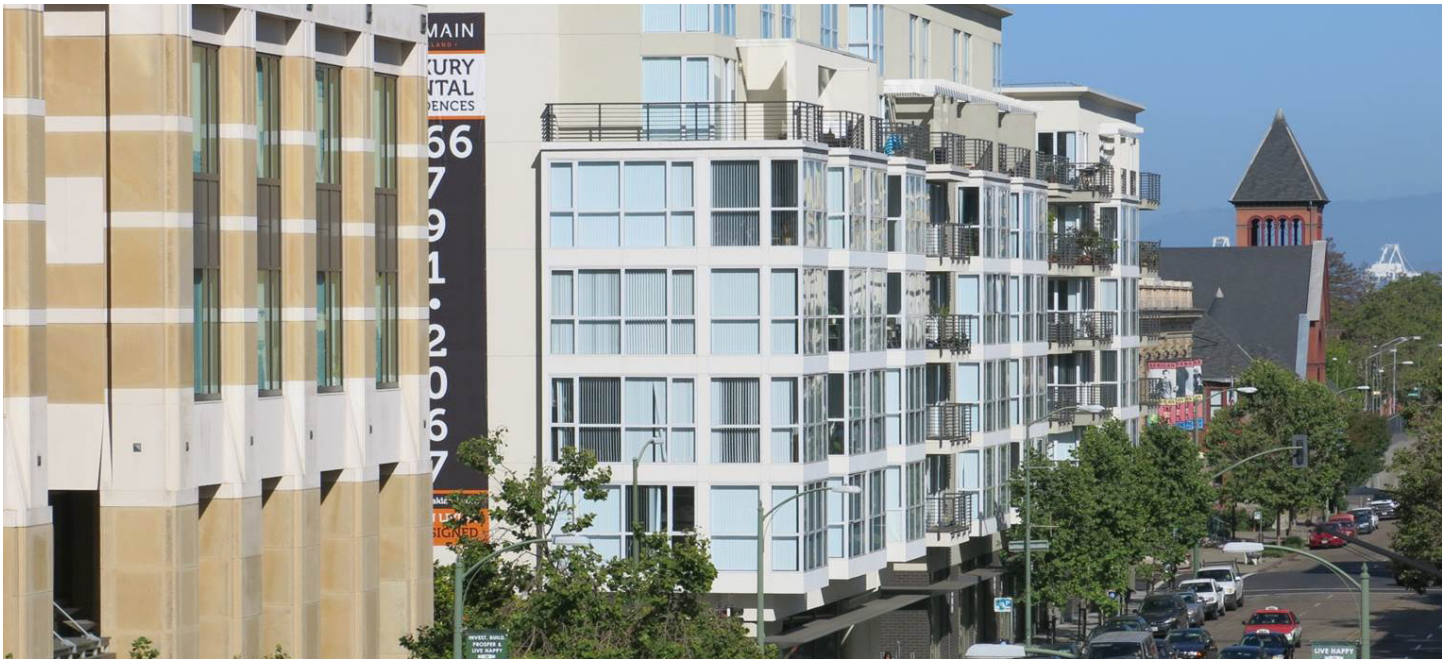


Figure D-6: Mixed-use development on 14th Street, with the Federal Courthouse, residential mid-rise, the African-American Museum, the Unitarian church adjacent, and first floor retail, offers a more affordable lifestyle without a car or fewer cars per household.

The City Council is currently in the process of adopting development impact fees that will apply to the Downtown and other parts of the city. The fees will provide funding for affordable housing, as well as transportation and capital improvements such as parks, libraries, fire, police and storm water. These fees are proposed to be levied in three zones across the city, with the highest fees targeted to the Downtown, which has a strong market and can better withstand increased fees. State law has also put a maximum amount of parking at 0.5 per unit if new development is within a half mile of transit. A parking study is also underway to determine whether parking requirements can be reduced further as another way to encourage housing production.

Additional policies and actions to consider include:

- Rezone areas with unnecessarily excessive height limits to allow for more flexibility with density bonuses and other developer incentives.
- Strengthen protections for multifamily rentals to reduce conversion to condominiums, which are less affordable to the average household.
- Develop a right-of-return policy that would allow residents and displaced residents priority in acquiring publicly-subsidized housing.
- Develop programs that proactively address environmental justice issues.
- Provide stipends or other incentives to encourage participation of residents from historically marginalized communities in planning processes.
- Create a participatory budgeting process that allows inclusive access by all residents to decision-making about how to allocate a portion of the City's resources.
- Create a Youth Empowerment Zone with a clear, shared vision for the area, as well as incentives and guidelines to support youth. Shared programming and coordination for events could also be a part of the designation. Include implementation techniques to ensure that the Youth Empowerment Zone vision can be accomplished (e.g. neighborhood guidelines, incentives or requirements, a definition for youth related organizations).

[1]PolicyLink, "A Roadmap Toward Equity: Housing Solutions for Oakland, California", prepared for the City of Oakland, 2015. https://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/pl-report-oak-housing-070715.pdf

Figure D-7: The adoption of development impact fees will provide funding for new affordable housing, such as this recently completed project on Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, that blends into a mix of neighborhood housing for a variety of household incomes and housing types.

ARTS & CULTURAL HERITAGE

What We've Learned:

It is clear that what Oaklanders value most strongly about their city is its diverse cultural heritage and the creative arts.

These elements have long been part of the draw and success of Downtown Oakland, and it is essential that the arts, cultural institutions and artists are able to remain an integral part of downtown in the future.

Figure D-8: The Paramount Theatre is a cultural icon in Oakland.

Throughout the planning process so far, a wide variety of arts institutions, organizations and artists have participated and talked about recommendations for policies that would preserve and expand the arts and culture that makes Oakland unique. Their ideas are discussed below.

- The arts and cultural institutions downtown are well used by residents and visitors; they are an historic part of the city and need to remain in the community.
- Arts and culture remain very active while being underfunded and understaffed by the City due to a lack of resources.
- The elimination of the Arts Commission has resulted in less available funding and ability to undertake projects that could support the arts.
- Both new and existing artists need affordable, creative spaces of all types and sizes.
- 14th Street has historically been a center of the Black Arts Movement and Black-owned businesses; however, until recently there has been no official recognition of the area, and the existing tenants that are continuing this tradition are threatened with displacement by rising rents.
- Without funding for the arts and culture, the community fears of further displacement of features and people that have long been a part of a distinctive dynamic Downtown.
- Many youth organizations are located downtown; they are well-used and need more affordable space as office space rents rise.
- The historic produce market in the Jack London District provides a useful hub for commerce, but there may be an opportunity to develop a better equipped facility for the produce market in a more appropriate location, while taking advantage of the current market's historic buildings for adaptive reuse.
- The existing art galleries in the historic garage district that surrounds 25th Street would like to stay in the area and build on the arts momentum that has already gained Oakland a positive regional and national reputation for the arts, but are concerned about displacement due to rising rents.
- Many neighborhoods in Oakland have a cohesive arts scene; some participants suggested that all of Downtown be designated as an arts district.

Figure D-9: First Fridays, in cooperation with Oakland Art Murmur, draws thousands of visitors to Telegraph Avenue, and the adjoining side streets, where a multitude of galleries and businesses are located.

Figure D-10: A mural detailing part of Oakland's cultural heritage.

Figure D-11: The Malonga Casquelord Center for the Arts is one of many popular arts and educational institutions in Oakland.

How Can the Specific Plan Address Cultural Heritage & the Arts?

Potential policy recommendations to explore for maintaining the existing, and growing new, arts and cultural places in Downtown Oakland, include the following:

- Recommend an initiative or study in the Specific Plan that seeks to restore the Arts Commission, and accompanying administrative funding support to coordinate events and programming for artists and institutions; provide opportunities to fund arts events and local artists; and serve as a liaison between the City and the arts community.
- Apply for cultural district status for a Black Arts Movement and Business District along 14th Street, connecting West Oakland to Lake Merritt, and incorporating important arts institutions.
- Illustrate and describe recommendations for a Black Arts Movement and Business District along 14th Street to recognize and celebrate the political and cultural significance of this area and its history.
- Define, envision and illustrate an arts district in Downtown, which might include a series of arts districts within specific neighborhoods that are well-connected and coordinated with one another.
- In arts districts, permit uses that encourage development related to arts and culture. Facilitate special events and temporary installations that promote art in public spaces.
- Connect arts and cultural districts with local transit accommodations (e.g. a special events trolley that is used for a specific event), provide a comfortable pedestrian experience on the streets that travel between centers of activity, and implement a unified marketing theme.
- Coordinate programming and activities between arts districts to refine how the unique neighborhoods that comprise Downtown can become a coordinated arts district.
- Coordinate the preservation of the arts and cultural institutions with strategies for affordability.
- Offer a density bonus or other relevant incentives for arts or cultural uses in new development projects.
- Designate a pilot area to implement the recommendations of the Mayor's Artist Housing and Workspace Task Force, including real estate acquisition and leasing, financial assistance, and technical assistance.
- Help to visualize how arts and culture can remain a part of the city fabric through a menu of building types in the Specific Plan that accommodate artists and cultural organizations.
- Create a campaign to celebrate Oakland's cultural history, such as plaques, sidewalk art, and themed street amenities.
- Support entertainment, cultural and nightlife uses by requiring new residential development work with existing venues to minimize sound and other conflicts.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, PRESERVATION & HOUSING

What We've Learned:

Oakland has a wealth of historic buildings, cultural landmarks, and open spaces that tell the story of its history and diverse communities.

The City conducted the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey in 1997, and continues to use the results of this survey to classify and preserve historic buildings. As a result, many individual historic properties have been identified, as well as collections of resources within historic districts that contribute to Downtown's unique and historic character.

Within Downtown there are several different types of historic districts, including the National Register-listed Downtown Oakland Historic District as well as a number of locally-designated historic districts. Oakland local historic districts are designated within a two-tiered system. One tier is Areas of Primary Importance (API), which are National Register-quality, but not necessarily listed, historic districts. The other tier is Areas of Secondary Importance (ASI) or districts of local interest (illustrated in Section 2).

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.

Figure D-12: The historic buildings and public spaces at Frank Ogawa Plaza have been preserved and define the center of the City.

Major concepts that have been expressed regarding preservation and the future of the built environment are described below.

- Downtown's unique, historic buildings, districts ,and places need to be protected as Oakland grows and adapts to meet the needs of existing residents and projected population increases
- Vacant and underutilized historic buildings provide opportunities for adaptive re-use.
- Certain view corridors through Downtown Oakland are significant cultural and design elements within the City's historic fabric, and should be protected.
- While the boundaries of the Downtown Specific Plan do not include Chinatown because it was included in previous planning efforts, there is a clear connection between Chinatown and the rest of Downtown that requires continued planning and historic preservation practices to ensure the viability of this important cultural component of Oakland.
- Grow downtown in a way that meets the area's housing needs, while respecting the context and character of each neighborhood.
- Because buildings of seven or fewer stories are usually less expensive to build than taller buildings, they are common downtown. Adequate infill development should accommodate this market reality, while providing for a variety of buildings to be built over time, including taller buildings where appropriate.

How Can the Specific Plan Address Preservation, the Built Environment & Housing?

- The following historic preservation strategies, designed to work in conjunction with other best practice planning efforts, can be explored to help ensure Downtown's significant cultural past is embraced, highlighted, celebrated, preserved, rehabilitated, and included within the overall plan efforts.
- Provide strategies that will ensure a mix of building types, heights, and uses in Downtown.
- Relate the height, bulk, scale, and massing of new buildings to the important attributes of the existing city pattern, especially when designing in or adjacent to designated City Landmarks, the Downtown Oakland National Register Historic District, and Areas of Primary Importance (API) previously identified through the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey program.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized historic buildings by creating an easily available and implemented set of incentives for property owners that include permit streamlining and fee reductions, application of the California Historic Building Code, adjustments to parking requirements, Transfer of Development Rights, Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits, and Mills Act Contracts.

Figure D-13: The historic Key System Building is a prime candidate for rehabilitation given its prominent location.

- Create additional opportunities for use of the wide range of historic preservation incentives available through local, state, and federal programs.
- Protect Downtown's most significant view corridors, including views of Lake Merritt, the estuary waterfront, the Oakland hills, historic and culturally significant buildings, and civic spaces.
- Implement a policy to reduce the parking requirement downtown, in order to encourage the creation of more housing units. This is especially pertinent for housing that is located near major transit stops.
- Work with developers to identify how the Cap & Trade scoring system impacts financing.
- Require that new development account for public access and views to Oakland's waterfront areas (Lake Merritt and channel, and estuary shoreline).

CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

What We've Learned

Transportation and street improvements – at all scales – have been a popular theme for the Downtown Specific Plan.

Oakland's streets are not just a path to get from one point to another; they serve as the city's front porch. They are an accessible meeting place for residents from all walks of life, and they are the backbone around which the buildings, parks, streets, homes, businesses, and civic structures are built. Because the community owns the streets, they are a key leverage point where the City can most directly influence the character of Downtown.

Our public spaces can reflect our priorities, our aspirations, and our dedication to building a city that is sustainable, equitable, livable, and forward-thinking. Downtown streets that are safe and welcoming allow Oaklanders of all ages, education levels, economic status, and cultures easy access to the businesses, services, jobs, education, entertainment, and government that serve us all.

The major issues that the community has communicated and that have emerged from analysis of the transportation and street network include the following:

- The one-way streets Downtown are unnecessarily wide, and cars move too fast for pedestrian and bicyclist comfort and safety.
- Many streets have buildings with long blank walls or gaps in the street wall, which are unpleasant and discourage people from walking or riding a bicycle between destinations.
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on Downtown Oakland streets is inadequate; although the City is increasing the number of bike lanes, there are no protected cycle tracks, pedestrian crossings are long, there are few street trees, benches, bicycle racks, and other amenities, and cars dominate the public realm,
- More pervious surfaces along Downtown streets would allow rainwater runoff to be treated before flowing into Lake Merritt and the estuary.
- The City of Oakland has a long-term interest in improving downtown Oakland transit circulation, particularly along its central downtown "main street", Broadway, in order to create a welcoming, recognizable brand to better connect all of the neighborhoods, destinations and transit stations along Broadway.
- Streets are the civic realm, and yet in Downtown they often function more like fast-moving on-ramps for the adjacent highways, rather than vibrant, safe places for people. This is particularly true along the streets that lead directly to an on-ramp to Interstate 880 or the Webster Tube, including but not limited to Broadway, Webster, Jackson, Madison, 5th and 7th Streets. Community members would prefer to see the character of Downtown streets changed so they feel more pleasant both to drive and walk along.
- Trains traveling along the Embarcadero are a barrier for safe and easy access to the waterfront. Also, the frequent train whistles are uncomfortably loud and disruptive.
- Youth-serving organizations report that students and their parents who live outside Downtown do not feel safe traveling to or on the streets of Downtown Oakland. Bus connections are not convenient from East Oakland. As a result, many of them are not accessing valuable services.
- Interstate 980 cuts off West Oakland from Downtown and is inefficient because it is overbuilt for the amount of traffic it carries.
- The heart of Downtown needs to be better connected to the Jack London District and the waterfront; it is currently blocked by Interstate 880, which has underpasses that feel uninviting to pedestrians, and even to vehicles.
- Streets in Downtown are congested and the speed, reliability, ride quality, and street infrastructure of transit service Downtown needs to be improved to encourage more people to use transit instead of driving; a reliable and convenient streetcar should be implemented.

How Can the Specific Plan Address Connectivity & Access?

- Improve the Interstate 880 underpasses (such as at Broadway, Webster, Jackson, Madison, Oak, Washington, and Martin Luther King); and add more street connections to the Jack London District (including Franklin Street) to make it easier and more pleasant for pedestrians, bicycles, and autos to access the waterfront.
- Design all streets in all neighborhoods downtown to be complete streets, and use traffic calming techniques where appropriate to improve the pedestrian environment.
- Consider developing a new transit hub near Howard Terminal that could serve Jack London, West Oakland and Downtown.
- Institute a "quiet zone" for trains traveling along the Embarcadero downtown; study long term alternatives for resolving the noise related to the train, including undergrounding the rail lines.
- Evaluate all freeway access points Downtown, and modify where necessary to ensure that pedestrians and cyclists feel safe and comfortable.
- Work with AC Transit to provide better ride quality and permanent infrastructure, such as transit shelters/platforms, dedicated transit lanes and signage, are all needed on primary and secondary streets.
- Implement specific designs for all streets that make pedestrians, cyclists, and transit patrons the priority.
- Adopt policies that call for reconnecting West Oakland with Downtown by removing the I-980 freeway and replacing it with a street-level boulevard that is lined by new buildings and green spaces.
- Study policy options that will result in a two-way restoration of as many downtown streets as is feasible; categorize and prioritize streets for a two-way conversion.
- Study policy alternatives that prioritize "road diets" on major streets, slimming unnecessarily wide car travel lanes and allocating more space for bikes, pedestrians, and transit.
- Implement a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that incorporates policy recommendations for creating complete streets in all of Downtown (the capital improvements can be recommended in the City's existing CIP).
- Support Downtown economic development by catalyzing transit-oriented development.
- Increase downtown Oakland's livability by providing designs that encourage more convenient "last-mile" connections between downtown destinations and BART, San Francisco Bay Ferry, Amtrak Capitol Corridor, and AC Transit.
- Seek grant funding for the one-way to two-way conversions, all "road diets" and street amenities.
- Develop a strategy to green the streets Downtown with bioswales, trees and other natural elements that both serve environmental purposes and improve the human experience of the street.
- Include a street atlas in the Specific Plan, with recommended design details and amenities for each street in Downtown.
- Develop a parking strategy that accommodates current and future demand, balances on-street and off-street options, and provides for easy access and efficient use of space.
- Prioritize transit improvements, such as a streetcar line, in Downtown.

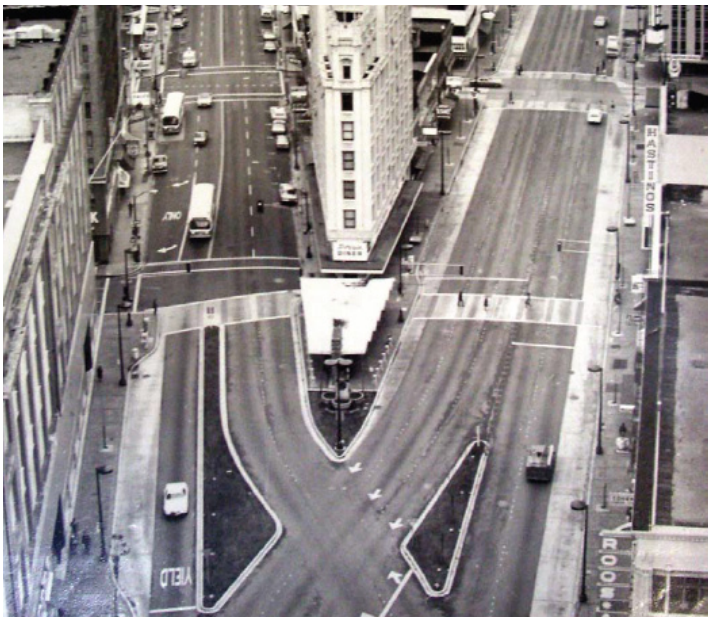


Figure D-14: Historically, a streetcar line serviced Broadway (left), 1913. Later (right), the streetcar was removed.

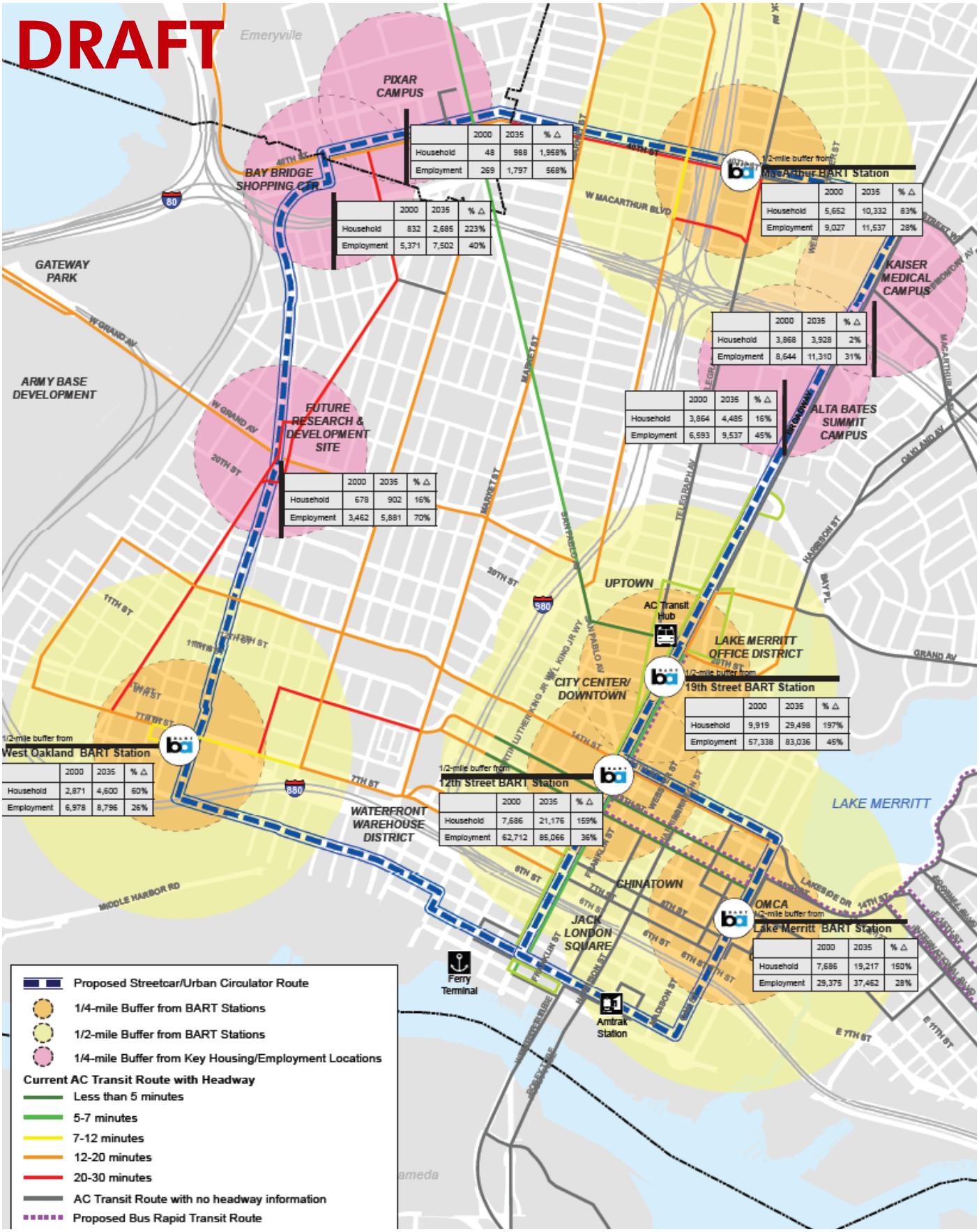
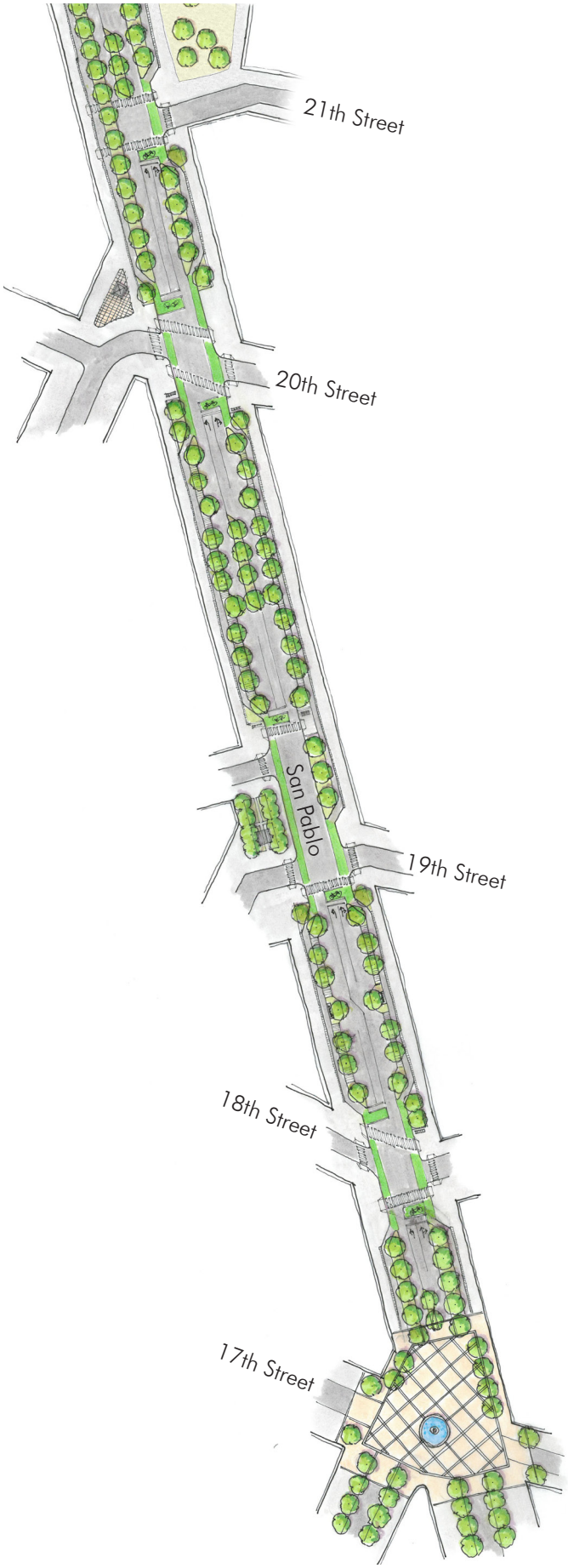


Figure D-15: Draft concept for a future streetcar loop, starting Downtown, goes north to Kaiser, west to Emeryville, south to the West Oakland BART station, and east to Jack London. Phase I feasibility planning is underway for the Broadway portion of the project -- from Jack London to MacArthur BART.



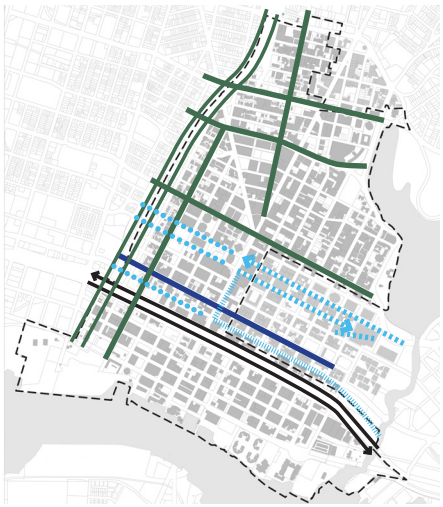
In addition to these actions and policies, draft street designs were created with members of the public during the charrette in response to the community's initial suggestions for transportation improvements.

The options are varied in design, depending on the context; however, every street is designed to be a complete street where all modes of traffic share the street space (such as bikes, pedestrians, transit users, cars and eventually self-driving-cars, etc.). In addition, all street designs should include adequate space for green infrastructure, such as bioswales and rain gardens.

The overall design intent ensures that cars are welcome, but won't dominate. The proposed re-designs are safer, slower and prevent the downtown streets from being "on-ramps" for the surrounding highways. Instead they are designed to contribute to the place-making of a vibrant downtown. These streets are for people too, not just cars.

Nearly all of the streets downtown have very low traffic counts even at peak hour, and many lack bike infrastructure. In addition, downtown streets with a vibrant, walkable environment require traffic calming techniques. Therefore, these design solutions reduce the number of car travel lanes and add additional bicycle, pedestrian and transit infrastructure. These preliminary street sections are categorized by their intended speed and use.

Figure D-16: This drawing illustrates an intersection design where two separated bike facilities meet with pedestrian and car traffic, each with an 80 foot right-of-way.



The first street type is for roads that have a 25 MPH design speed. In these locations, streets are narrowed to one car travel lane in each direction, separated bike lanes are present, vertical curbs, on-street parking and street trees add a sense of enclosure (another traffic calming technique), and sidewalks are widened to a minimum of ten feet. The majority of these streets are primary corridors for all modes of traffic, connecting primary destinations.

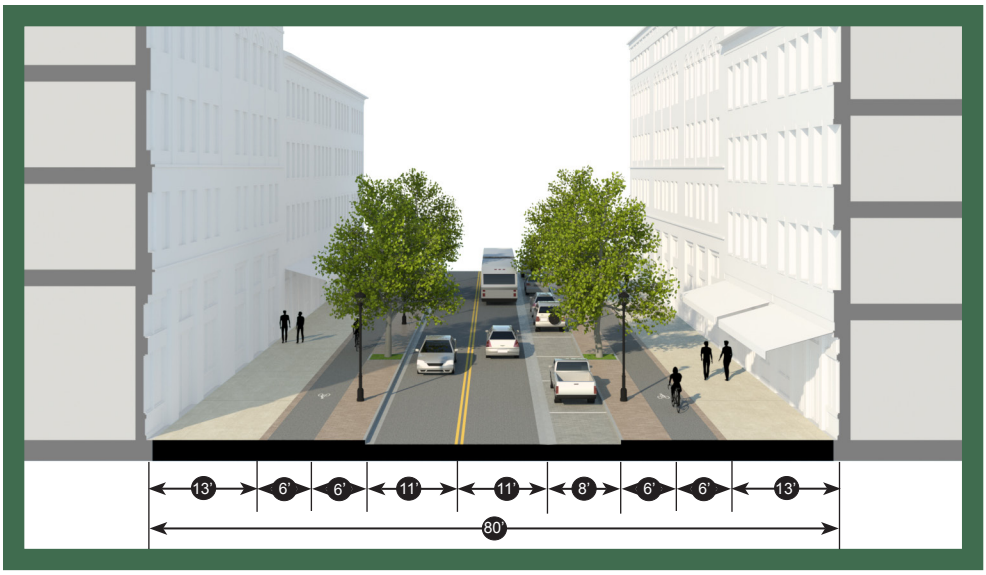


Figure D-17: 25 MPH Streets. Asphalt travel lanes, separated, buffered bike lanes, vertical curbs, street trees along with cars, buses, and bikes all share space on this street. Parallel parking occurs on one side of the street. This design is recommended for streets like 14th Street, 20th Street, Grand Avenue and Jefferson Street.

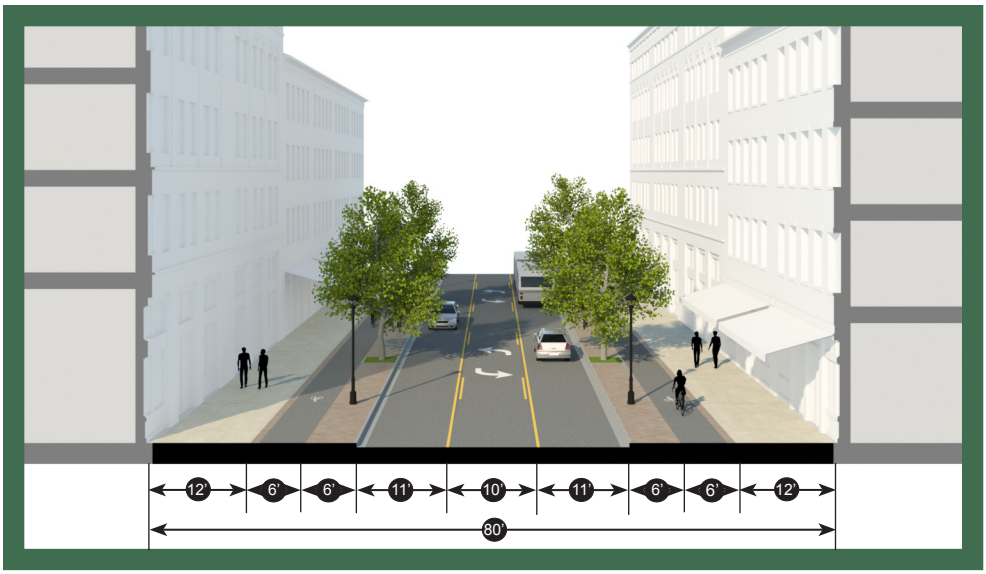
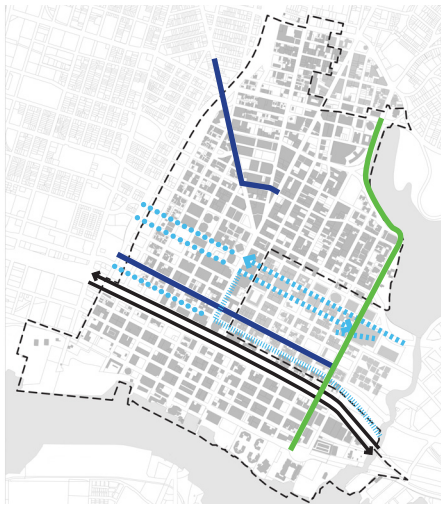


Figure D-18: 25 MPH Streets - with Center Turn Lane. For specific portions of the street depicted in the figure above, a center turn lane may be required as the street approaches an intersection. Asphalt travel lanes, separated, buffered bike lanes, vertical curbs, street trees along with cars, buses, and bikes all share space on this street. Parallel parking does not occur on this part of the street. This design is recommended for streets like 14th Street, 20th Street, Grand Avenue and Jefferson Street.



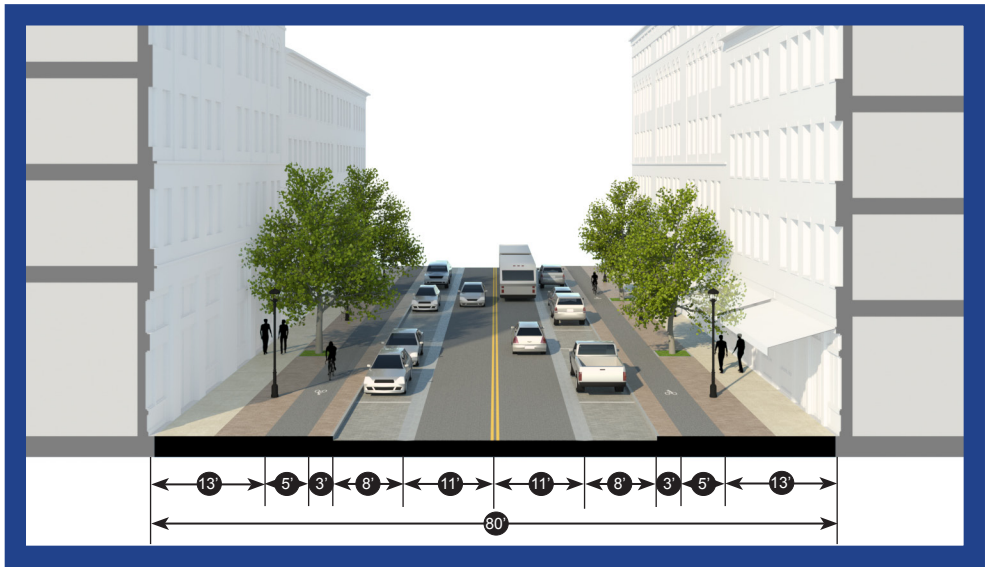


Figure D-19: 25 MPH Streets - with parking on each side. Asphalt travel lanes, separated bike lanes, vertical curbs, street trees along with cars, buses, and bikes all share space on this street. Parallel parking occurs on both sides of the street. This design is recommended for streets like 8th street and other side streets.

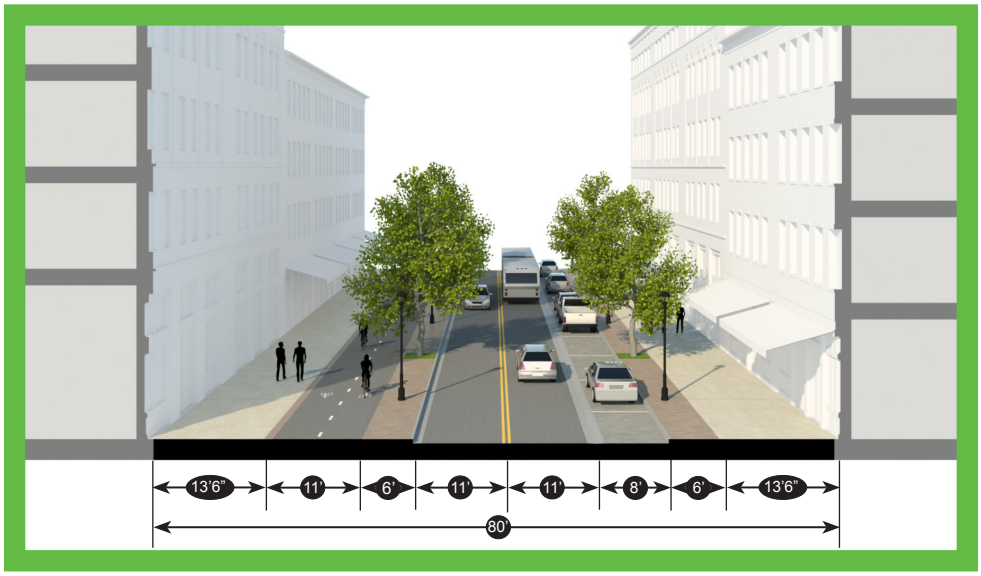
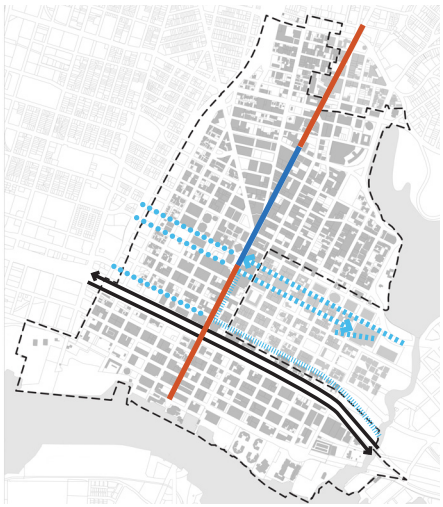


Figure D-20: 25 MPH Streets - with two-way cycle track on one side. Asphalt travel lanes, a separated, two-way cycle track on one side of the street, vertical curbs, street trees along with cars, buses, and bikes that all share space. Parallel parking occurs on one side of the street. This design is recommended for streets like Oak Street and Lake Merritt Boulevard.



Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
Future two-way city transit route
Minor city bus route

The second street type (next page) is designed to move cars more slowly (20 MPH), while also accommodating all types of transportation. These greatly contribute to place-making. The streets are curbless, have more parking (parallel or back-in, which is safer than front-in angled parking) contributing to a sense of enclosure, include street trees and are a shared space for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and cars. By design, shared space requires vehicle operators to navigate these spaces at slower speeds. Shared spaces are also often the most memorable places in a city, since they are plaza-like, and are typically a great location for daily, weekly or monthly activities and street festivals.

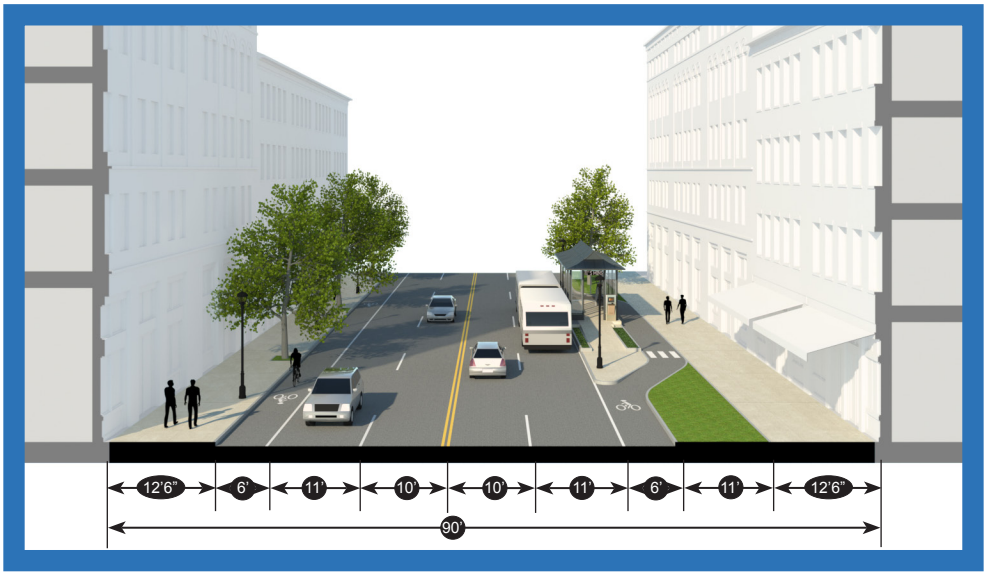


Figure D-21: Narrowest Section of Broadway. The right-of-way on Broadway varies. At its narrowest, the street section should include two BRT lanes, two car lanes, two bike lanes and sidewalks with street trees. When the right-of-way is larger, additional space can be added to the sidewalk and/or on-street parking may be added.

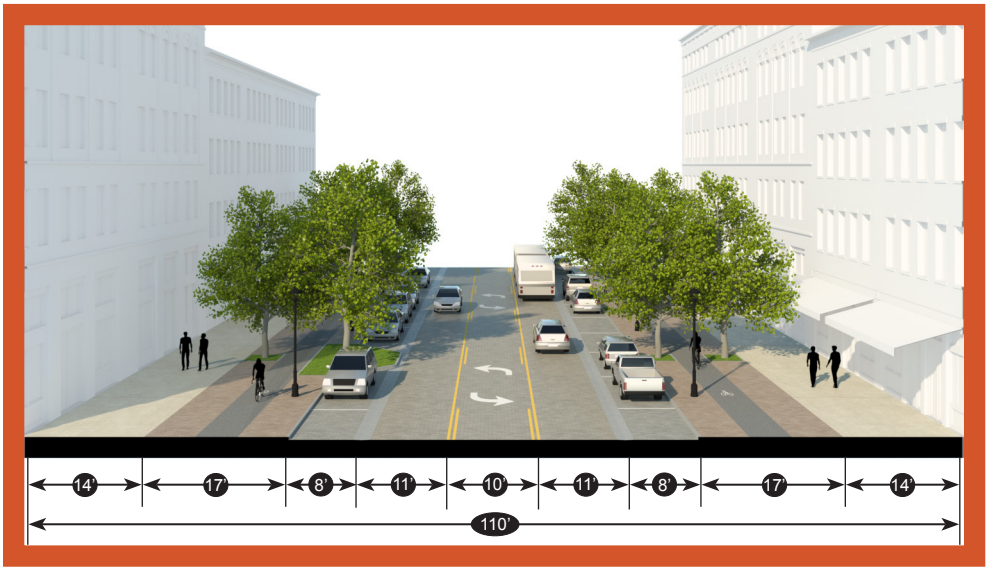


Figure D-22: 25 MPH Streets - Northern Part of Broadway and Southern Part of Broadway. The northern and southern portions of Broadway have a larger right-of-way. For these sections, when BRT stations are not present, the street design can accommodate transit, cars, separated bike infrastructure as well as parallel parking.

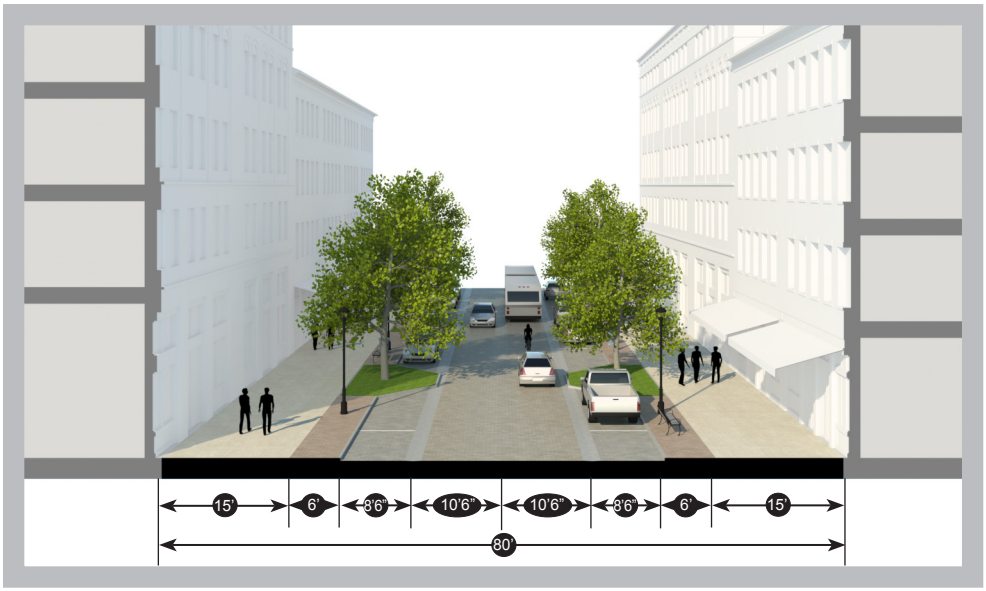


Figure D-23: Typical Streets, 20 MPH (slower). Texture, enclosure (trees), curb-less, parking on each side of the street and rain gardens define this type. Cars, buses, and bikes share space. This design is recommended for most side streets that are not primary traffic routes.

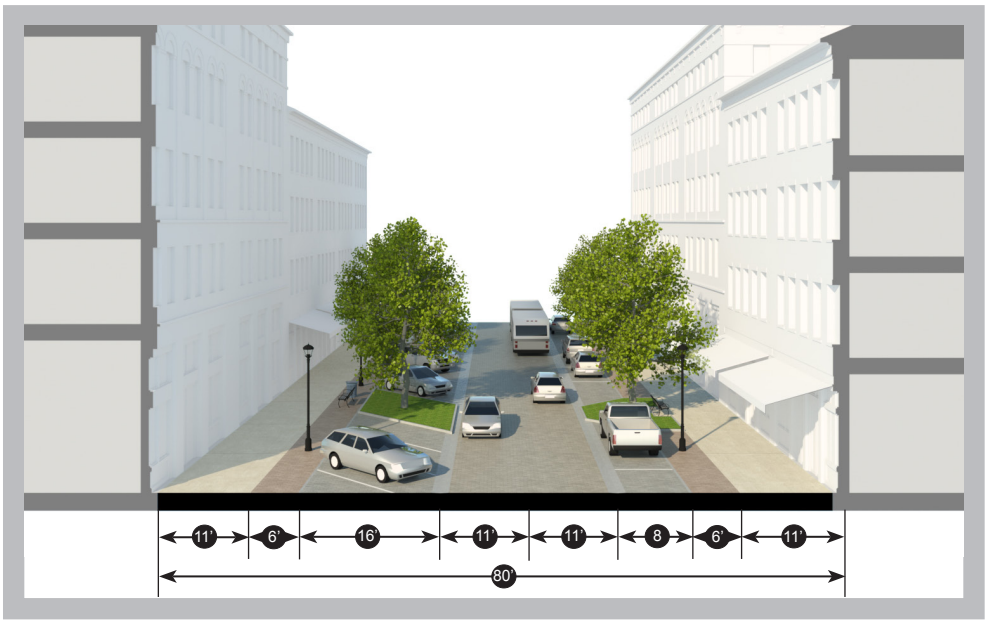


Figure D-24: Typical Streets: 20 MPH (slower) - with reverse angle parking. Texture, enclosure (trees), curb-less parking on each side of the street and rain gardens define this type. Reverse angle parking on one side is an alternative option for parking that provides more parking spots. Cars, buses, and bikes share space. This design is recommended for most side streets that are not primary traffic routes.

This second kind of street would be typical of secondary roads downtown. The majority of streets have an 80-foot right-of-way, so either of the depicted street design options for this type of street will fit into the right-of-way. These streets are not the major corridors or connectors, which have separated bike infrastructure. There are benefits to each of these options, and the appropriate design for a street can be determined based on the neighborhood context.

It is important to note that on-street parking can improve safety and comfort for pedestrians and cyclists. However, it is essential that on-street parking is adequately managed and maintained to promote an environment where people park once and then walk, bike, or take transit to their nearby destinations. On specific sections of Broadway, at the heart of the multimodal center, on-street parking is not a part of the proposed street design. On this core part of Downtown's main street, pedestrians, cyclists and transit are the priority.

Two options for these typical secondary streets are illustrated here. The first 20 MPH street design option (above, top) is more traditional, with narrow travel lanes for traffic calming (slowing down traffic), parallel parking and sidewalks. On these side streets, traffic moves more slowly. There is much less traffic and the travel lanes can be shared between bikes and cars. It's important that the travel lanes are narrow, that on-street parking provides a comfort and safety barrier, and that street trees provide a sense of enclosure. These streets are also curbless, creating a shared space and enhancing ADA accessibility.

The second 20 MPH street design option is similar, but with reverse- angle parking instead of parallel parking. This option has all of the same attributes, but provides more on-street parking and is typically more appropriate for retail areas.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

What We've Learned:

Downtown is the economic engine of the City, providing a substantial amount of jobs and tax revenue that supports the delivery of services to residents throughout the whole City.

As Downtown goes, so goes the City. Oakland is currently experiencing a period of economic growth, with a significant increase in jobs, declining unemployment and increased investment in new businesses and development activity.

The City is known for its arts and entertainment scene. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Downtown, which has experienced an upsurge in national attention and economic activity. However, residents, business owners and other stakeholders are concerned about consequences that have accompanied this growth, including rising commercial rents and the risk of loss of existing businesses. Stakeholders at the charrette strongly communicated the need for the benefits of economic growth to be shared widely among residents, businesses, non-profits, artists and other local stakeholders of all races and income levels. The Specific Plan should encourage the goal of shared prosperity. Other ideas expressed throughout the process include:

- Businesses, non-profits, and local institutions that have been central to the distinct culture that defines Oakland, are being priced out of their commercial and office spaces.
- Oakland needs a clear plan, illustrating the community's vision for the future of Downtown, so that strong and consensus-based ideas, developed with diverse voices, guide growth and change.
- Economic growth and cultural changes over the last several years has supported emerging sectors such as clean energy and social entrepreneurship, and has led to renewed investment in housing development in the Downtown .
- Howard Terminal is no longer utilized as a container shipping terminal by the Port of Oakland; however, the land continues to support Port operations through accessory activities such as truck parking and cargo and container storage. A visionary long-term plan for Howard Terminal that lays out a phased transition to other uses could bring new energy to the Jack London District and Downtown.
- The I-980 corridor is an inefficient use of space that was previously part of Oakland's street grid. The freeway could be removed in the future to allow a reconnection of the community, while freeing up space for new growth and public revenue.
- City businesses as a whole are thriving to such an extent that room to grow has become a challenge, as industrial, Downtown office and retail vacancies have all reached record lows.
- The dissolution of redevelopment agencies Statewide has led to a gap in available funding for community development, which needs to be filled to provide affordable housing and other community infrastructure.
- Making Oakland a more stable and resilient city with jobs for all types of workers, diverse tax revenue streams, and a vital public realm experience requires a strong, multi-sector business base.

Figure D-25: The renovation of The Fox Theater and new housing have resulted in activation of the Uptown neighborhood.

Figure D-26: Authentic storefronts at the heart of Downtown are a local and regional draw for residents and visitors.

How Can the Specific Plan Address Economic Development?

The Specific Plan will articulate a clear vision to promote and guide future growth and development in the Downtown. It will consider how to sustain and grow economic activity, and how such growth can be leveraged to help pay for needed public improvements and affordable housing, and also consider policies that help to protect and nurture a diverse set of local businesses, artists, and other desired uses.

The City is in the process of developing a citywide economic development strategy that is focused on supporting business growth and linking Oakland residents to jobs. As Downtown is the most important center of economic activity and jobs in Oakland, the Specific Plan will link to this strategy and include specific policies and initiatives that can help to achieve these goals in the Downtown. Additional ideas that may be considered as part of the implementation strategy include:

- Develop new tools, strategies and funding sources to continue public-private projects that mitigate physical and economic blighting factors. Provide incubator and co-working space to support new businesses of all types.
- Encourage new development projects to provide on-site spaces for local businesses and arts uses.
- Partner with community organizations to provide information about resources and technical assistance, including support for relocation if necessary, for businesses that are in danger of having to relocate.
- Develop local business and economic infrastructure so that it supports the community in both strong and weak economic markets.
- Offer a density bonus or other incentive to provide affordable space in new development projects for arts or cultural uses.
- Design and implement regulations and incentives that promote "incubator spaces" or shared office spaces, so that small businesses can share the costs of office and commercial spaces.
- Create a community asset at Howard Terminal, which could include new public waterfront improvements, a new sports stadium, and an extension of Jack London Square development.
- Investigate the removal/burying of I-980; this publicly owned right-of-way can be a source of growth and economic benefit for Oakland, as well as a place to accommodate housing and other new construction.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

What We've Learned:

Protecting the natural resources that surround Downtown Oakland is key to maintaining the environment that makes the City unique.

Lake Merritt is considered by many to be the jewel of Oakland. It is a great asset to residents and visitors, as is the Estuary. Over the period of Plan implementation, Downtown is envisioned to become an even more environmentally-responsive urban center which strives to maintain and enhance its open spaces, parks, plazas, and waterfront areas,. Throughout the planning process so far, the community's environmental priorities have primarily focused on mitigation and resiliency to climate change, particularly related to sea level rise and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. A compilation of the big ideas is provided below.

- Reduce the carbon footprint of Downtown. A Downtown that is more walkable, bikeable and transit- served, rather than dependent on single-user car trips, will reduce vehicle miles traveled and associated GHG emissions.
- Address the projected impacts of climate change, such as heat, drought and sea level rise.
- Study the future of the Webster and Posey tubes, and identify strategies to address the potential impacts of projected sea level rise and flooding on their long-term viability.
- Use sustainable "best practices" including the adaptive re-use of buildings, particularly historic buildings, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Figure D-27: Lake Merritt serves as the "Central Park" of Downtown Oakland by providing beauty and quiet respite.

Figure D-28: Many unique natural resources surround Oakland.

How Can the Specific Plan Address Environmental Sustainability?

The Environmental and sustainability principles will inform the Plan and be an integral part of all elements of the Plan. The Plan policies, development standards, and design guidelines, and implementation measures will highlight environmental and sustainability concepts and ensure they are implemented as part of the Plan. Additionally, the land use element and transportation elements of the plan will work in concert to improve the environmental and sustainability of Downtown.

In December of 2012, the City adopted the Oakland Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP) in December of 2012, which contains policies and actions to reduce GHG emissions and improve the overall resilience of Oakland. The ECAP set a goal of a 36 percent% reduction in GHG emissions to be met over eight years (the 2020 Plan). The Downtown Specific Plan will help the City further its objectives to reduce GHG emissions and many of the ECAP policies and actions.

Below are a list of ways in which the Specific Plan can address the environment and sustainability, drawing upon the community's big ideas and the ECAP policies and actions. These policy and action ideas that specifically relate to ECAP actions include the ECAP action number in parentheses.

- Develop design guidelines to ensure development that occurs under the Downtown Specific Plan achieve the community's environmental goals and further achieve the ECAP's objectives.
- Increase street trees and other landscaping throughout Downtown. (ECAP Action AD-9).
- Require high-albedo (reflective) surfaces where appropriate, such as on rooftops, to reduce the urban heat island effect in Downtown (ECAP Action AD-8).
- Ensure all site designs, both private and city-owned, incorporate storm water catchment and diversion systems such as rain barrels, bio-swales, permeable surfaces, and green roofs to reduce the impact of flood events (ECAP Action AD-11).
- Designate sites adjacent to transit hubs and along major transit corridors to accommodate the most intense and dense development balancing housing supply with local employment opportunities. (ECAP Action TLU-9).
- Update design review standards for high-density multi-family buildings to facilitate dense development adjacent to transit (ECAP Action TLU-11), and includes design guidelines that promote aesthetically pleasing, vibrant and attractive development and public spaces. (ECAP Action TLU-11).
- Include design guidelines that promote urban food production such as food-producing gardens, including rooftop gardens (ECAP Action MW-17, Action MW-20).
- Prioritize pedestrians and bicycles and de-emphasize the role of the car through streetscape design (ECAP Action TLU-17).
- Design and implement complete streets throughout Downtown (ECAP Action TLU-17) and use vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to assess transportation impacts, consistent with SB 743 (ECAP Action TLU-15).
- Prioritize completion of pedestrian and bicycle networks (ECAP Action TLU-16) and identify opportunities for shared streets and to maximize the use of streets for non-automobile uses where feasible.
- Prioritize transit improvements, such as a streetcar line, in Downtown (ECAP Action TLU-20).
- Minimize parking requirements for new development, particularly when it is within a ½ mile of a BART station or rapid bus line and create parking maximums for new development in Downtown (ECAP Action TLU-30) or eliminate parking requirements.
- Require new development projects to prepare and implement a transportation demand management plan to reduce parking demand and greenhouse gas emissions through development standards and guidelines that reduce VMTs and promote transit, car sharing, bicycle parking, and other VMT-reduction strategies (ECAP Action TLU-27).
- Integrate and coordinate the Specific Plan's environmental review process throughout the creation of the Plan.

OPEN SPACES & RECREATION

What We've Heard:

Downtown has several great parks and open spaces. These existing parks need to be maintained and in the future new parks and cultural spaces should be incorporated into the neighborhoods.

Oakland has an historic system of regional and neighborhood-serving parks located throughout the city. Some of these parks are well-used, and others are in need of revitalization. Partially due to the success of the Measure DD open space bond, Lake Merritt is one of the most iconic and well-maintained locations for recreation and local events—for both residents and visitors. Downtown provides a range of spaces for recreation and activity and should expand facilities, specifically small scale open spaces that serve areas with residents.

- Downtown needs more parks and open spaces near residences, particularly west of San Pablo Avenue, north of Grand Avenue, and in Chinatown, so that families have a nearby place for recreation and leisure.
- The idea for the Webster Green in the Jack London district would provide a much needed greenway corridor and also create a more inviting experience, connecting the city center to the waterfront.
- Oakland's iconic and historic waterfront is underutilized, and could become a regional destination connecting to regional trails, Lake Merritt, and bicycle paths. Appropriate dining, living, entertainment, civic and other uses could take advantage of a recreational waterfront to provide services and drive economic development in the waterfront and Jack London District areas.
- More cultural gathering spaces are needed in all neighborhoods. Improved streets and new plazas that encourage cultural activities and events are desired.
- The existing parks in the Downtown area need to be better maintained.
- Lake Merritt is an iconic part of Downtown. The streets connecting to the waterfront, such as 14th and 20th Streets should be more inviting to draw people towards the lake and surrounding open space.

Figure D-29: The street market in Old Oakland and Chinatown regularly transforms 9th Street into a vibrant pedestrian space.

How Can the Specific Plan Address Open Spaces & Recreation?

The Specific Plan can play a key role in coordinating previous plans for parks and open spaces as well as identify new locations for active and recreational space. A series of recommendations are listed below.

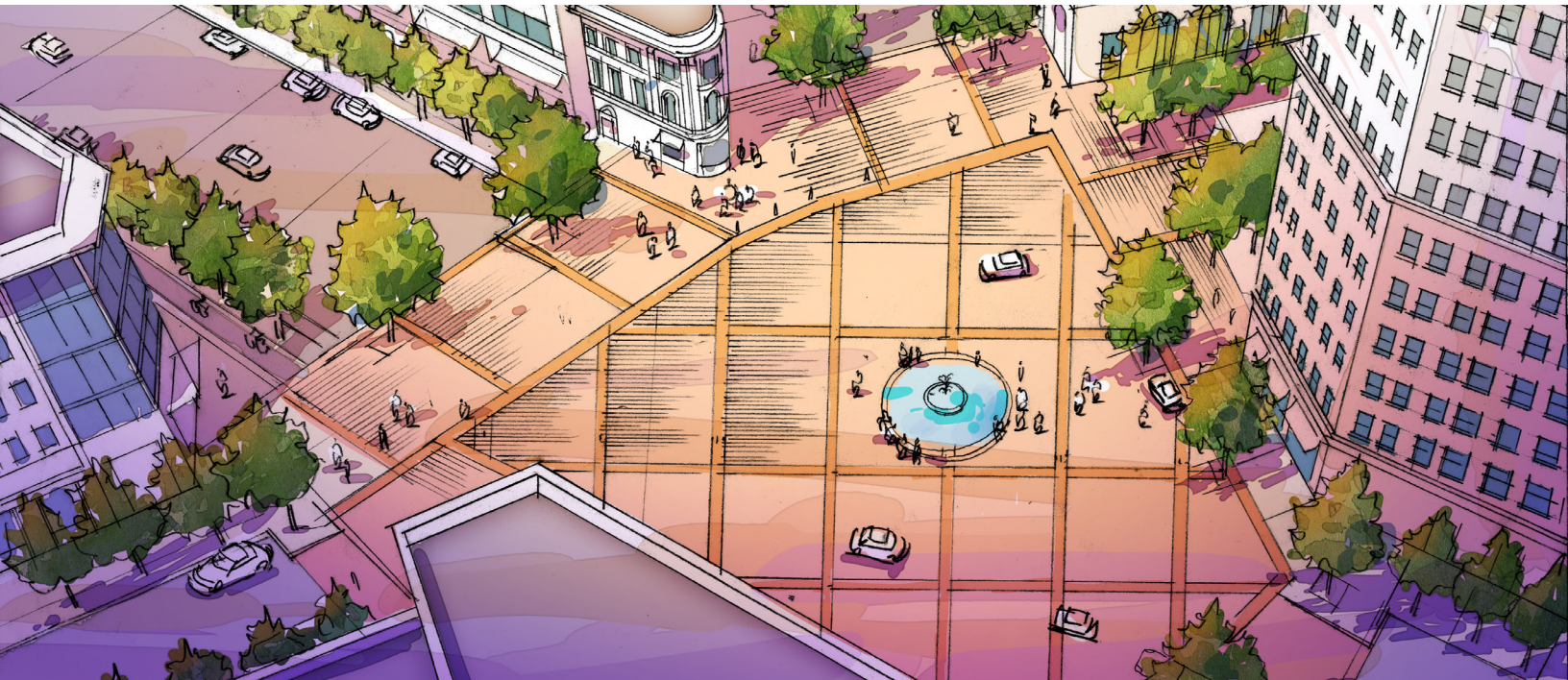
- The planning process can work with participants to prioritize locations for new cultural spaces in each of the neighborhoods.
- Working with members of staff, the process can identify existing parks that can benefit from maintenance improvements.
- The Downtown Specific Plan can illustrate and envision new parks and cultural spaces that have been identified by members of the community.
- The city has dedicated planning efforts to improving parks and recreation space in the past (e.g. the implementation of the amphitheater at Lake Merritt and the notion of the Webster Green in the Estuary Plan). The Specific Plan can build upon the work completed in the past in order to identify areas for improvements.
- New development and revitalization needs to be well coordinated with new parks, cultural gathering spaces and street improvements. The planning process can facilitate a comprehensive look at the vision for the future.
- Small scale pocket parks or plazas in the neighborhoods that are located west of San Pablo would add needed outdoor space to that section of Downtown.
- In the future, Howard Terminal should increase waterfront access for residents and visitors. Park space, a waterfront stadium, and other active spaces are suggested.

Figure D-30: This Downtown plaza is a great example of neighborhood serving public and gathering space.

GOLDEN STATE
WARRIORS
2015 NBA
CHAMPIONS

ILLUSTRATING THE VISION FOR THE DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS

Illustrating the Vision	5.2
Planning for Anticipated Development	5.4
KONO	5.5
Uptown	5.10
City Center	5.14
Lake Merritt Office District	5.18
Lakeside	5.22
West of San Pablo	5.28
Old Oakland	5.32
Jack London District	5.36
I-980 Conversion	5.46



ILLUSTRATING THE VISION

Downtown Oakland is comprised of many neighborhoods, each with unique characteristics and opportunities for future preservation, growth and evolution. The Illustrative Master Plan shown in this section attempts to capture the community's vision for the future built environment of the streets and neighborhoods Downtown. The Illustrative Plan depicts ideas for public realm/infrastructure improvements, historic preservation, and infill of underutilized parcels, demonstrating how Downtown can be preserved, while it changes and grows in the future.

It is clear that growth in Downtown needs to follow a plan in order to occur in a more predictable manner. Predictable development, based on consensus items within a community, allows desired growth to occur according to plan rather than random or sporadic growth (which is often surprising). New housing, commercial spaces and opportunities for employment are all needed. If the impact fee that the City is currently considering is implemented, growth will also provide revenue to subsidize housing and infrastructure projects. However, growth should remain sensitive to existing residents and businesses and be coupled with policies that are in accordance with the vision.

This section contains design ideas derived from community and stakeholder input and conversations. They are intended to illustrate ways to achieve the community's vision for an improved public realm that better serves residents while accommodating both growth and preservation. These conceptual ideas include detailed narratives and graphics to illustrate how the Specific Plan could improve physical form and preserve community character. Organized around Downtown's neighborhoods, these ideas can form the basis for recommended improvements in the Specific Plan.

While this section illustrates a preliminary vision for Downtown, it also imagines a series of potential alternative options to consider in each neighborhood. Opportunities, challenges, and implementation considerations are discussed and depicted in order to demonstrate how the envisioned concepts could be achieved.

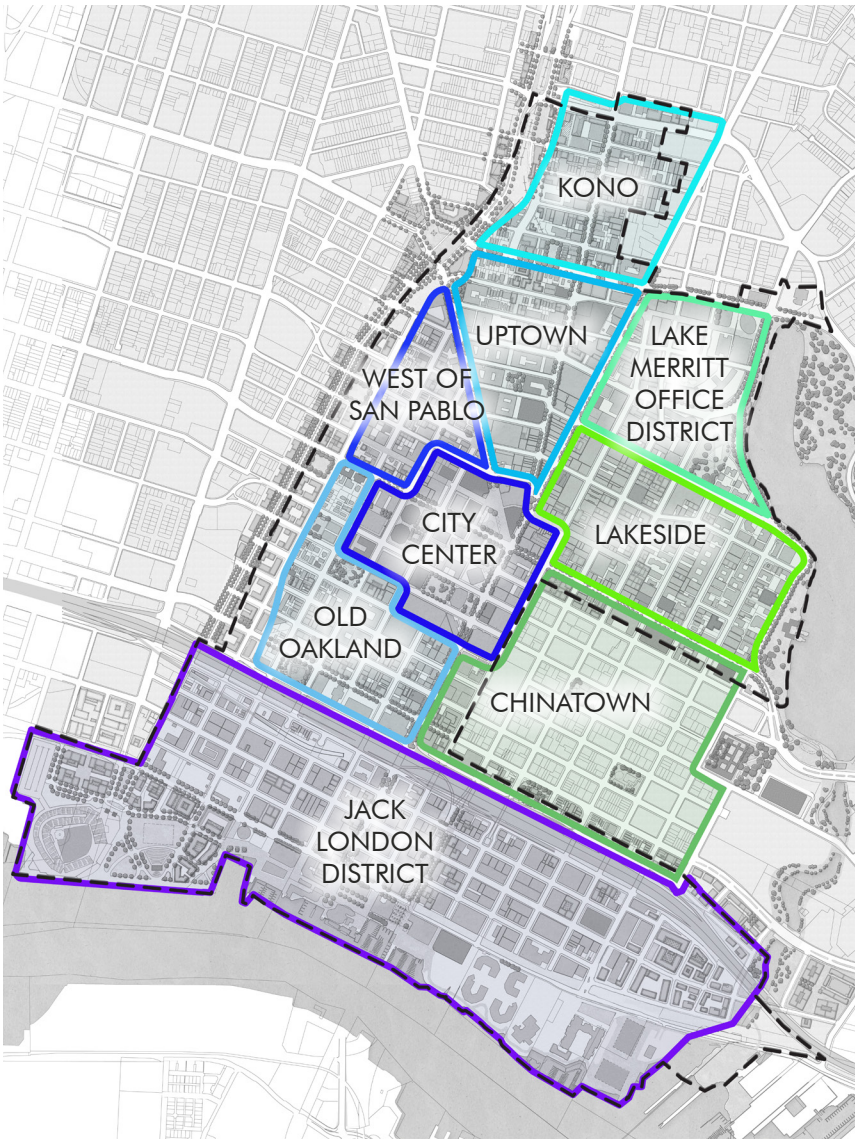


Figure E-2, above: A characterization of Downtown neighborhoods (draft).

Figure E-3, right: The Illustrative Master Plan for Downtown Oakland.

The intent of this section is to highlight preliminary key ideas in each neighborhood and identify potential steps that would need to occur for implementation. These images are not an illustration of the exact buildings that will be proposed, as the buildings themselves will be designed by private developers, with guidance from the goals and concepts in the Specific Plan. The images portray a vision of the type of development and character that the Specific Plan can guide toward implementation.

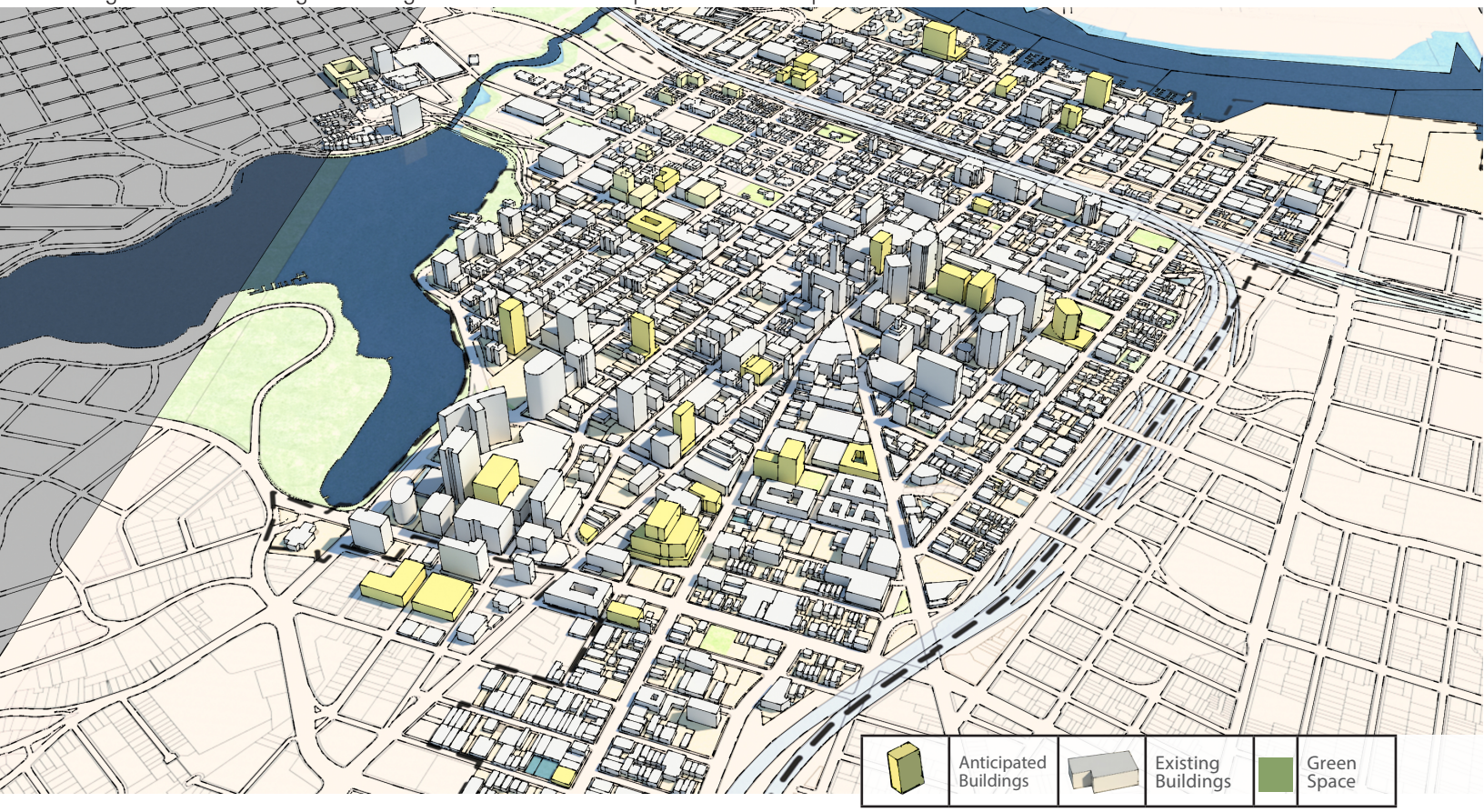
Existing Buildings
Existing Historic Buildings
Civic/Cultural Buildings
Anticipated Buildings*
Proposed Buildings
Shared Space/Plaza
Open Space
*City-Approved Projects
400
Feet

PLANNING FOR ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENT

This section portrays the preliminary vision and potential alternatives for each neighborhood. The alternatives include calculations of potential new physical development that could occur as a result of implementing the desired vision. All calculations assume buildout of "anticipated development" which is development that has recently been approved or submitted for approval to the City of Oakland.

Anticipated development projects throughout the Downtown are depicted in yellow on the image below. The total quantity of development that is known (to date) for these projects is listed in the accompanying chart. While the majority of this development has received development approval from the City, due to the recession only a handful of the buildings have begun construction. To see the status of a specific proposed building, refer to the detailed *Anticipated Development Projects* map in Section 2 (Existing Conditions).

Figure E-4: Rendering of existing conditions and anticipated new development.



Anticipated New Development	
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS	3,828 UNITS
TOTAL COMMERCIAL SPACE	60,810 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL OFFICE SPACE	910,285 SQUARE FEET

KOREATOWN / NORTHGATE

In the Koreatown/Northgate (KONO) District, activity takes place in a network of civic spaces and on neighborhood streets that are friendly to pedestrians and cyclists, while still accommodating the needs of local businesses. Art related events occur here that draw people from across the city and region. In addition to the reputable arts scene, Koreatown is also an integral part of this district and is envisioned to be more walkable and better connected to the rest of Downtown. Vibrant streets, coupled with infill davelopment and the rehabilitation of historic buildings will build on the already unique character of this section of Downtown. West of Telegraph, specificallly, can continue to improve frontages at the ground level, offering a continuous and interesting building facade as the streets travel to the heart of the arts district.

- Infill development in this neighborhood focuses on vacant, surface parking and underutilized lots to accommodate artists and makers, as well as support retail and entertainment uses while maintaining existing residences and businesses. Large- to medium-scale building types are provided along transit-rich Telegraph and 27th Streets, ranging from 6 stories to 12 stories, to house retail and entertainment uses for makers and artists within the District.

- An Industrial/Maker designation in this district can be applied to preserve existing and introduce new artist and maker spaces along 24th, 25th and 26th Streets between Telegraph and the Plan Area boundary. Spaces are created for artists and production. Medium and small building types would support the artist and production community.

- Preserving the smaller, early 20th century production buildings in the 3,000 to 6,000 square foot range within the Industrial/Maker designation maintains the character of the neighborhood. Minimal changes to these buildings, such as openings, awnings, signage and building lighting, engage people in the streets and open spaces between buildings provide places for events and impromptu performances.

- Standards and regulations for historic designations are examined and revised to preserve the artist and maker building fabric. In this neighborhood, a survey can identify additional buildings to add to the primary or secondary historic designation.

Figure E-5: Existing conditions in the KONO neighborhood (left and right)

Figure E-6: Illustrative Plan for the KONO neighborhood

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A Include a separated and buffered bike lanes on Telegraph Avenue.

B Enhance the 25th Street Historic District with an Arts Paseo.

C Create spaces for artists and production. Context-sensitive medium, small, and house-scale building types include well-designed units, provided to support the artist and production community.

D Preserve smaller, early 20th century production buildings (3,000 and 6,000 square foot range) within the Industrial/Maker designation.

E Implement the Telegraph Avenue Complete Streets Plan. Bolster transit and bicycle facilities along 27th and Telegraph by focusing additional larger- to medium-scale buildings along these corridors.

F Filter stormwater with regularly spaced street trees, structural soil systems, pervious pavers within secondary spaces, rain gardens and rooftop gardens. These serve as water quality features within the District.

- A network of public open spaces that provides an amenity for artists, makers and residents. For example, a mid-block pedestrian paseo is introduced within the blocks along 24th, 25th and 26th Streets. Currently, these long blocks run east and west for almost 700 feet. To promote walkability and access within this District, the paseo breaks up the 700 foot block into two 450 foot sections which gives pedestrians more options and visual interest. The pedestrian paseo is linked to additional secondary spaces with tree-lined shaded streets. Street trees are planted along one side of internal streets to improve the public realm and preserve parking and loading spaces on the other side.
- Streets share the uses of curbs for passenger loading zones and mobility hubs. Bike share, on-street car share, and ride share vehicles will also use this space.
- Telegraph Avenue is transformed from a pedestrian barrier into a community anchor with a strong emphasis on the public realm and active ground floor frontages that house retail, entertainment and other lively uses.
- Improved transit and bicycling facilities connect KONO to BART. Rain gardens within street tree planter boxes and structural soil systems filter stormwater as a water quality strategy to reduce pollution and street flooding from runoff.

Figure E-7: Telegraph Avenue cycle track and future infill at 25th Street

- Implementation of the Telegraph Avenue Complete Streets Plan creates a safe and pleasant experience for cyclists. A separated cycle track is a comfortable path for cyclists of all experience levels.

- Edges of the pedestrian paseo between the blocks on 24th, 25th and 26th Streets are defined with new uses that spill into the pedestrian space. Existing buildings are spaces for art and maker production, and simple modifications add new openings, awnings, signage and building lighting. Emerging vendors occupy shared commercial spaces within low-cost, semi-permanent structures such as airstream trailers or shipping containers in front of blank walls that cannot be retrofitted or gaps in the street frontage. These shared incubator spaces are smaller and more affordable, by design. They complement the existing, more established art galleries and maker spaces.

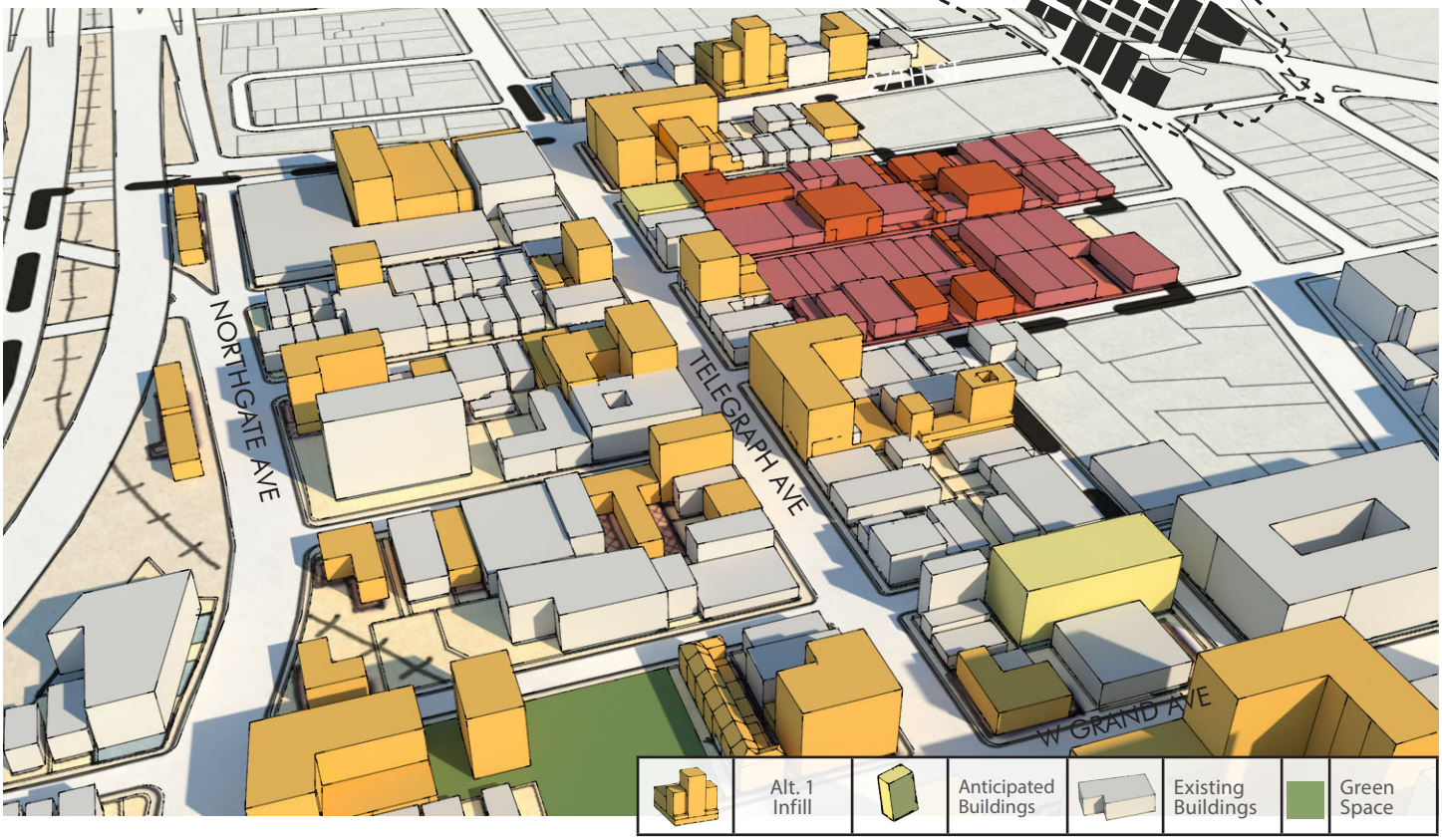
- The paseo is articulated with pervious pavers as a water quality feature. Industrial character is preserved by minimizing height at the street and slight changes articulate existing frontages. For example, buildings may step back after the first story.

- Any additional height that is allowed is done in a way that limits its impact on the character of the Garage District, including ensuring that buildings step back from the street above the first or second story.

STUDYING THE VISION FOR KONO

Two alternatives were studied that meet the desired vision for the KONO area. The first alternative depicts infill development that is typically seven and eight stories tall on empty sites, except along the center of the block on 24th, 25th and 26th Streets, where the height is typically four stories tall. Development of the existing small lots results in a character that is similar to what exists now. Other small-scale mixed-use buildings front along the east-west streets. As the primary streets in KONO, Telegraph and 27th Street have larger buildings facing the street. These new buildings could have restaurants and retail uses at the sidewalk. In the first plan alternative, no residential development is assumed in the local arts district that is east of Telegraph in the 24th and 25th street area, which is consistent with current permitted uses in that area.

In the second alternative (next page), underutilized or vacant buildings to the west of Telegraph are re-imagined. In this scenario, 353 additional new housing units are added and work-live units are permitted. The character of the area, a distinct and local arts district, remains intact. The fabric of the neighborhood responds to the low-scale development east of Broadway, and begins to increase slightly in scale at the edges of the district, where a transition in the existing urban fabric occurs, with larger scale buildings, specifically west of Telegraph.



KONO DISTRICT: Plan Alternative #1

TOTAL NEW UNITS	1,368 UNITS*
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL OR LIGHT INDUSTRIAL SPACE	187,653 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	--
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	96,750 SQUARE FEET

*In this alternative, no new units are proposed within the red shaded area (above).

GETTING THERE: PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

An Industrial/Maker designation is necessary to achieve the desired character of this neighborhood. Zoning ordinances should be updated to reflect this new designation. This kind of zoning would permit work-live spaces while also encouraging or providing incentives for preserving industrial buildings. An Industrial/Maker designation would help to preserve the distinct character of the district. The existing buildings would need to be reviewed to ensure that all of the historic structures are represented as a historic resource.

Some affordable work-live units could be achieved by implementing a workforce housing policy that requires or incentivizes units that house residents who meet specific income or occupational requirements (such as artists and makers). Affordable units could also be achieved with design by incorporating creative housing models. For example, small yet high-quality work-live units could be designed above shared commercial space at the ground level.

Additionally, when preserving historic buildings in KONO, a transfer of development rights could occur between another property Downtown. This would enable needed housing to increase in another neighborhoods by increasing height or density, while maintaining the historic buildings and uses in KONO and providing an incentive to KONO landlords to maintain their properties and provide community benefits. For example, specific areas in the Jack London District that are located next to the freeway might be a good candidate for additional intensity.

Local ordinances would need to be adjusted to achieve shared commercial spaces and to implement a successful system for transferring development rights. The height and intensity of development depicted in both alternatives must be sensitive to the historic context. Preserving the historic buildings east of Telegraph, will help maintain the existing character that has encouraged the artist and maker community to blossom here.

KONO DISTRICT: Plan Alternative #2

TOTAL NEW UNITS	1,721 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL OR LIGHT INDUSTRIAL SPACE	196,465 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	261,896 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	111,150 SQUARE FEET

UPTOWN

The vision for the future of Uptown includes an improved public realm, strategic infill and the re-purposing of underutilized and historic buildings to meet current needs—such as affordable housing and incubator space for small businesses. Strengthening the connection between Uptown and City Center is also a top priority. Uptown's lively and walkable streets, including Telegraph and Broadway, create a uniquely Oaklandish place, with shops, restaurants and venues that can only be found Downtown. The energy in Uptown strenghtens the connection from KONO as well as the City Center.

- Many residents and business owners cited improved street and urban design as essential to create a better connection between Uptown and City Center.
- Telegraph Avenue runs through the heart of Uptown. Currently, the road is too wide and does not adequately accommodate pedestrians, cyclists and transit users. A "road diet" has been designed for Telegraph Avenue; the new street design includes separated bike lanes in each direction, narrowed travel lanes, the addition of drought tolerant street trees, and a central street space that accommodates cars and buses.

Figure E-8: Illustrative Master Plan for the Uptown neighborhood

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A Transform Latham Square into the historic plaza that it once was. In the future, this transformation can also accommodate a street car.

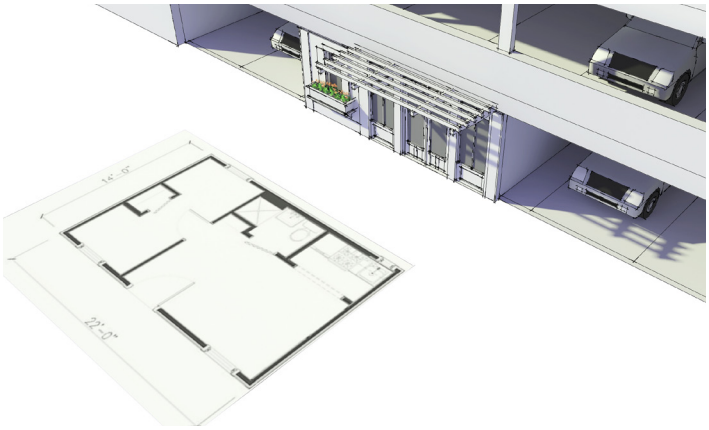
B Telegraph Avenue will have a "road diet", dedicating more of the street space to pedestrians, cyclists and transit users. Plant drought tolerant street trees in a row to enhance the public realm.

C Infill empty sites with new construction to define the street edge while providing ground-level retail, some office space and new residential units (affordable and market rate).

D Add needed connectivity along a long block with pedestrian paseo.

E As transit use becomes more diverse, adapt and reuse underutilized parking garages as micro housing units or incubator retail spaces.

F Strategically infill, with buildings that are inviting along primary streets to help to define the street edge and activate street life.

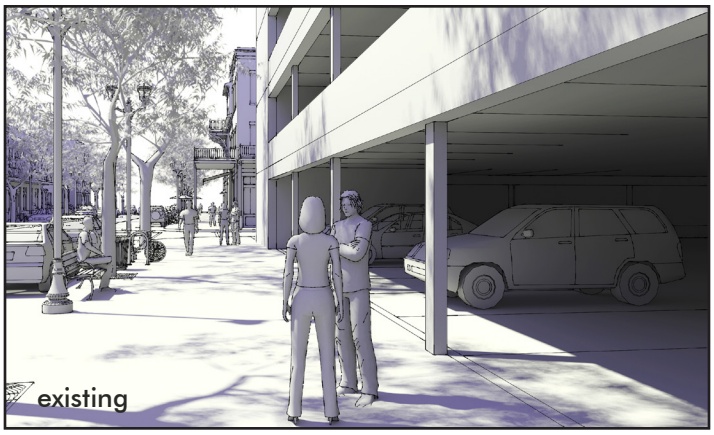


- Adjusting the street design on Telegraph will make the center of Uptown more walkable and bikeable to reduce traffic congestion, support business, and create a more livable public realm in a place with a large number of residents and local businesses. Making Telegraph a street for people and not just a thoroughfare for cars will make traveling to City Center a more pleasant experience.

- Infill development in Uptown is intended to add more ground-floor commercial space, some office space and new residential units.

- Along 21st and 20th Streets, a paseo is envisioned to add a pedestrian connection along the very long City block. Book ended by small buildings that could be used for incubator space or as live-work units, the new paseo would add needed connectivity to the neighborhood.

- There are a variety of building types in Uptown, including several parking garages. One idea for the future involves retrofitting parking garages at the ground level into housing or commercial spaces the depth of an individual parking bay. This would add housing supply or commercial space in Uptown, repair damaged street frontages, and re-purpose underutilized portions of parking structures.



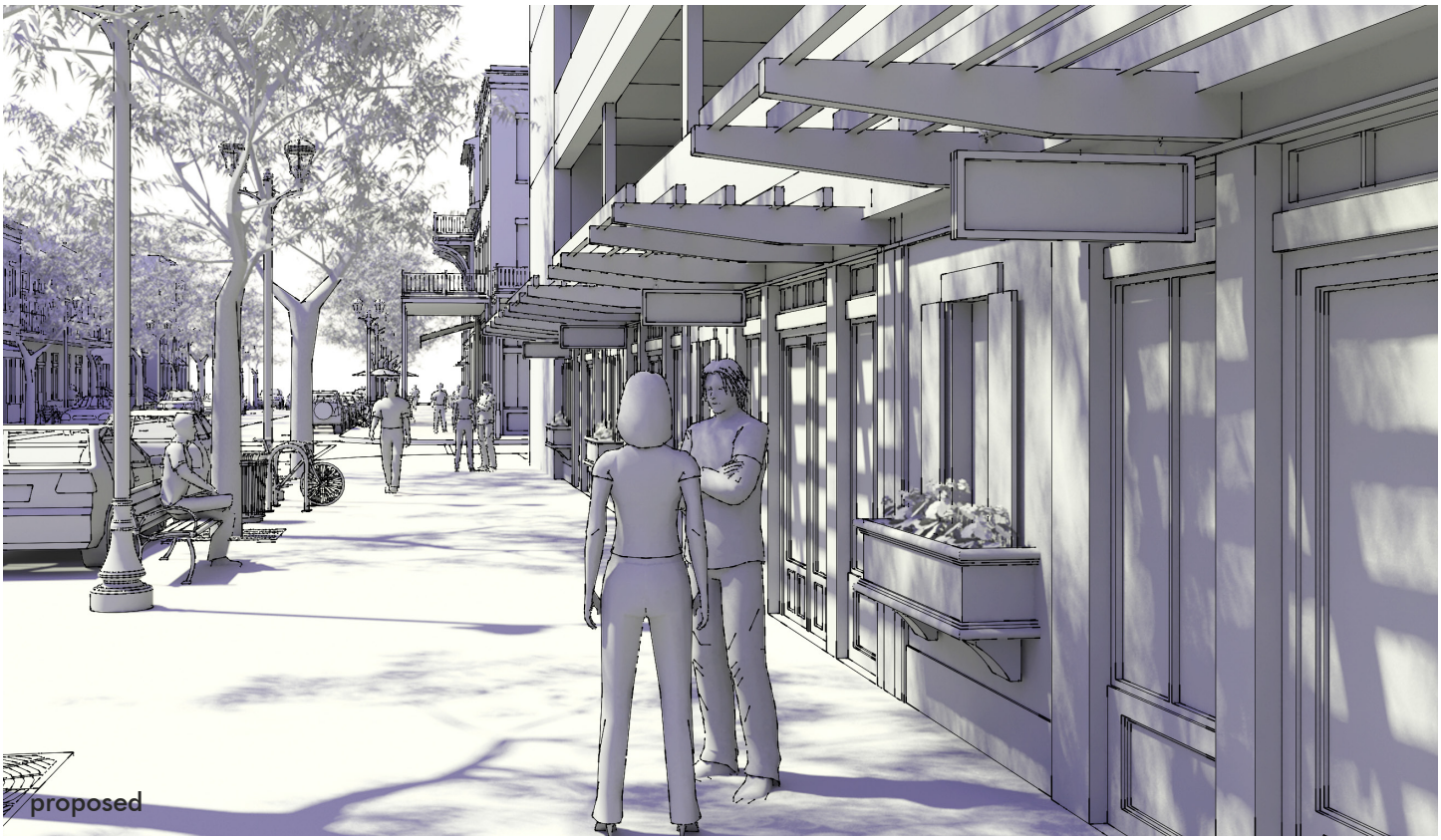


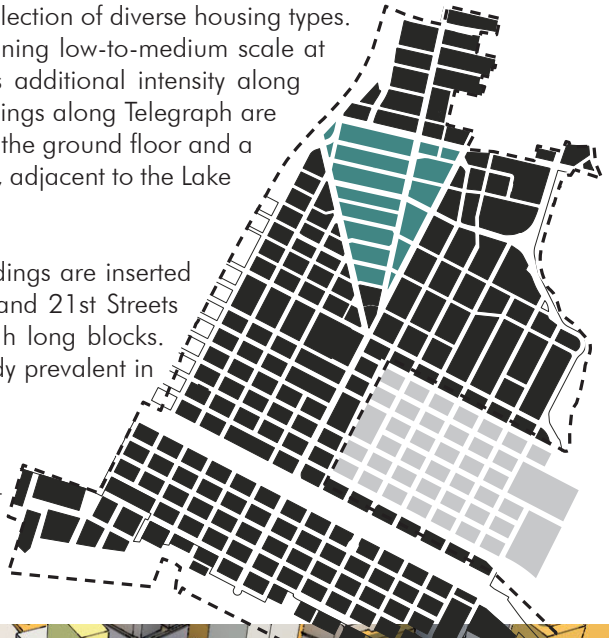
Figure E-9: Illustrating the potential to retrofit the ground floor of parking garages into retail or residential units, including unit floor plan (top), existing conditions (middle) and proposed conditions (bottom)

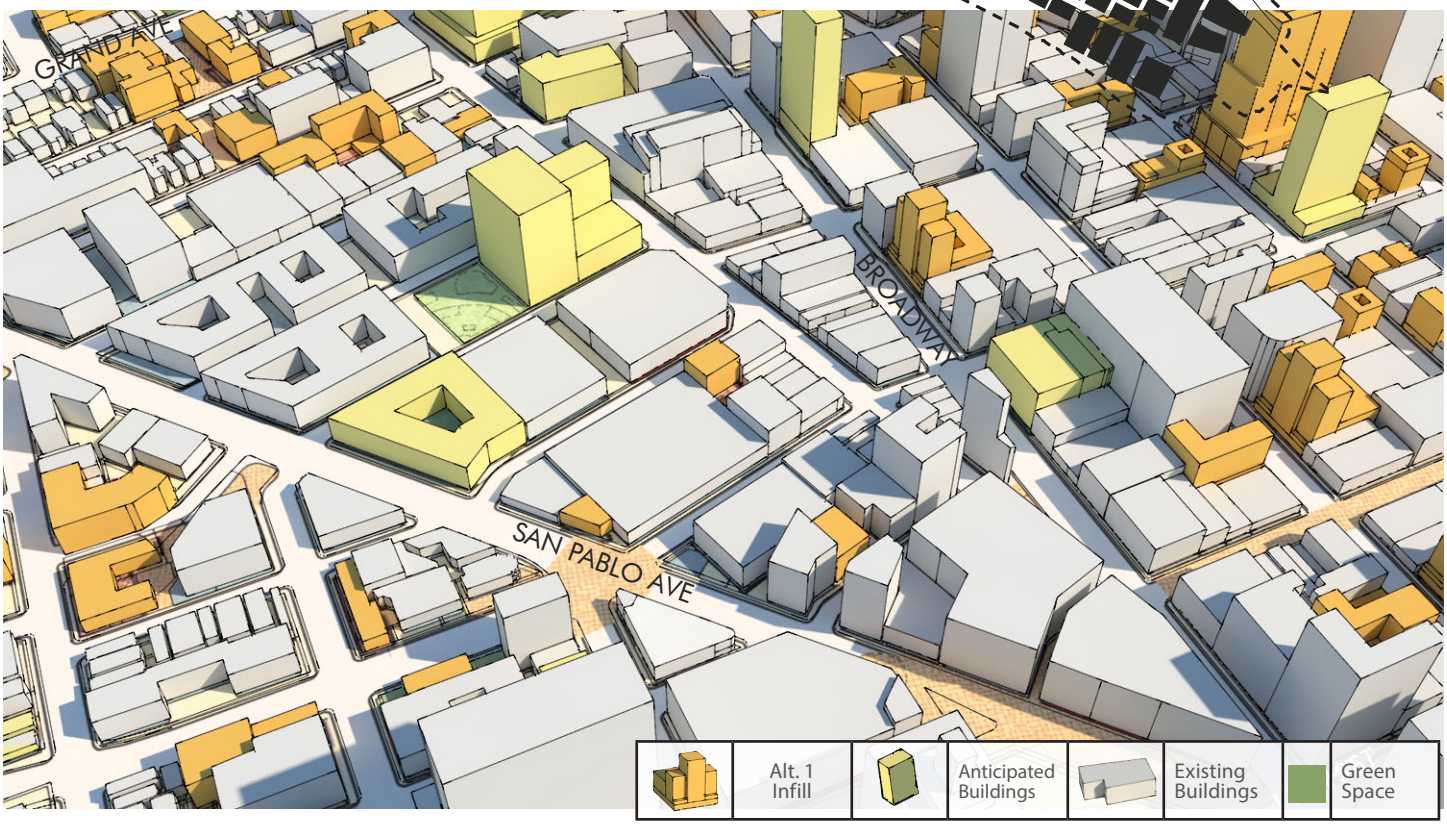
STUDYING THE VISION FOR UPTOWN

Broadway is the "main street" in Downtown, and already has a collection of diverse housing types. This scenario adds more intensity along the corridor, while remaining low-to-medium scale at the edges, in order to respond to the surrounding context. This additional intensity along Broadway defines the character of Uptown in the future. The buildings along Telegraph are given a height of eight to fifteen stories, resulting in more retail on the ground floor and a large amount of new housing units. The buildings along Broadway, adjacent to the Lake Merritt Office District, are eighteen to twenty-four stories tall.

In the smaller lots just south of Grand Avenue, small-scaled buildings are inserted into the existing fine-grained fabric. Larger blocks, along 22nd and 21st Streets increase pedestrian connectivity with passageways cutting through long blocks. These passages would be fronted by creative office spaces, already prevalent in the rehabilitation and conversions in the area.

A large quantity of anticipated development is expected to occur in Uptown (e.g. the large parcel at 2100 Telegraph). The exact quantity for the district has not yet been entirely approved, therefore the number totals in the chart below do not include anticipated development but represent new infill development (in orange).





UPTOWN DISTRICT: Plan Alternative

TOTAL NEW UNITS	1,228 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACE	38,076 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	19,302 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	39,404 SQUARE FEET

*A large quantity of anticipated development (yellow) is expected in Uptown. Anticipated Development is not included in the number totals on this chart.

GETTING THERE: PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

In order to achieve the desired vision in Uptown, the sections of Telegraph and Broadway that travel through the heart of the neighborhood should be redesigned with the pedestrian, cyclist and transit user as the priority, rather than the single occupant vehicle. On the northern sections of Telegraph and Broadway that are wider and have ground floor retail, on-street parking could provide quick access to businesses

Local ordinances can be updated with design guidelines for storefronts. The guidelines can outline steps to ensure that storefronts are inviting to the pedestrian. For example, maximum transparency on the first floor, signage that is visible to the pedestrian, and the presence of awnings, result in a comfortable and inviting experience. Additionally, a temporary ordinance can be implemented that allows large blank walls to be transformed by local artists into murals or art installations. This will help to establish continuity between active storefronts.

A local ordinance can be created in order to encourage incubator spaces and pop-up retail, like shipping containers or food trucks, to occur on underutilized sites. These temporary solutions can catalyze permanent change within a neighborhood.

Height allowances within the Uptown neighborhood already permit tall buildings; buildings in this alternative are typically at least seven stories tall, and become as tall as twelve and eighteen stories along Broadway and Telegraph. This would accommodate at least 1,228 new housing units as well as additional retail and office space at the heart of the City. In order to provide affordable housing in this scenario, several options could be pursued including the City allocating an impact fee for subsidy, and/or designing the units to have a variety of sizes and types.

PARKING DOWNTOWN

In the alternative plan concepts that are illustrated in this section, new parking is assumed to take up much less space than typical parking structures. Additionally, the demand for parking is reduced due to assumed improvements to transit access in Downtown Oakland.

The assumed parking in each of the concepts incorporates stacked and automatic parking facilities (pictured to the left), that can support parking underground. This new technology enables more space to be dedicated to other uses Downtown. For example, with less space consumed by parking, more space can be dedicated to housing. Because parking requirements raise costs significantly while limiting design options, often deterring housing production unnecessarily, reducing parking requirements will also incentivize housing construction.

The City of Oakland is currently conducting a parking study to determine the future need for parking Downtown. The Specific Plan process is coordinating with and following this study closely. The study has noted that there is a vast supply of parking Downtown, but it is often difficult to locate. As “smart cities” technologies and advertising are used to connect drivers more easily with parking, as the study continues, and as the plan alternatives are weighed, the assumed parking in each scenario may be reduced. If the assumed parking is further reduced, additional residential and commercial spaces can be accommodated in each alternative.

Figure E-10: Examples of mechanical parking systems

CITY CENTER

City Center consists of large buildings, many with an historic designation. The community and local advocates expressed a clear desire to maintain historic buildings in the City Center as Downtown grows. Any new development or retrofit of an existing building will need to contribute to the public realm, as many of the surrounding historic and iconic buildings have done.

- A distinctive characteristic of Broadway is its many small, well-loved, and unique retail businesses. Improving the sidewalk and street space will encourage pedestrian traffic to support them while making public spaces more comfortable and secure. During the construction phase of these street improvements, existing businesses should be reinforced

Figure E-11: Illustrative Plan for City Center

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 to connect the Civic Center to Uptown and facilitate successful ground-floor commercial businesses.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A Restore Latham Square to a plaza for people: residents and visitors can sit, dine or interact.

B Implement transit enhancements such as dedicated lanes, level-boarding, and queue jumps/ transit signal priority to carry passengers swiftly from origin to destination. These improvements will work well with the future BRT service and potential streetcar that will run along the corridor.

C Retrofit Broadway to become the "main street" of Downtown Oakland. Improvements include: separated bike infrastructure, street furniture and street trees.

D New development should contribute to the public realm, with a ground-floor that meets the street in a way that is inviting. The historic buildings in downtown accomplish this with: first floors that have a large floor to ceiling height (typically 16 to 18 feet), ground-floor retail that has a mostly glass or transparent facade, and awnings or umbrellas that provide shade and protection. Blank walls along the street are detrimental to the public realm.

E Temporarily improve large blank walls on the ground level with murals or other artistic installations.

with adequate signage and best construction management practices, for the least amount of disruption.

- The addition of a modern streetcar system is a popular idea that has emerged for the future of Broadway. Historically, Broadway had a streetcar system, and a new streetcar line could extend along Broadway from Jack London to 40th Street/McArthur Bart, adding another mode of transit to this busy corridor. A modern streetcar would complement other improvements such as extended bus service along the corridor, the implementation of dedicated bike lanes, and generous sidewalks. These improvements would not preclude car traffic, but would add more and different modes of transportation to Oakland's iconic "main street."

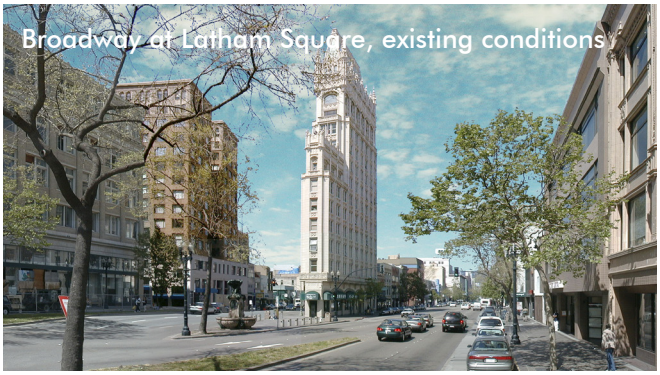


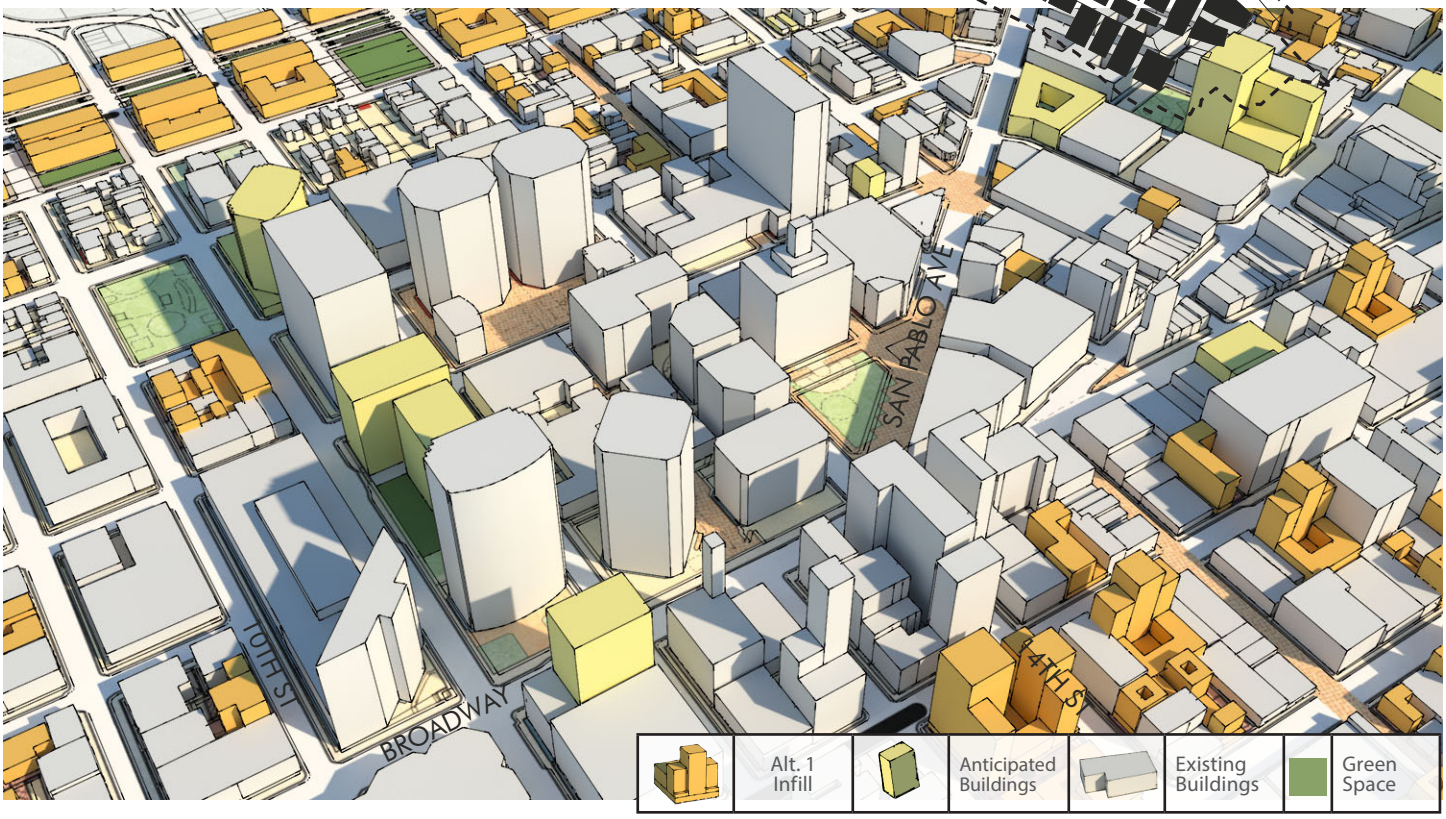
Figure E-12: Potential improvements to Broadway in City Center

STUDYING THE VISION FOR CITY CENTER

Currently consisting of convenience shopping and daytime dining establishments that serve local office workers, the City Center area is filled in with mid- to large- sized buildings with retail on the ground floor, and residences above in this scenario. This is also a prime location for new office development. With more residents, the ground floor commercial expands to include more neighborhood serving uses.

To improve walkability along streets with exposed parking garages, small retail or residential units are introduced on the ground floors of parking garages, providing habitable space along the street. These "liner" units face the street, providing activity and security. The addition of residential units to the City Center area creates activity beyond weekday office hours - boosting safety and the local economy.

Like the Uptown District, a large amount of anticipated development, specifically in office and new residential units, is expected to occur here (e.g. the City Center Lot T5/6 and City Center at Jefferson are located in this neighborhood). The exact quantity for the district has not yet been entirely approved, therefore the number totals in the chart below do not include anticipated development but represent new infill development (in orange).



CITY CENTER DISTRICT: Plan Alternative

TOTAL NEW UNITS	240 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACE	10,071 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	12,000 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	19,250 SQUARE FEET

*Anticipated development is not included in the number totals on this chart. At present, an additional 310,285 of office has been approved and 600,000 SF of office is under review. Refer to Anticipated Development Map in Section 2 for the status and details of specific sites in City Center.

GETTING THERE: PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

One of the key concepts for implementing the vision for City Center is the retrofitted design of Broadway as it travels through the core of Downtown. The envisioned street retrofit includes a transit priority lane to accommodate the forthcoming BRT route that will pass through this portion of Broadway. The proposed street design also includes car travel lanes in each direction, dedicated and separated bike lanes, and large sidewalks adjacent to retail storefronts.

In this area, on-street parking does not fit within the right-of-way if dedicated transit, bike lanes and bike parking are accommodated. This new infrastructure will bring increased pedestrian traffic to the main street. The tradeoff between on-street parking and increased bike and transit facilities is not suggested for every street Downtown. However, this segment of Broadway is envisioned to be restored to the true main street that it once was—the multi-modal center of the City. Given the special nature of Broadway at the City Center, this design is appropriate. Additionally, design consideration should be given to the growth of car/ride share services and the potential for autonomous vehicles, and what that growth will mean for future infrastructure, such as the need for pick-up and loading areas rather than parking.

The future of Broadway includes the planned BRT route. The idea of restoring the street car system has also been popular. If determined to be a community priority, a streetcar line could energize Broadway while also adding to the menu of transit options.

As in Uptown, an ordinance can be implemented that encourages local artists to partner with property owners to reduce the prevalence of large blank walls at the ground level. Adding temporary mural art or other art installations on blank or covered up frontages along Broadway will help to establish continuity from Uptown to City Center and from City Center to the Jack London neighborhood.

Figure E-13: New structures are being proposed in City Center, including this residential building designed on Clay & 11th Streets. The developer is Strada Investment Group and the designer is Arquitectonica.

LAKE MERRITT OFFICE DISTRICT

In the draft illustration of the vision for this district, new high-rise towers, designed using green building strategies, join those already located in the Lake Merritt Office District. This would enable new jobs and places to live that cater to a variety of skills and incomes. Walkable urban streets connect Downtown to Lake Merritt, creating a unique place to live and work.

- Higher-intensity buildings in this district absorb demand for Class A office space, relieving development pressures on other Downtown districts. Economies of scale allow larger residential buildings in this district to provide a significant number of residential units.
- Improved street frontages on existing buildings are proposed, allowing local businesses to expand and reinvest in the area to provide goods and services to new and current residents and workers, while streets become lively, pedestrian-oriented places throughout the day and into the night. Connections to Lake Merritt and other downtown districts are improved as pedestrian and bicycle routes are enhanced and more people commute to work by transit or bicycle. Key connections in this neighborhood include 20th Street and Grand Avenue.
- Infill development in the Lake Merritt Office District focuses on vacant, surface parking and underutilized lots

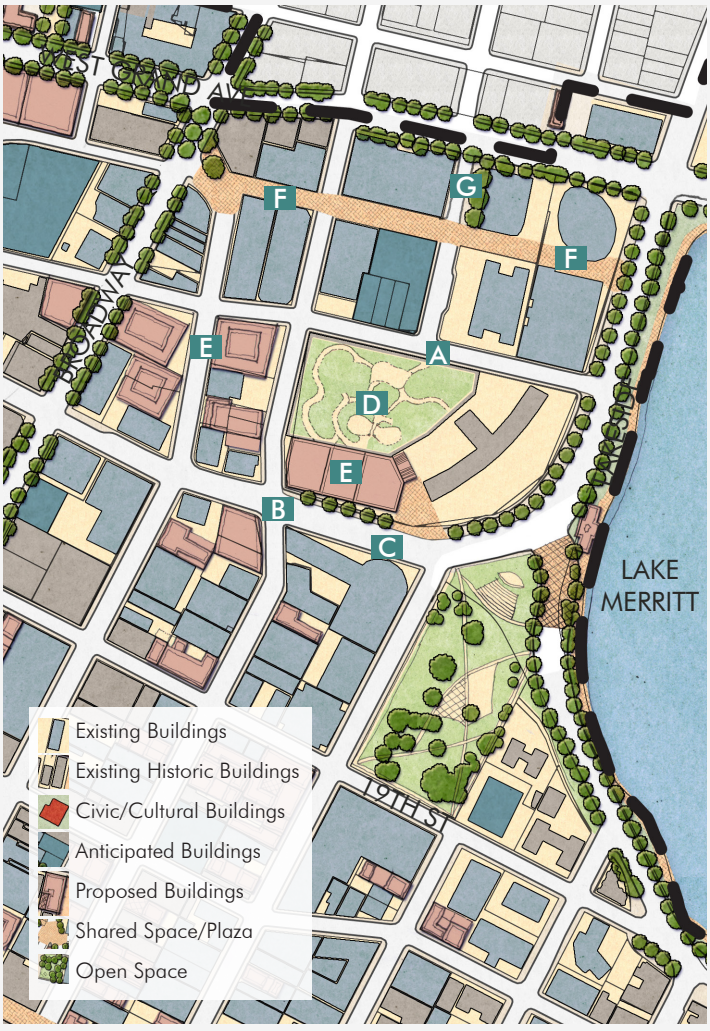


Figure E-14: Lake Merritt District Illustrative Plan

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A Improve pedestrian connection to Kaiser roof garden.

B Existing and new retail and entertainment establishments benefit from an expanding workforce, and vice versa. Examine and revise entertainment district regulations and allowances to maximize the use of entertainment spaces.

C Activate street-level frontages to improve safety and engage pedestrians by generating visual interest along streets leading from the interior of the district towards Lake Merritt and Broadway. Visual elements include shopfronts, awnings, outdoor seating, pedestrian-scaled signage, and primary entrances.

D Provide an improved network of main community gathering spaces and secondary public open spaces to generate amenities that are attractive for Class A office users and residents alike.

E Focus new employment immediately adjacent to transit, further enhancing Oakland as a major employment destination. Improve bike and pedestrian infrastructure to connect Lake Merritt Office District to other neighborhood centers within Downtown and to areas west of San Pablo.

F Improve 22nd Street as a shared space; this linear civic space creates a new passive, main public open space.

G Re-open street and extend Kaiser Plaza to better connect Lake Merritt Office District to Broadway / Valdez Street retail.

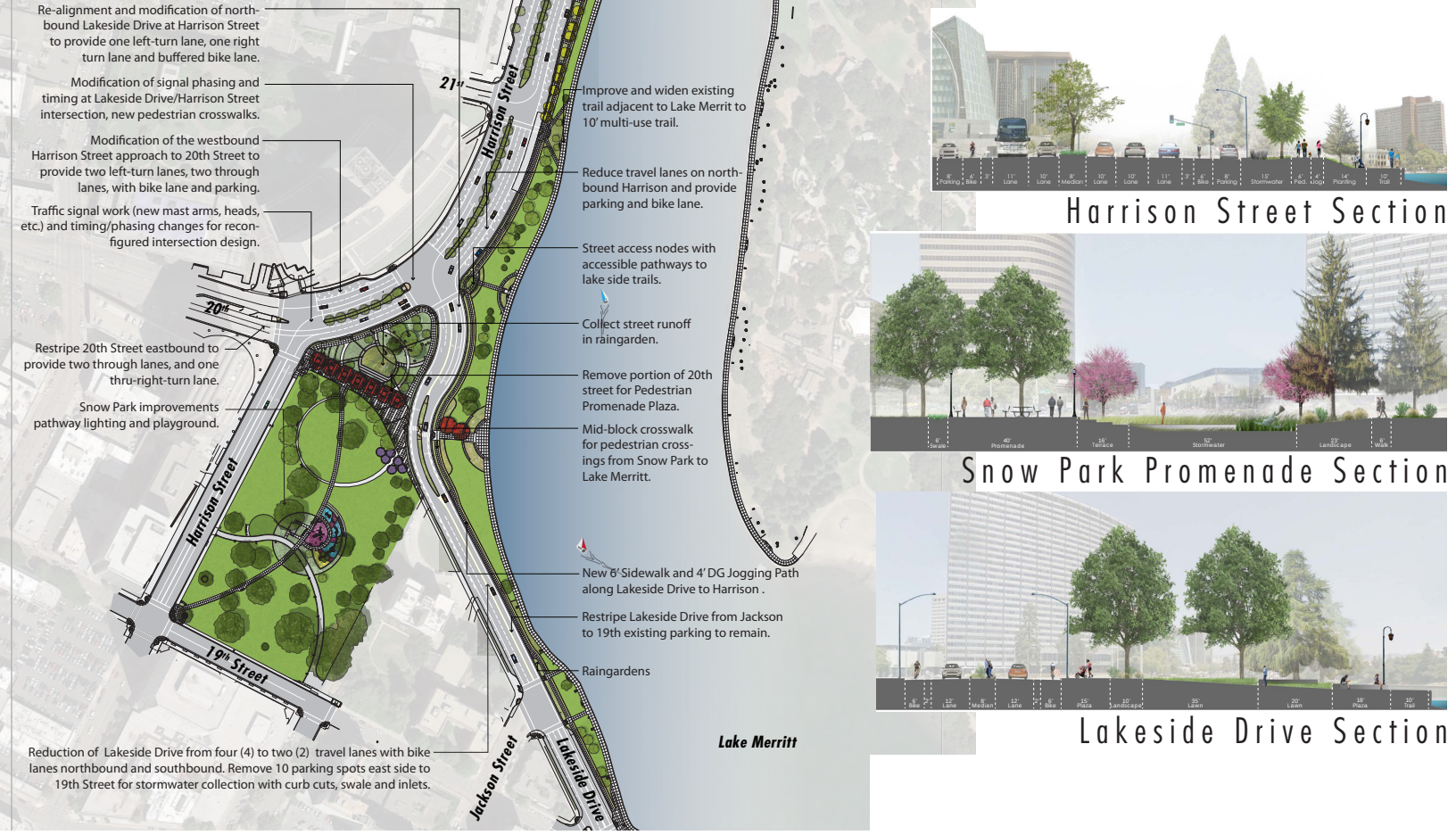


Figure E-15: Snow Park waterfront activation at Lakeside and 20th Street.

to accommodate additional offices and residences that support entertainment and retail uses which will also serve existing residences and businesses. This new development provides new locations for residents and businesses, adding to the supply of housing and commercial space. The planned intensity encourages an increase in housing supply by allowing for high-density buildings in this district. Using zoning incentives and government subsidies, well-designed affordable housing units and market rate units can be incorporated into the district.

- Infill development in the Lake Merritt Office and City Center Districts focuses on absorbing much of the Class A office demand to allow a higher percentage of more affordable office spaces (Class B and C) to locate in other Downtown neighborhoods. The 19th Street BART station and AC Transit's Uptown Transit Center serve the Lake Merritt Office District. By focusing high-density buildings in areas where they already exist, Downtown can accommodate new growth while minimally impacting small-to-medium scale Downtown neighborhoods.

- While some existing towers in this neighborhood are wide "bar" buildings, new high-rises should be "tower" forms, which are more slender and have less impact on view sheds and light. Regularly spaced street trees, rooftop gardens and green roofs create an urban canopy and minimize urban heat island effect. Infill development consists of green buildings with a certain percentage LEED certified.

- Re-make 22nd Street with decorative paving and special lighting (such as a "necklace of lights") between Telegraph Avenue and the Kaiser/Cathedral plaza to create an intimate, plaza-like street corridor through downtown to Lake Merritt.

- Re-open the former section of Valdez Street between 22nd Street and Grand Avenue to auto traffic to better connect the Lake Merritt Office District to the future retail corridor along Valdez Street north of Grand Avenue.

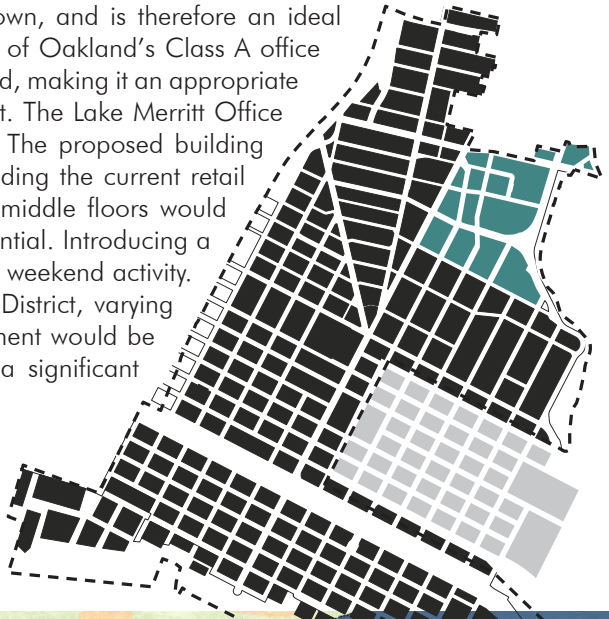
- Centralized, enclosed open space such as pocket parks, plazas and courtyards, add value to Downtown and particularly to lots that are immediately adjacent and within 800 feet of open space. Snow Park maintains the sight lines down Thomas L. Berkeley Way that lead to views of Lake Merritt.

- Ground floor spaces along the streets that lead to Snow Park can be occupied by active uses and "third places" (the "first place" being home, and the "second place" being work) such as local coffee shop, park or civic institutions to promote pedestrian safety and comfort and support the creative flow of ideas.

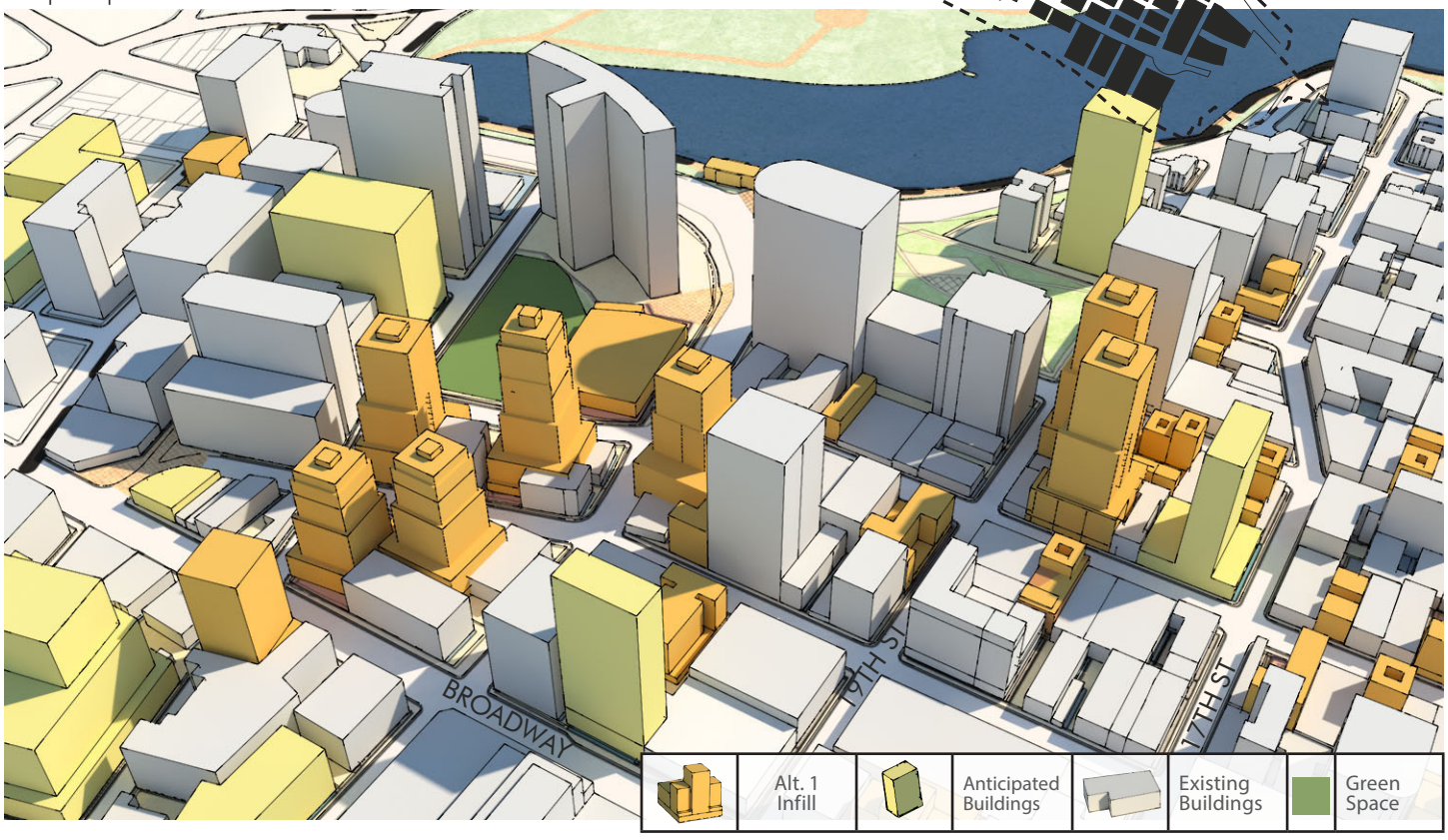
- To support collaborative interaction, ground level frontages are designed to open out to the street with facades that are diverse and well-detailed with doors, windows, signage, and lighting. Streets narrowed and enclosed by street trees to calm traffic are safer and more appealing routes.

STUDYING THE VISION FOR LAKE MERRITT DISTRICT

The Lake Merritt Office District is located at the core of Downtown, and is therefore an ideal location for the most intense building types. It contains nearly all of Oakland's Class A office inventory, and is adjacent to the transit-accessible center of Oakland, making it an appropriate location for more office, residential and commercial development. The Lake Merritt Office District is proposed to have mid-rise to high-rise building types. The proposed building types are mixed-use with commercial on the ground floor, expanding the current retail targeted to office workers to also target to local residents. The middle floors would offer office space, while the upper floors could transition to residential. Introducing a residential component is key to expanding daytime, nighttime and weekend activity. In the two plan alternatives depicted for the Lake Merritt Office District, varying levels of intensity are illustrated. In both scenarios, new development would be tall (typically thirteen to twenty-four stories) and could provide a significant portion of new housing units as well as employment centers.



Given the proximity to BART and the existing height, a second alternative (next page) depicts an option that adds more intensity. This option allows the most intense part of Downtown to grow further, adding more towers, while maintaining large expanses of open space.



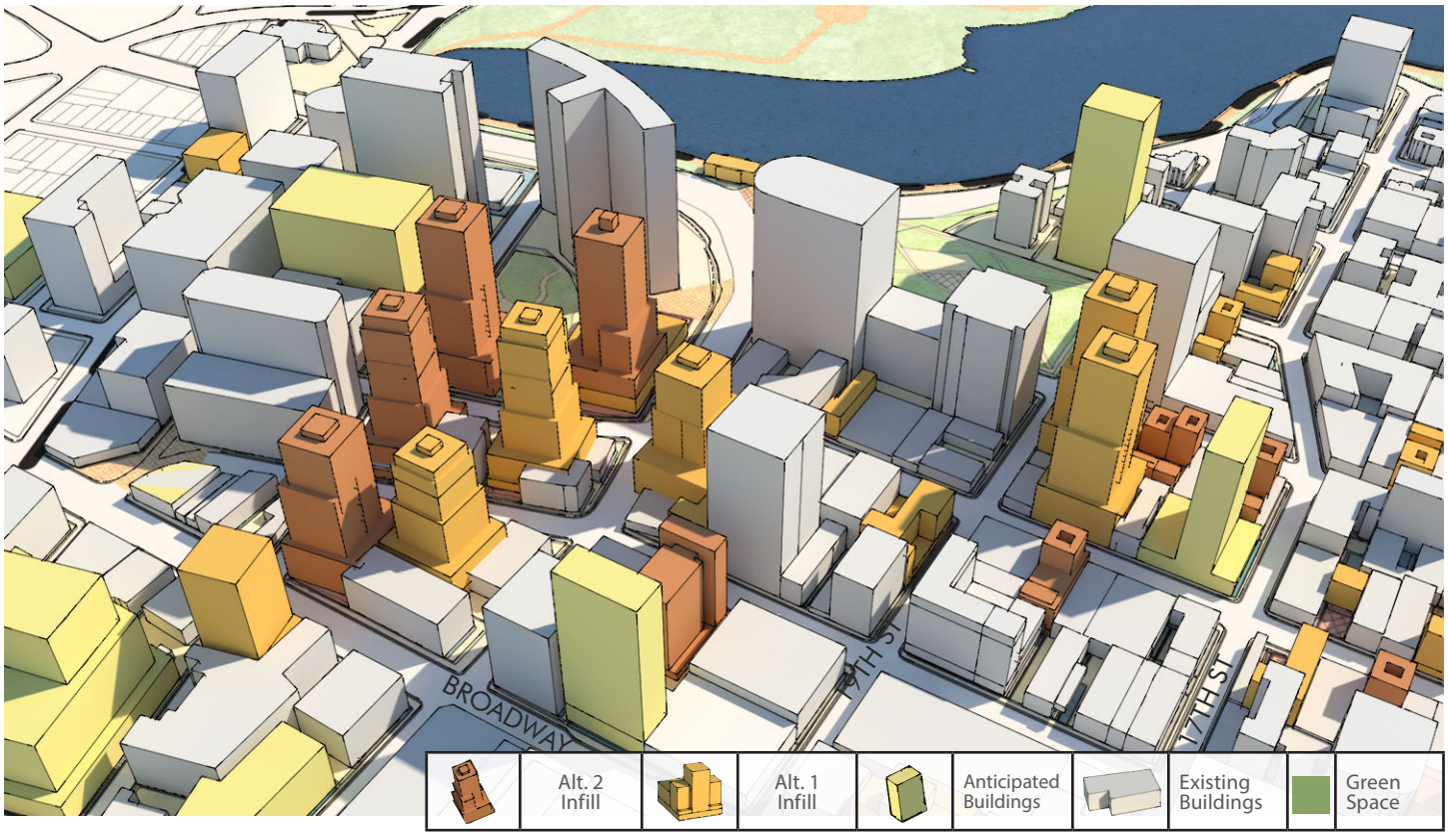
LAKE MERRITT OFFICE DISTRICT: Plan Alternative #1	
TOTAL NEW UNITS	598 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACE	74,512 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	1,395,568 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	143,617 SQUARE FEET

GETTING THERE: PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

To meet the projected need for residents and businesses in the future, and to allow an opportunity for more affordability, new development is needed Downtown. Maintaining lower-scale development in some neighborhoods Downtown to match the existing character makes sense. However, the Lake Merritt Office District is an opportunity to intensify in an area that is already very tall.

New development should provide a variety of housing types, including one, two, and three bedroom units. An adjusted zoning ordinance that incentivizes both the inclusion of homes priced below market rate and a variety of unit types, the Lake Merritt District can offer opportunities for much needed housing supply and affordability.

Additionally, policies to incentivize shared office and commercial spaces at the ground floor should be included to implement the vision for this district. In both alternatives evaluated, the overall vision is met; however, the second alternative includes no additional parking for the added development. A lower parking requirement in this transit-rich neighborhood, gives developers more options to achieve more units with a variety of development types in the same building footprint.



LAKE MERRITT OFFICE DISTRICT: Plan Alternative #2

TOTAL NEW UNITS	1,288 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACE	104,512 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	1,565,600 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	188,617 SQUARE FEET

LAKESIDE

The vision for the Lakeside neighborhood preserves existing high-quality buildings and cultural centers while integrating new infill development and civic spaces that support and enhance local cultural institutions. Building on the successful mixed use neighborhood that already exists, the future of Lakeside adds a large quantity and variety of transit-served housing, improves all of the streets and public spaces, providing an interesting and walkable experience towards Lake Merritt whitle creating many of the best addresses for all demographics Downtown.

- Existing residential and mixed-use buildings are supplemented by context-sensitive infill that includes affordable housing and commercial space.

- Affordable housing can be achieved in Lakeside and other neighborhoods Downtown with a series of different tools. An impact fee will help to subsidize housing. Also, local ordinances can provide incentives to build below-market-rate units, as well as small market rate units that are affordable by design

- In the illustrated vision, neighborhood residents mingle with people from Oakland along a shared space art Walk on 15th Street, where local businesses and art galleries spill onto the sidewalk to create active frontages in support of a rich pedestrian environment. The Black Arts Movement and Business District is celebrated through improved streetscapes, distinct signage, and other visual and architectural cues that reinforce the character and significance of this area to Oakland's culture and history.

- Infill development focuses on vacant, surface parking and underutilized lots to accommodate additional residential development, as well as supporting arts, office, entertainment, and retail uses. New spaces, coupled with ordinances that require or incentivize workforce housing,

Figure E-16: Illustrative Plan for Lakeside neighborhood

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A Fill in vacant or under-utilized vacant lots.

B Designate and design 14th Street as the Black Arts Movement and Business District.

C Link pocket plazas and greens by shaded, tree-lined streets.

D Develop the 15th Street Art Walk & shared space; this linear civic space creates a new passive, main public open space with plenty of room for outdoor art displays and opportunities for active ground floor uses.

can help to stabilize existing residents and businesses in this neighborhood. The planned intensity allows for large-scale buildings between Broadway and Harrison as well as fronting 14th, Lake Merritt and 19th to encourage the supply of housing. Contextually sensitive small-, medium-, and large-scale buildings fill in the residential portion of the Lakeside District.

- The Malonga Casquelord Center for the Arts (formerly the Alice Arts Center) is highlighted as an invaluable asset to this neighborhood. An art walk is created along 15th Street, a portion of Harrison, and a portion of 17th Street that encourages artist spaces and incubates budding artists.

- The 14th Street Black Arts Movement and Business District has been identified as a community priority to honor the unique contributions of Black arts, artists, and businesses to Oakland's cultural and historic landscape. The District extends from the Calvin Simmons Theatre and the Lake Merritt amphitheater on Lake Merritt Boulevard to Frontage Road and includes up to four blocks in certain area on either side of 14th Street. The district includes distinct banners, wayfinding signage, directories and plaques and other artistic installations that would highlight, celebrate, preserve and support the contributions of Black artists and business owners in Oakland. Further, a future District board of directors could provide oversight to ensure the economic vitality of Black artists and businesses.

Sensitive Infill Strategy

Vacant, underutilized, and surface parking lots could accommodate additional residential units, as well as supporting arts, office, entertainment, and retail uses. Recent development in Uptown has intensified developer interest in building residential products in downtown. Based on developer feedback, Types 3 and 5 construction (seven stories and higher) is currently feasible in downtown. It is unlikely that the wrapped, block-sized building types recently constructed in Uptown will occur frequently due to the fact that such large development opportunities are limited. An incremental infill strategy is more likely. Incremental infill helps to further activate the neighborhood and provides an opportunity to fill "missing teeth" in the Lakeside District's existing urban fabric.

1. Provide live/work units to activate ground floor spaces with artists along quiet neighborhood streets.

2. Locate higher intensity buildings between Broadway and Harrison as well as fronting along 14th, Lake Merritt and 19th.

3. Allow residential-only frontages where appropriate along quieter residential streets (secondary and tertiary).

Figure E-17: Infill in the Lakeside neighborhood

THINK BIG...
...by thinking small(er).

Infill development can be large (150' x 150'), medium (100' x 150') and small scale (50' x 150') incremental infill rather than large, block sized (400' x 400') buildings.

Figure E-18: 14th Street initial improvements, looking west

Figure E-19, above: Long-term transformation of 14th Street

Figure E-20, below: Existing conditions on 14th Street

14th Street Transformation

A better pedestrian realm to mark the Black Arts District on 14th Street has been envisioned by the community, connecting key destinations downtown. In this proposal,14th Street is transformed from a barrier between the Lakeside District and Chinatown into an address for the Black Arts District with a stronger emphasis on the public realm and active ground floor frontages. Extending the "necklace of lights" up 14th Street, as is described in the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan, would create a memorable link between the lake and city center.

4 Shown in the figure above, 14th Street is redesigned with two-way movement, narrowed travel lanes, parallel parking, street trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, off-street bicycle facilities and wide sidewalks. Just as foot traffic and convenience parking are important for active ground-floor uses, cycle tracks also contribute to economic stability by increasing visibility for businesses.

5 While awaiting more permanent development, creative temporary infill is designed in the form of repurposed shipping containers to provide incubator spaces for artists and businesses. Long-term development could include high-quality, affordable spaces within large-scale buildings.

6 Locally-created public artwork celebrates Oakland's Black arts and culture. Plaques and signage are integrated into the streetscape to reinforce the Black Arts District.

- The high quality, unique scale of the Lakeside District focuses on the civic art of city building. Infill development will provide building types that are informed by the existing building fabric (such as the sidecourt apartment).

- A network of great public spaces, including a shared space (a plaza-like street with a priority on the pedestrian, designed to eliminate the separation between pedestrians and car traffic) along 15th Street, pocket plazas and greens are linked by shaded, tree-lined streets to trails along Lake Merritt and Snow Park.

- The presence of Lake Merritt is pulled deeper into the Lakeside District with improved sight lines, pedestrian access and streetscapes. Streets are narrowed to slow traffic and establish them as high-quality pedestrian environments that generate a green canopy and establish a strong neighborhood. Such vibrant public corridors link the Lakeside District to other neighborhood centers in Downtown. Both 14th and 17th Streets are key links between neighborhoods as is Lakeside Drive, as it meanders around Lake Merritt. The unifying elements of these corridors include generous sidewalks and transparent shopfronts along the street edge that establish comfort for the pedestrian, street trees, dedicated bike and transit infrastructure, and memorable architecture.

- One-way streets are converted to two-way streets to improve access and pedestrian and bicycle safety. The conversion will reduce the speed of through traffic as the streets no longer simply serve as on-ramps to I-880. A conversion will also reduce greenhouse gases as vehicles are able to reach their destinations more directly. All streets are designed with pedestrians and cyclists as the priority.

- Much of Downtown is envisioned to have new civic institutions and organizations in the future. The 14th Street corridor in particular would be a good location for new museum, library or arts uses.

Figure E-21: 15th Street

15th Street Shared Space

15th Street in Lakeside presents an opportunity to create an outdoor room, or a unified plaza-like space in the street, anchored by an iconic building and surrounded by building fronts to provide a linear civic space within. This linear civic space acts as a new passive, main public open space with plenty of room for outdoor art displays and opportunities for active ground floor uses to flow into the space reinforcing the existing art community. Such a space is designed to support the block events that have developed organically in this area.

In this vision, new infill buildings are provided at the corner of Webster and 15th and along 15th to comfortably enclose the shared space. Large-scale, new infill buildings along Harrison terminate views down 15th and enclose the shared space. Permeable pavers, tree canopy, structural soil systems, tree planter boxes and rain gardens are provided within the shared space to aid in filtering stormwater runoff for water quality.

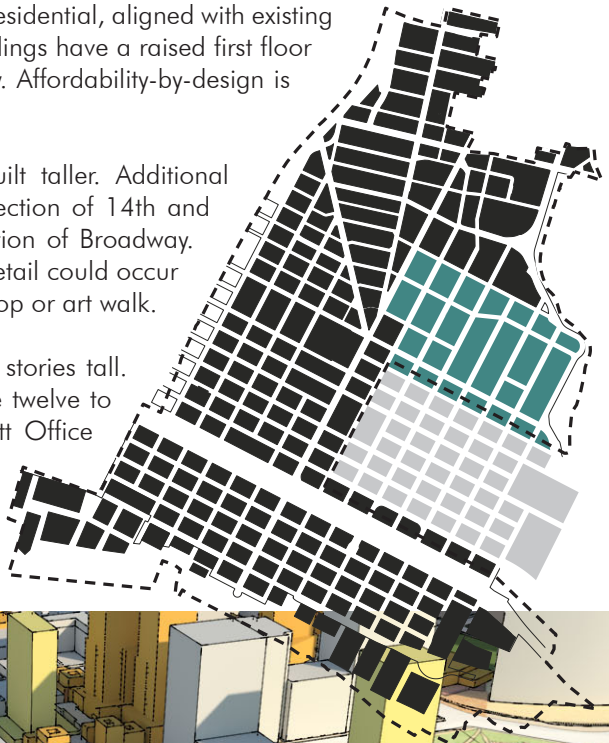
The shared space is designed for slow movement of cars, transit, pedestrians, cyclists, etc., as well as for the synergy of outdoor seating, galleries, and other "third places." In the near term Webster and Harrison are safer and more enjoyable for cyclists due to the addition of dedicated bike lanes that are buffered by temporary planter boxes that help to calm car traffic.

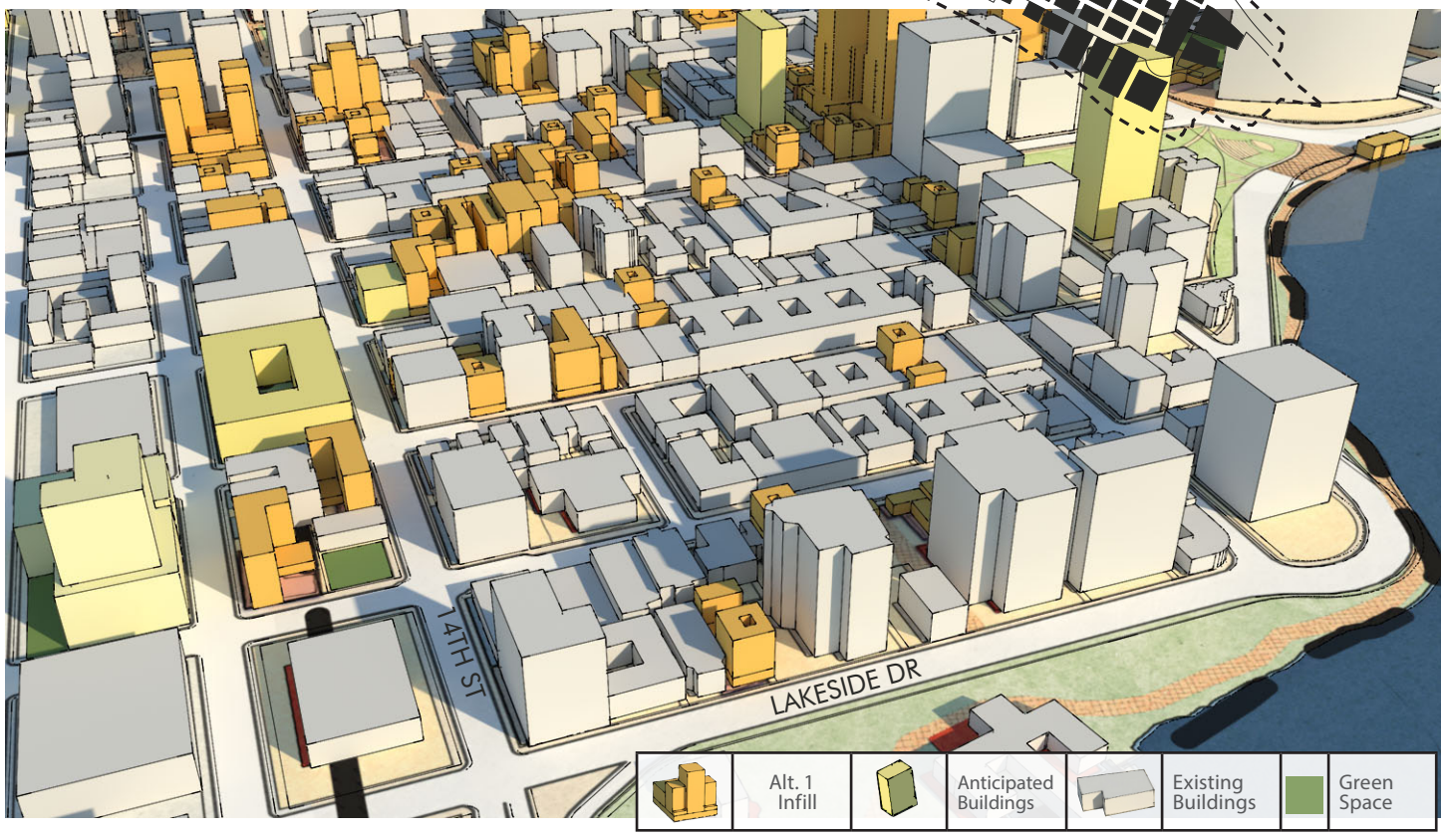
STUDYING THE VISION FOR LAKESIDE

New development envisioned for the heart of Lakeside is low-rise residential, aligned with existing older multi-family buildings. As in the existing buildings, new buildings have a raised first floor to provide ground-floor residents with privacy and added security. Affordability-by-design is accomplished through a diverse range of smaller units.

Approaching Broadway, buildings in strategic locations are built taller. Additional intensity of residential units and commercial space at the intersection of 14th and Broadway matches the existing development pattern on this section of Broadway. Small pockets of dining and neighborhood-serving convenience retail could occur at the ground floors in key areas, such as a 15th Street cultural loop or art walk.

The core of the Lakeside district ranges between two and seven stories tall. As The neighborhood travels toward Broadway, the buildings are twelve to eighteen stories; along 19th Street, adjacent to the Lake Merritt Office District, buildings are eighteen to twenty-four stories tall. New office space and new residences is intended to be located in the larger buildings that line Broadway and on the parcels that are adjacent to the Lake Merritt Office District.





LAKESIDE / GOLD COAST DISTRICT: Plan Alternative	
TOTAL NEW UNITS	2,147 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACE	236,163 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	588,000 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	165,062 SQUARE FEET

GETTING THERE: PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

The vision for Lakeside includes incremental infill that enhances the surrounding neighborhood, and public realm improvements that support local culture and arts.

As in other neighborhoods, including workforce housing is a priority; several policies could be considered to achieve plan goals including incentives with new development, or design approaches that incorporate a diverse range of housing types, including smaller affordable-by-design units or cooperative housing.

An important element of the vision for this neighborhood is that infill occur at the scale of the building and lot, and not by entire city block. This will help to retain the existing neighborhood character and scale. The City could incentivize development on smaller infill parcels by streamling the approvals process for new development of this kind.

The proposed vision for improvements to public spaces should be created and implemented in partnership with the community to ensure improved streets, plazas and shared spaces meet community needs for celebration of arts and cultural heritage. Establishing a community organization, such as an arts commission, or partnering with existing community groups, to work in conjunction with the City in establishing priorities, defining specific projects and detailing designs could be a first step.

Figure E-22: Shared space on 15th Street

Downtown Art Walk

Generating a shared space along 15th Street allows artists and businesses to informally engage with pedestrians, cyclists, and automobiles in the form of outdoor galleries and seating as part of a heavily-greened, linear civic space.

Concentrating Class A office development in the Lake Merritt Office and City Center Districts opens up the opportunity to focus on more affordable office spaces within the Lakeside District by adding a variety of office types and sizes. By design, smaller boutique office space can still be high quality. New infill buildings provide work/live spaces on the ground floor to support existing and new artists and other small businesses. Ground floors incorporate human-scale elements to create interest, comfort and safety for pedestrians. Elements include shopfronts, awnings, outdoor seating, pedestrian scaled signage, and primary entrances that face the street.

WEST OF SAN PABLO

The West of San Pablo neighborhood transitions from larger lot sizes to smaller parcels, with a series of low-scale historic buildings located near the freeway (I-980). There is a great opportunity for infill development West of San Pablo, with a character of development that is similar to the context of the surrounding neighborhood. There are gaps in the building fabric along the street edges in this neighborhood, therefore infill development that is inviting at the street is appropriate here.

- Street-oriented infill helps to better define both 17th Street and 20th Street, which are gateways to Downtown. Streetscape improvements and traffic calming along these streets will make them more welcoming gateways. A similar approach to San Pablo Avenue creates safe and comfortable street design and public spaces.
- As the West of San Pablo neighborhood (as well as Old Oakland) meets the freeway, portions of the streets and adjacent properties are blighted and underutilized. A popular idea with the community is to transform I-980 into a multi-way boulevard that can still carry car traffic but is also accessible to bikes, pedestrians and transit users. This change provides a more consistent transition and development pattern between West Oakland and downtown.

Figure E-23: Illustrative Plan for West of San Pablo

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A Transform 17th Street and 20th Street into multi-modal streets with cycle tracks.

B Create a new shared public space at San Pablo and 17th.

C Transform 15th Street into a shared street with small-scale infill to include art studios and incubator spaces.

D Infill and improve the connection/intersection on 18th Street as it transitions to 19th Street. A mid-block plaza would add connectivity and open space.

E Transform I-980 into an at-grade boulevard and fill in the right-of-way with new mid-rise buildings. The right-of-way could also be used for parks and open space.

F Welcome all other modes of travel on the multi-way boulevard replacing I-980, providing improved access to West Oakland.

17th Street West of San Pablo Ave.

The images below illustrate a sequence of street improvements that could occur along 17th Street in order to establish a gateway entry to Downtown Oakland. First steps include a road diet that creates a separated bicycle lane (cycle track). Since the existing right-of-way is very wide, there is space to add a planted buffer between the bike lane and the car travel lanes while maintaining wide sidewalks (at least 10 feet) on each side of the street. The next set of improvements includes infill development on empty sites. The upgrades to the public realm often catalyze the redevelopment of underutilized spaces like those that are envisioned in the renderings. The final steps include continued infill development, which can be either traditional or modern in design depending on the developer or architect, so long as the ground floor is designed to be inviting along the street frontage.

Figure E-24: Existing conditions along 17th Street, looking west toward Downtown.

Figure E-25: Proposed street improvements.

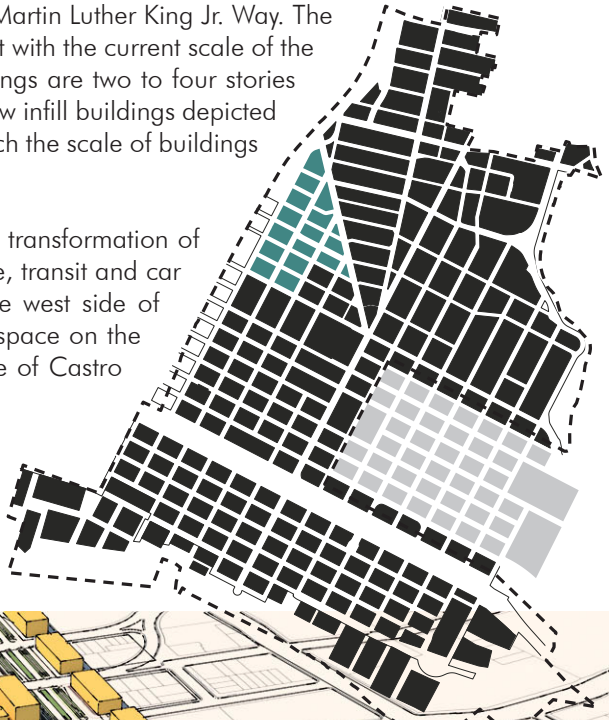
Figure E-26: Infill development with new modern buildings.

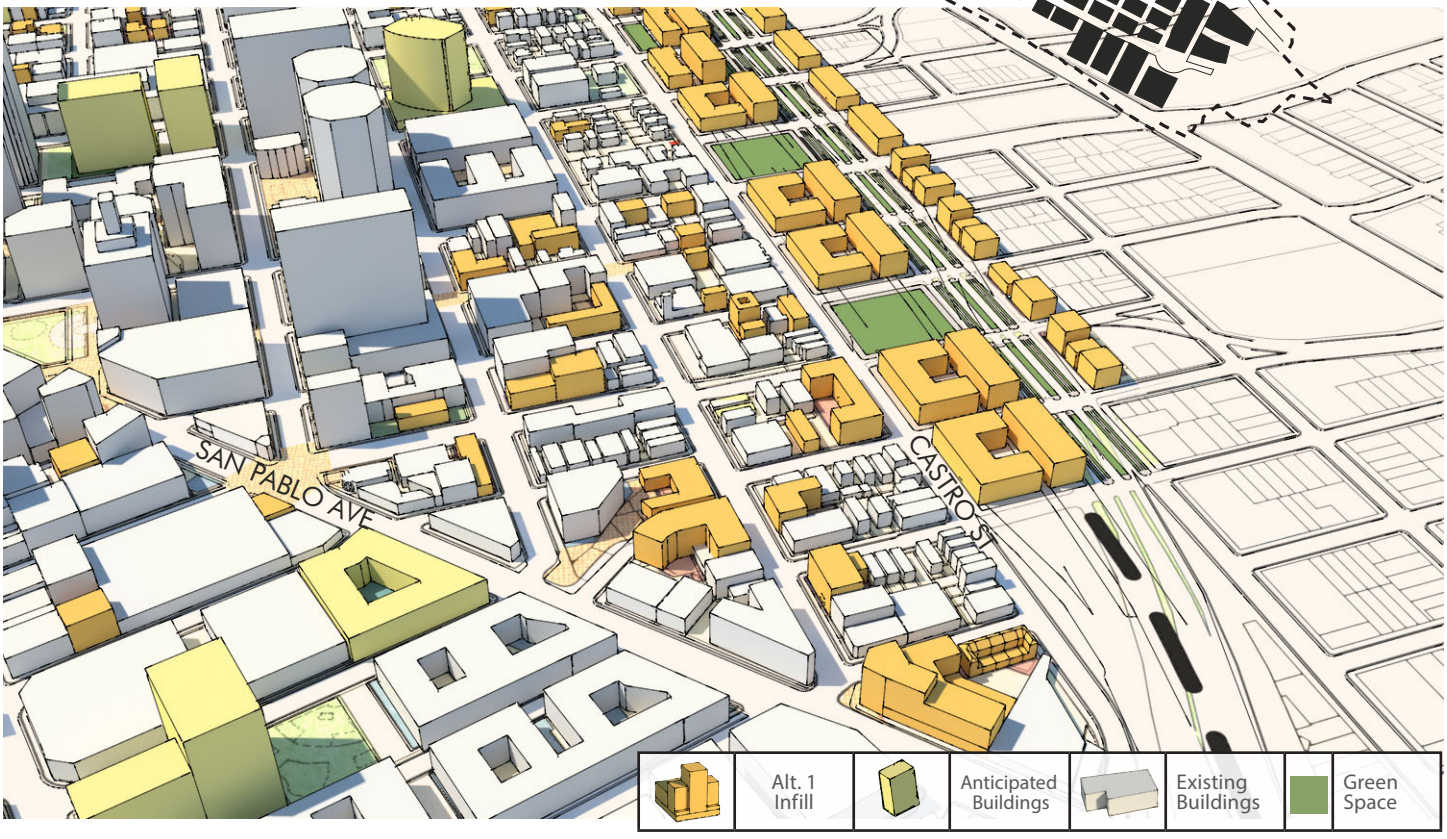
Figure E-27: Proposed infill development that with traditional buildings.

STUDYING THE VISION FOR WEST OF SAN PABLO

The West of San Pablo area has opportunity sites primarily along Martin Luther King Jr. Way. The vision proposes small mixed-use buildings on these sites, in context with the current scale of the buildings that house many local businesses. Typically these buildings are two to four stories tall; the four story buildings are located closer to the I-980. The new infill buildings depicted on the blocks along San Pablo are taller (7 stories) in order to match the scale of buildings across the street in Uptown.

The historic houses on Castro Street would benefit greatly from a transformation of I-980 into an at grade boulevard, designed for pedestrian, bicycle, transit and car traffic. Similarly scaled small lot development would balance the west side of Castro Street. These buildings could be live-work units, with flex space on the ground floors and owners living above. Building on the west side of Castro Street would reform the West of San Pablo area.





WEST OF SAN PABLO: Plan Alternative	
TOTAL NEW UNITS	537 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACE	86,559 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	77,849 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	47,798 SQUARE FEET

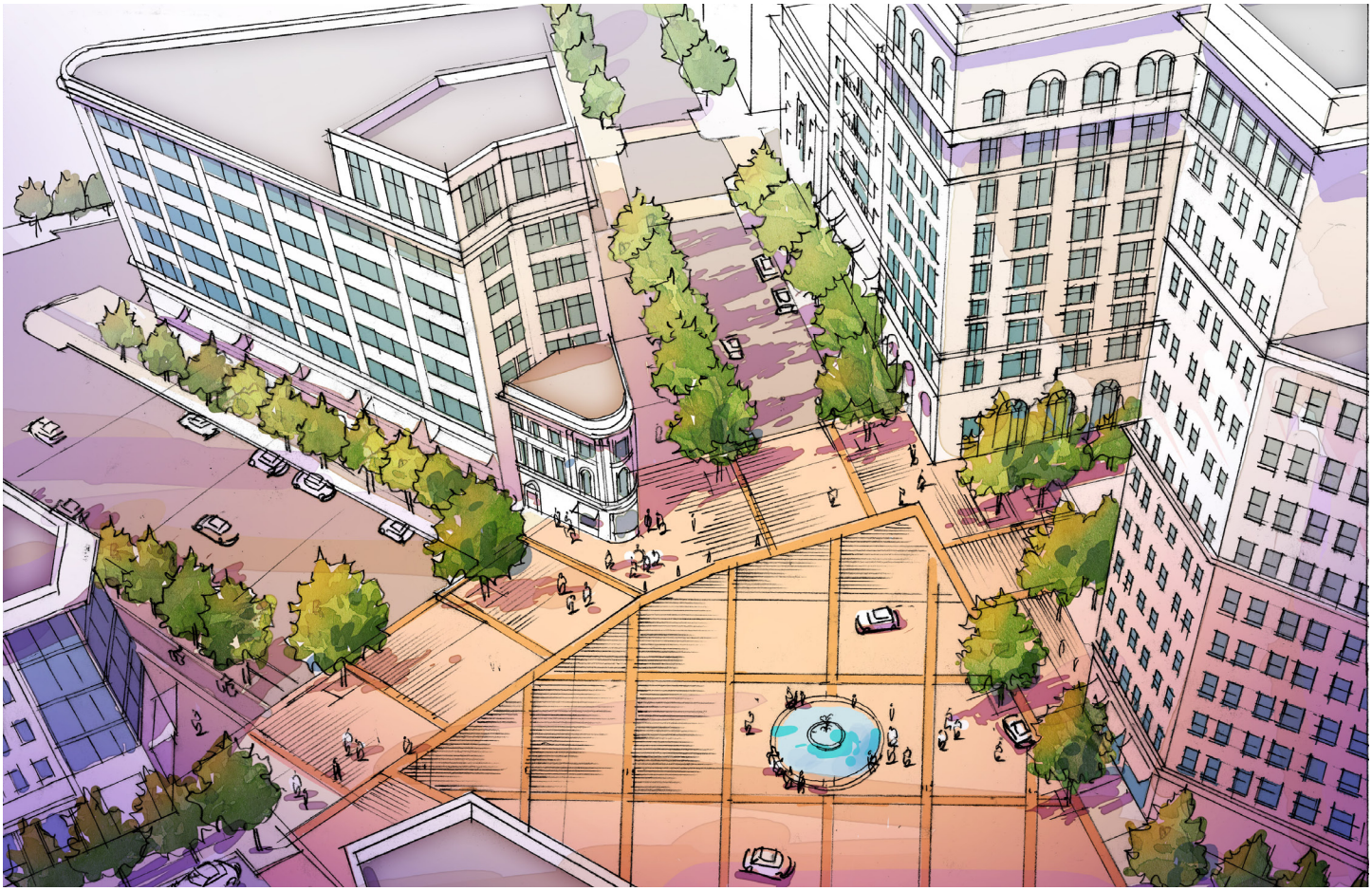


Figure E-28: Transformation of the intersection at San Pablo and 17th. A shared, multi-use plaza that is a gateway to Downtown.

GETTING THERE: PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

Achieving the vision for the West of San Pablo neighborhood will involve retrofitting the street design along the very wide streets, with a priority on 17th and 20th; these are great opportunities for gateway entrances Downtown. Improvements such as these, along with the proposed plaza at 17th and San Pablo, are typically public investments. Public investments can serve to stimulate private investment on infill sites.

The West of San Pablo neighborhood is uniquely situated adjacent to Interstate 980, the City Center, and parts of Old Oakland. Many of the lots are small and have housing that is similar to the housing in West Oakland. These historic homes should be preserved and re-purposed as needed. Local incentives to preserve and re-use historic structures, such as a transfer of development rights system, could be used to help maintain the buildings. Public and private partnerships between the City and civic organizations is another option.

A potentially transformative idea that has gained momentum in Oakland is the removal of Interstate 980. This neighborhood would benefit tremendously if the highway was to become an at-grade boulevard. The new street and block network would make traveling to and from West Oakland much easier and much more pleasant. Castro Street would become an asset and a real place for people, rather than an on-ramp to the adjacent interstate. Ample green space could be added on the western boundary of Downtown, where it is needed.

The cost of removing the I-980 freeway would be great; however, the potential return on the large investment would result in a dramatic improvement. New housing, office and commercial space, as well as a series of new parks, would stitch the West of San Pablo neighborhood back to West Oakland, providing needed access and connectivity to the heart of the City.

OLD OAKLAND

Old Oakland is comprised of historic residential communities and small shops and businesses. The area features many historic buildings and quality street-oriented building fabric. Preservation and enhancement are a major focus of the plan for this area.

- As new development opportunities occur, open spaces can be incorporated in the form of pocket parks, community gardens, outdoor performance spaces and other small public spaces. Appropriately-scaled new infill buildings reinforce a sense of community.
- Buildings are generally placed close to front property lines to continue the existing form and scale of the neighborhood. A mix of uses are pursued to activate sidewalks. A stronger sense of security is created with increased pedestrian traffic, shoppers, outdoor cafes, cyclists and other community members that are out enjoying the city's street life.

Figure E-29: Illustrative Plan for Old Oakland

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A Transform 9th Street to include context sensitive infill and safer street design.

B Fill in vacant or underutilized lots with scale-appropriate buildings that contribute to the public realm of the street.

C Adapt and re-use underutilized parking garages as micro housing units or incubator retail spaces.

D Create and reestablish new civic spaces that can be used as gathering places for neighborhood residents.

E Include crosswalks at all signalized intersections.

F Respect the scale and character of the neighborhood with new construction and rehabilitations of small warehouses, apartment buildings, and single-family homes.

9th Street Transformation

The current gaps in the urban street facade on 9th Street in front of Swan's Market disrupt the pedestrian experience. Ninth Street is one of many one-way streets that make trips in both cars and bikes longer than necessary and inefficient. Diagonal parking can be a hazard to bicyclists.

The street can be transformed from one-way into two-way, as well as reconfigured with head-in diagonal parking converted into back-in diagonal parking. The addition of physical or visual texture on the street surface increases safety for bicyclists because it signals to motorists to drive slower and more cautiously.

After the street has been enhanced, scale-appropriate infill can start to contribute to the street and public realm. Respecting the existing and historic buildings, new development can complement the character of Old Oakland. New street trees fill in the tree canopy, making the street more comfortable and inviting for pedestrians.

A similar street design could also be applied to 7th and 8th Streets, further unifying the public spaces in Old Oakland.

Figure E-30: 9th Street, existing conditions

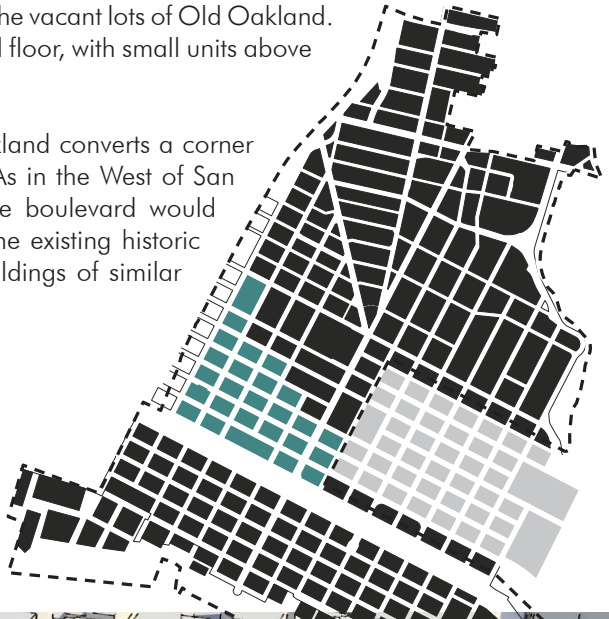
Figure E-31: 9th Street, initial street improvements

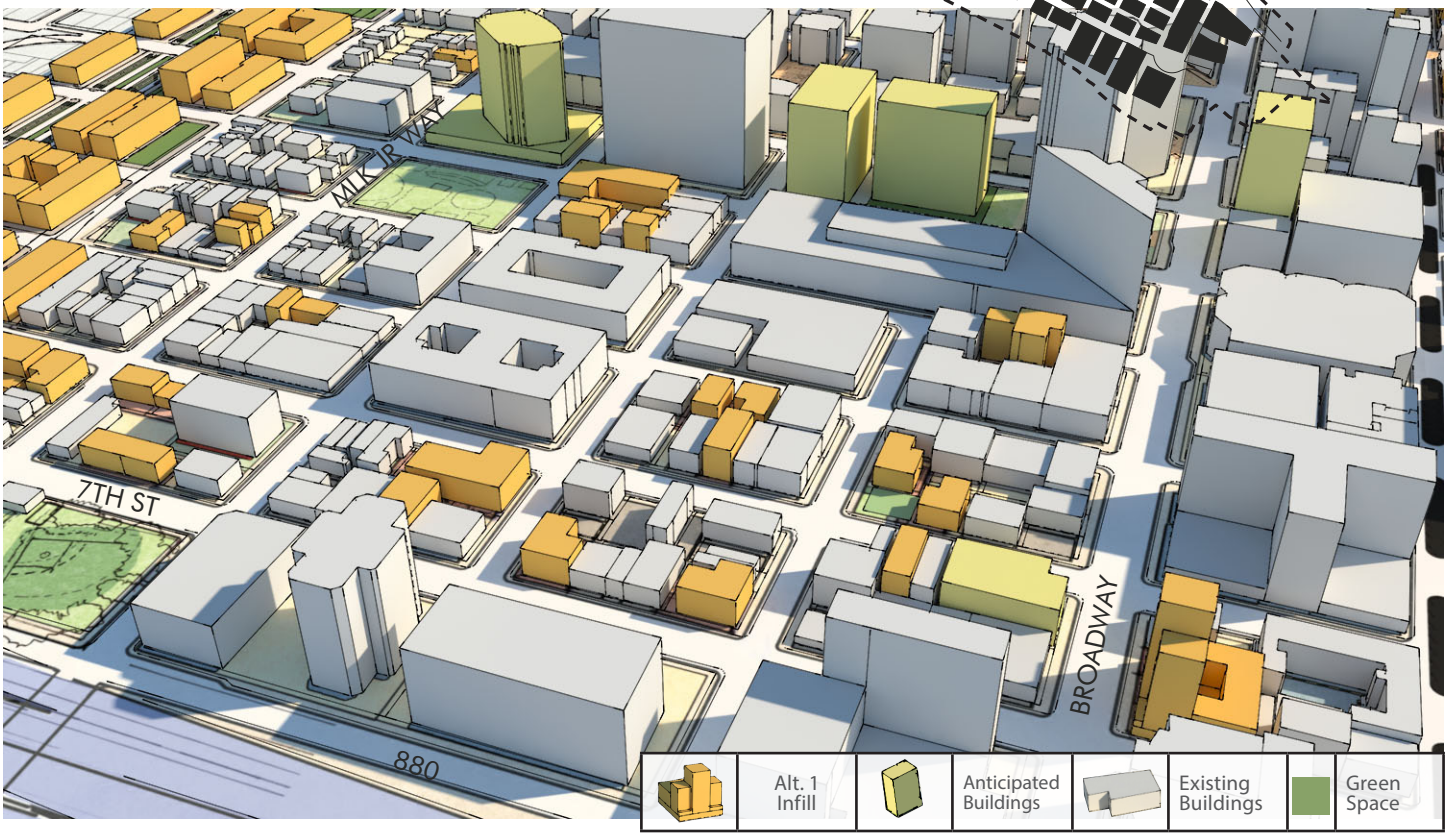
Figure E-32: 9th Street transformation

STUDYING THE VISION FOR OLD OAKLAND

This scenario depicts small, context-sensitive development filling in the vacant lots of Old Oakland. These mixed-use buildings could have retail or office on the ground floor, with small units above - keeping in context with the existing built environment.

A new small open space near the commercial center of Old Oakland converts a corner parking lot into a gathering place to host a variety of activities. As in the West of San Pablo neighborhood, the transformation of I-980 into a surface boulevard would improve the experience of Castro Street in this neighborhood. The existing historic houses, places of worship, and historic sites would face new buildings of similar scale to complete both sides of Castro Street.





OLD OAKLAND: PLAN ALTERNATIVE #1

TOTAL NEW UNITS	467 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACE	33,323 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	64,052 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	--

GETTING THERE: PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

Ensuring that Old Oakland is preserved in the future will require a variety of planning and implementation tools.

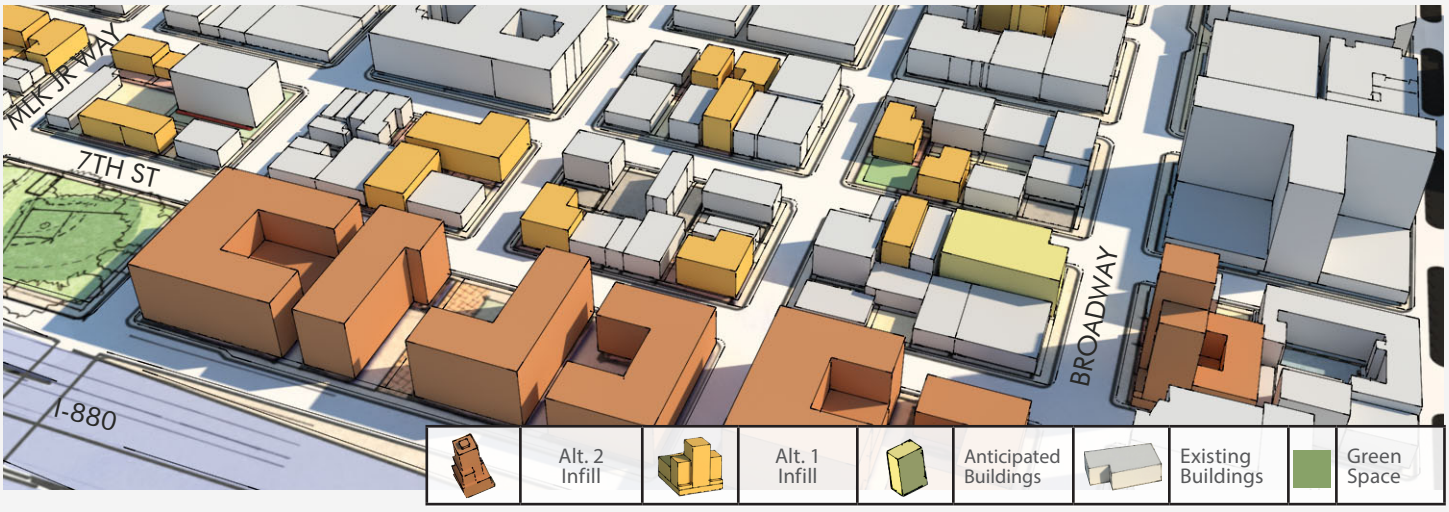
A new Transfer of Development Rights (TDR program) system that assists in preservation efforts Downtown can be studied and implemented. TDR programs should be used in exchange for additional heights in areas where it is appropriate, yet allow the smaller-scale building owner an incentive to retain, reuse, and rehabilitate lower-scale, historic structures in Downtown.

Rehabilitated buildings in Old Oakland should maintain historic building elements. Appurtenances like porches and stoops on residential buildings or historic facade elements such as a large floor to ceiling height on ground floor retail spaces, are examples of elements to be preserved.

New infill buildings in the neighborhood should be context-sensitive and of an appropriate scale and character. Implementing design guidelines for new development in this historic part of Downtown can help to ensure that new buildings fit in with the surrounding scale and context. Additionally, zoning ordinances should specify the desired development parameters for Old Oakland and encourage a TDR system that keeps the neighborhood intact.

The potentially designated historic database that has been compiled by the City and local advocates should be reviewed. Buildings within this database can be prioritized for inclusion in the Local Register as well as the National Register.

Another alternative for the district includes added intensity on the redeveloped government-owned parcels, immediately north of 880 for residential, office, or hotel uses. These three blocks can retain a consistent scale with Old Oakland while stepping up to add height along I-880.



OLD OAKLAND: PLAN ALTERNATIVE #2

TOTAL NEW UNITS	1,107 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACE	157,823 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	291,552 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	--

JACK LONDON DISTRICT

The Jack London District is the area of Downtown between I-880 and the estuary waterfront. Historically, this was an industrial zone and many warehouses remain. Today, Broadway terminates at a waterfront plaza in the Jack London Square entertainment area. The potential reuse of Howard Terminal, located in the Jack London District, has great potential for a positive impact.

- Maintaining the existing character by preserving historic warehouse structures is a community priority; these can be repurposed for work/live uses or light industrial uses that increase the vibrancy and mix of uses in the district. There are opportunities for infill on underutilized lots, appropriately-scaled to fit with the surrounding context. These new buildings can repair gaps in the pedestrian network by introducing continuous, interesting building facades that line and activate sidewalks, creating a memorable and comfortable experience.
- Improve the Jack London waterfront with better lighting, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and open space amenities.
- New buildings can also increase the mix of uses and further enhance the vibrancy of this special waterfront district, providing quality residences, work places, light industry retail/entertainment destinations, and citywide attractions within a walkable context.
- There are significant opportunities to enhance the public realm by creating new community gathering places. The Webster Green, a new linear greenway constructed over the alignment of the Webster Tube, is one idea that has been contemplated for some time. Development options are limited on these parcels due to underground infrastructure; today the area is primarily parking lots and underutilized land.
- Implementing a linear sequence of open spaces, greenscape and hardscape along Webster Street, can provide a gathering spot for residents and visitors, and connect downtown neighborhoods to the waterfront.

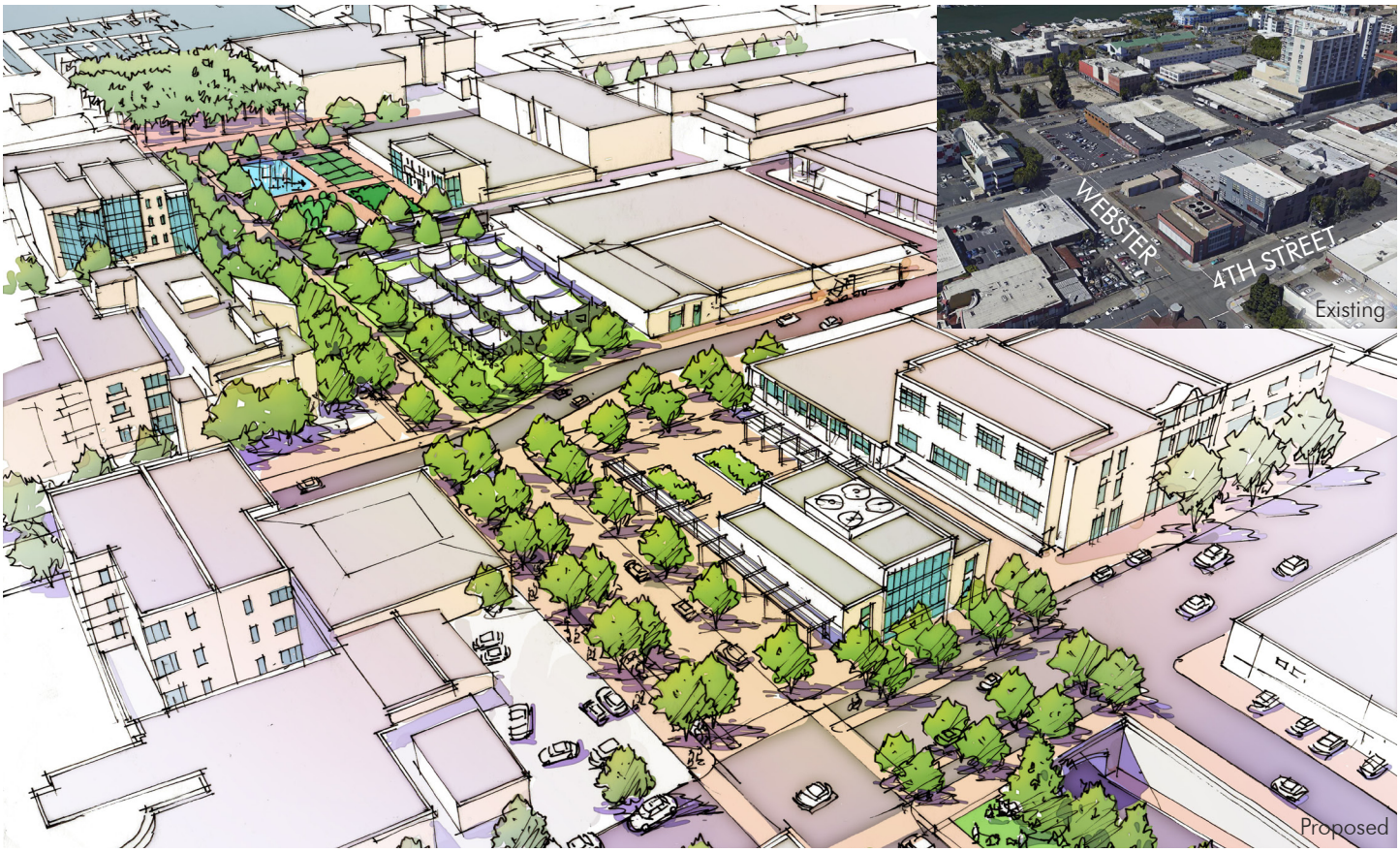


Figure E-33: Webster Green, connecting Jack London District to the waterfront

Figure E-34: Illustrative Plan for Jack London District

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A Connect Downtown to the waterfront by enhancing the Webster Green

B Preserve all, or major portions, of the Produce Market for urban retail, arts, culture, and entertainment - should the owners of this wholesale operation decide to relocate

C Insert appropriately-scaled infill buildings on underutilized lots

D Provide better crossings under I-880 to connect Jack London District to other Downtown neighborhoods

E Connect Jack London Square to Lake Merritt

F Additional scenarios have been explored for these areas, as detailed on the following pages

G Create new waterfront public space at the Howard Terminal site

- Several options have been explored for Howard Terminal (see following pages). The options could include a new waterfront public space. In addition to these large public spaces, there are many opportunities for smaller plazas and "shared space" streets throughout the district.
- In addition to the I-880 highway, the district is also separated from downtown and impacted by an active rail line. Institution of a "quiet zone" was suggested as one way to make the presence of rail compatible with the growing neighborhood. In a quiet zone, intersection and other safety improvements allow trains to follow a set schedule where they do not have to blow their horn as they travel through the zone. There are also opportunities for enhanced transit connections, in part dependent on the future use of the Howard Terminal site and intensity of future development in the district.
- Better pedestrian and cyclist connections are needed between Jack London District and the rest of Downtown. Improved under-crossings of I-880 are being studied; ideas include wider sidewalks, better lighting, and public art.
- The County of Alameda-owned buildings on Broadway near I-880 currently house Alameda County Children & Family Services of the Social Services Agency (100,000 gross square feet) and the Alameda County Probation Department (108,000 gross square feet). Should a suitable replacement location be found and the County Board of Supervisors agree, the county-owned buildings could be repurposed similar to the Sears Building (near Broadway and Thomas L Berkeley Way) or could become opportunities for being rebuilt.

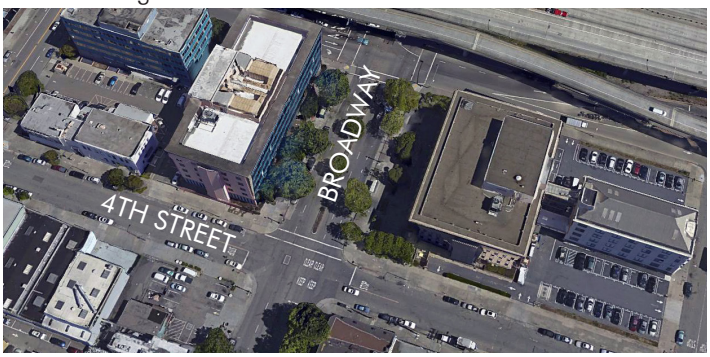
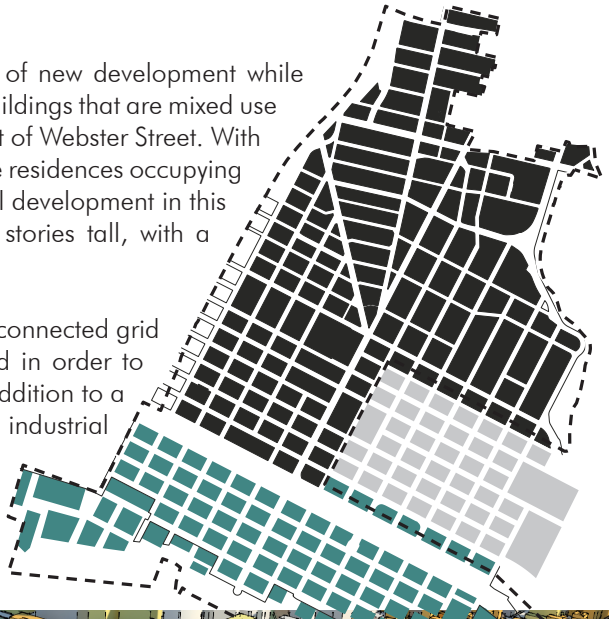


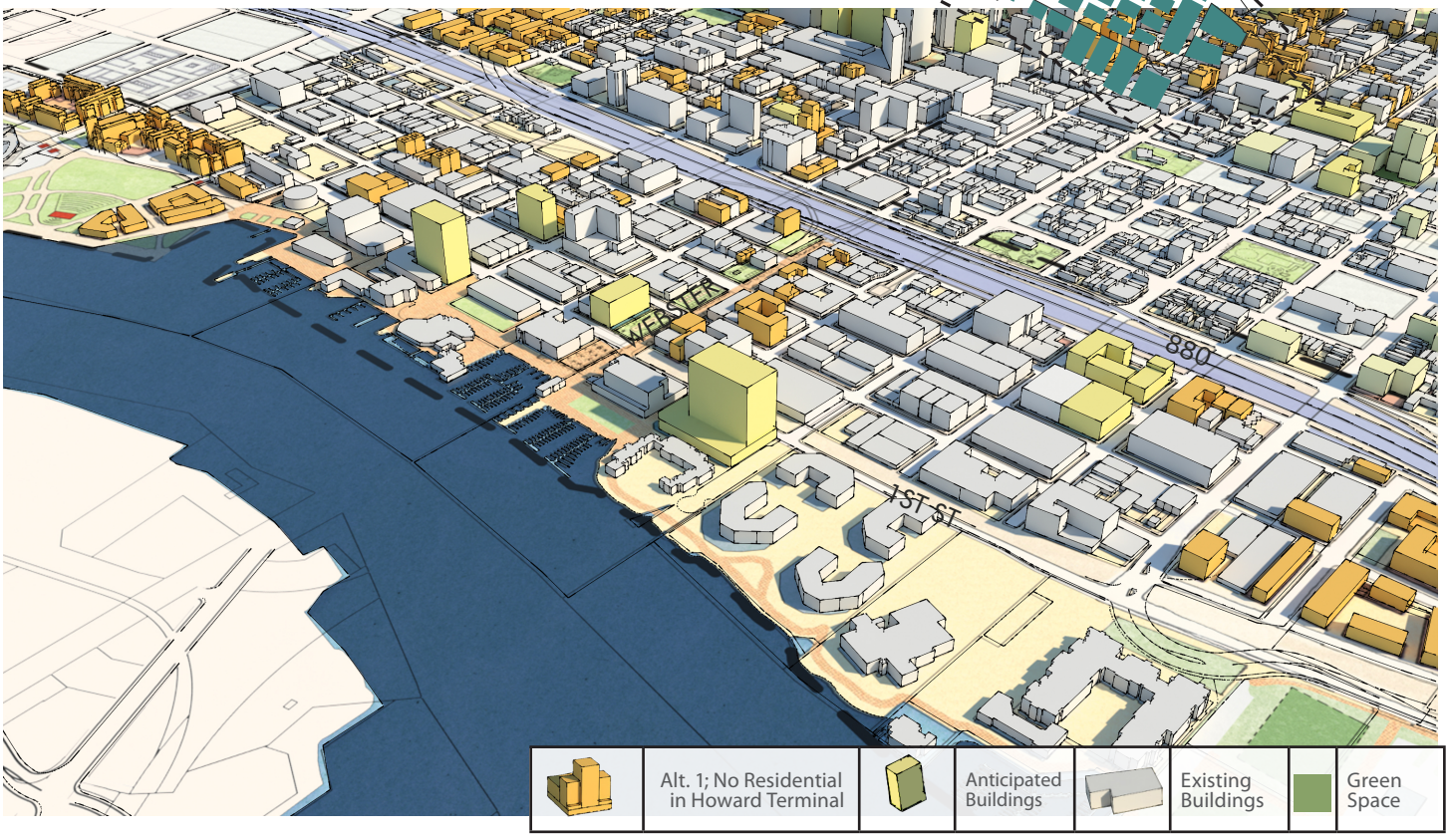
Figure E-35: Existing county buildings at Broadway and 4th Street

STUDYING THE VISION FOR JACK LONDON DISTRICT

The Jack London District can potentially accommodate a range of new development while preserving the historic buildings in the neighborhood. Small infill buildings that are mixed use are integrated into the existing fabric along 4th Street and also east of Webster Street. With retail or office space on the ground floor, these small buildings have residences occupying the upper floors and can accommodate work-live spaces. The infill development in this alternative (excluding Howard Terminal) ranges from two to six stories tall, with a handful of buildings that are eight stories tall.

New blocks of development in Howard Terminal continue the interconnected grid of streets. In this scenario, new residential units are not provided in order to remain consistent with the Tidelands Trust lands requirements. In addition to a new stadium, this alternative would provide opportunities for light industrial development, hotels, some retail or services, and conference space or maritime related office space. New buildings in Howard Terminal are shown at one to three stories tall along the waterfront park and become four to five stories approaching 1st Street. These taller buildings could potentially be hotels.





JACK LONDON DISTRICT: Plan Alternative #1	JACK LONDON	HOWARD TERMINAL
TOTAL NEW UNITS	1,219 UNITS	--
TOTAL NEW LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/RETAIL/HOTEL/SERVICES - SQUARE FEET	320,524 SF	509,884 SF
TOTAL NEW OFFICE OR WORK-LIVE SPACE - SQUARE FEET	68,000 SF	571,129 SF
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA - SQUARE FEET	61,575 SF	49,465 SF

*Note: only limited categories of retail, office, industrial are considered Tidelands Trust consistent.

In this alternative for the Jack London District and Howard Terminal, new mixed-use buildings are similar to the surrounding scale, with amenities for the residents in the interior of the blocks forming a series of courtyards. Consistent with the vision described previously, the infill development in this alternative (excluding Howard Terminal) ranges from two to six stories tall, with a handful of buildings that are eight stories tall. The difference between this alternative and the one illustrated on the previous page is that Howard Terminal has slightly more development potential, and residential development is envisioned for this site.

The amount of development in this scenario leaves ample space for a potential sports stadium and a large waterfront park. While residential development is depicted here in the Howard Terminal in order to provide new housing Downtown, implementing new residences in Howard Terminal would require the adoption of state legislation.

This scenario illustrates new buildings that are two to three stories tall along the open spaces and become as tall as five and six stories as the buildings step back towards 1st Street. Architectural elements on iconic buildings may extend above the six story buildings.

While accommodating a potential new stadium, this version also includes significant space for new light industrial, office, retail or services, hotels, residential and green space. New parking is envisioned in order to accommodate additional traffic. However, if improved transit access were available to better connect the Jack London District and the Howard Terminal to the rest of Downtown, the space allocated for parking could potentially become available for other uses.

JACK LONDON DISTRICT: Plan Alternative #2	JACK LONDON	HOWARD TERMINAL
TOTAL NEW UNITS	1,219 UNITS	578 UNITS
TOTAL NEW LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/RETAIL/HOTEL/SERVICES - SQUARE FEET	320,524 SF	228,329 SF
TOTAL NEW OFFICE OR WORK-LIVE SPACE - SQUARE FEET	68,000 SF	582,679 SF
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA - SQUARE FEET	61,575 SF	49,465 SF

*Note: only limited categories of retail, office, industrial are considered Tidelands Trust consistent.

Another alternative for the district includes added intensity on infill lots and underutilized buildings (while also preserving historic buildings). This image illustrates the most intense private development option, consistent with the parameters for Transit Oriented Development at Howard Terminal, while still maintaining a large, expansive waterfront park. The additional housing, light industrial, commercial and office space at Howard Terminal could result in a transit-hub, which is appropriate within the context of a downtown. Implementing this alternative would require the adoption of state legislation.

In this alternative, options for infill and revitalized sites that surround the 880 freeway and the BART line are explored. These improvements can help to connect the Jack London District to the rest of Downtown with continuous and pleasant street frontages.

Figure E-36: Illustrative Plan, option for additional infill along the 880 freeway

JACK LONDON DISTRICT: Plan Alternative #3	JACK LONDON	HOWARD TERMINAL
TOTAL NEW UNITS	2,347 UNITS	895 UNITS
TOTAL NEW LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/RETAIL/HOTEL/SERVICES - SQUARE FEET	610,049 SF	347,749 SF
TOTAL NEW OFFICE OR WORK-LIVE SPACE - SQUARE FEET	1,075,800 SF	900,995 SF
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA - SQUARE FEET	186,900 SF	42,099 SF

*Note: only limited categories of retail, office, industrial are considered Tidelands Trust consistent.

East of Broadway

Additional plan alternatives to be explored east of Broadway in the Jack London District include extending new streets and development into the "Victory Court" area near the Lake Merritt channel, in order to better connect this area with the portions of jack London west of Oak Street. This section of the neighborhood also has the potential to connect Jack London to Lake Merritt along a memorable waterfront path.

Zoning for the majority of Jack London District has not been updated since the adoption of the Estuary Policy Plan in 1999. As part of the specific plan process the community will be engaged to provide input on updated zoning for this area.

Oakland's produce market has historic character, but doesn't serve existing produce businesses well. If a better solution were found, the existing historic buildings could be adapted to new uses, taking advantage of their distinctive architecture and covered galleries to revitalize the district as a unique destination similar to the French Quarter in New Orleans.

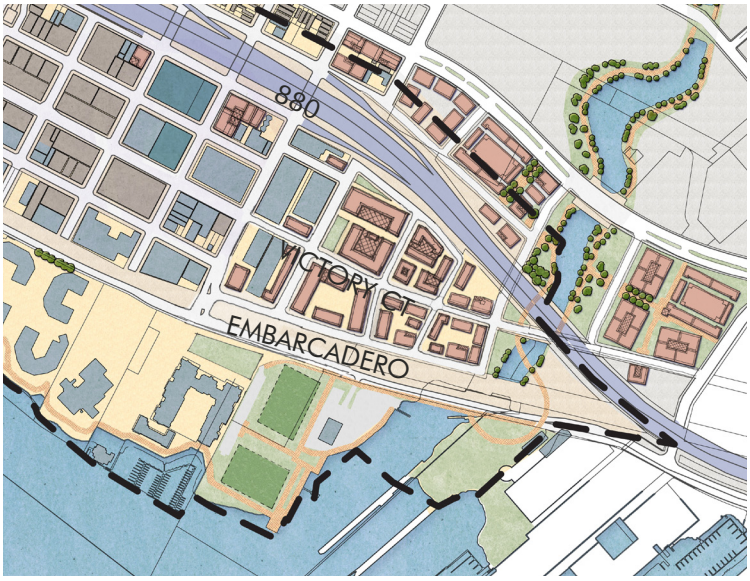


Figure E-37: Illustrative Plan, enhanced connections near Laney College

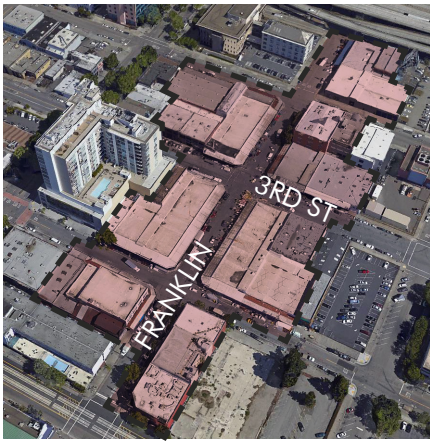


Figure E-38: The historic Produce Market (left) could be preserved with the reuse of the buildings to create a unique place (center and right)

GETTING THERE: PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

In the Jack London neighborhood, there are several potential options to consider for the future and each would add to the distinct waterfront district.

Incorporating a stadium along the waterfront has been a popular notion. Implementing the stadium would be a costly investment. However, the Howard Terminal site is large enough that it can accommodate a stadium, vast amounts of waterfront open space and new development such as light industrial, office and commercial spaces (that are are consistent with the defined categories of use on Tidelands trust lands). Together, the mix of uses on the site may help to offset a portion of the infrastructure costs. Residential development would further contribute to the mix and help to provide constant activity in the area; however, a process of amending state legislation is necessary in order to permit housing and other non- Trust consistent uses at this site.

In a different scenario, Howard Terminal includes new opportunities for housing, light industrial and some commercial. In both options, Howard Terminal can become a transit hub, providing transit oriented development. If the new development includes some residential or work-live space, the access to transit can make living Downtown more affordable since residents will not need to rely on a car. A property owner or developer of new and revitalized apartment buildings could partner with the transit organizations to create a partnership between the agency and new residents that offers subsidized ridership. If I-980 is reconfigured in the future, the added housing and commercial opportunities would further strengthen a new transit hub. Again, in order to implement these options, state legislation would need to be adopted and at present, maritime uses remain active on the site.

The heart of Jack London includes a variety of historic warehouse buildings which should be preserved and re-used. A Transfer of Development Rights system would support preservation and local ordinances could be adjusted to encourage the existing character of work-live units.

HOWARD TERMINAL

There have been many discussions about the future of Howard Terminal. The Port of Oakland owns and manages this property in trust for the State of California, as a Tidelands Trustee. However, the site is no longer being used for marine terminal operations (for the past couple of years). Instead, the property is being used for ancillary maritime support activities; at present the site is used for truck parking. If the current uses were to be discontinued, the property could be used for a new purpose, which opens up a grand opportunity to serve as an anchor for the Jack London District. There are multiple jurisdictions that have control over this property, whether publicly or privately owned and any future uses or construction would need to meet the requirements of the appropriate regulatory agencies, each with jurisdiction over Howard Terminal.

Figure E-39: Image of Oakland Estuary Policy Plan, 1999

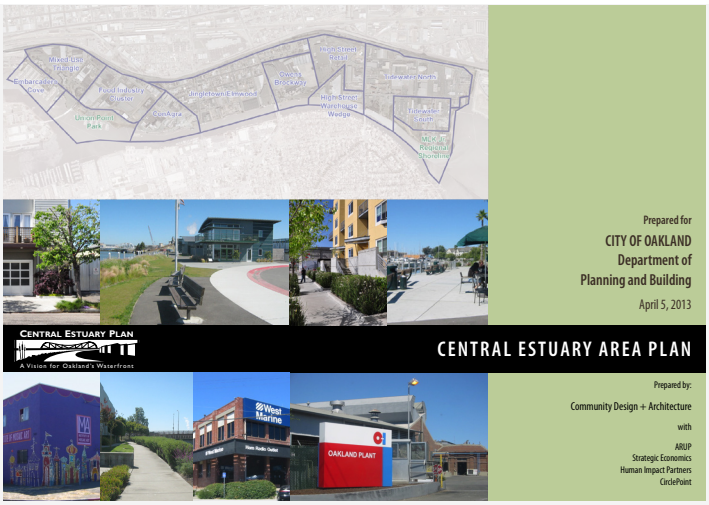


Figure E-40: Cover of Central Estuary Policy Plan, 2013

Regulatory Considerations

Howard Terminal is a mix of Sovereign Lands (also known as Granted Lands because they were granted directly from the State) and what are refered to as "after-acquired lands". These are Tidelands Trust lands, which the Port manages "in trust" for the State of California. The final authority of the Tidelands Trust lands is with the State and are limited to uses that promote water related commerce, navigation, ecological uses or open space. Allowable uses on Tidelands Trust properties are generally encompassed in the Public Trust Doctrine, the Granted Lands Statute and have been further clarified by the courts over the years.

The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) has influence over all of the estuary properties within 100 feet of the shoreline. Any development within this "band" will need to be consistent with the San Francisco Bay Plan and the San Francisco Bay Area Plan. BCDC reviews and permits all waterfront projects within their jurisdiction, with the intention to ensure that public access to the waterfront is maximized. Currently, the Howard Terminal site is designated for priority use in BCDC's seaport plan.

On the following pages a series of alternatives illustrate future best uses of Howard Terminal as envisioned throughout the planning process. The first alternative depicts a vision that includes a mix of uses and activities, but does not include any residential development. The subsequent alternatives depict options where residential units are incorporated into the mix of potential new development. To be clear, residential development is not currently permitted in Howard Terminal by definition of the uses allowed on Tidelands Trust lands. Given the community expressed need for more housing options in Downtown Oakland, the latter scenarios explore options that include residential as a part of future transit oriented development. There is precedent to allow residential on these lands; however, in order to implement a design that includes residential, a complicated process to adopt state legislation would be required. The legislation would need to reverse this property from the Tidelands Trust based upon the notion that the property is no longer necessary for Trust uses.

For a site with a complicated system of approvals, it appears that optimism still prevails on the range of possible futures for Howard Terminal. As an exploration into the range of possibilities, the design team working on the Specific Plan has illustrated multiple scenarios. It is still too early to know which may be the best for Oakland; there will likely be other possible scenarios that evolve over time. This draft vision for the Specific Plan accommodates and anticipates reuse of the property.

Figure E-41: Existing conditions on the waterfront.

Howard Terminal: Stadium Scenario

This scenario demonstrates that a Major League sized stadium can fit on the site, with additional space remaining. In typical stadium plans, the remaining would be used for surface parking lots. Given this unique location, the parking should be provided in structures toward the west side of the property and perhaps north side of the Embarcadero on additional properties, reserving the remaining space for more appropriate civic uses.

Figure E-42: Illustrative Plan, Howard Terminal, Stadium Scenario

A well-designed architectural focal point of the stadium could provide a "terminated view" of both Market Street and Brush Street simultaneously, since the streets run at an angle to one another, causing both of their view corridors to intersect at the Howard Terminal.

The remaining area also has room for an amphitheater, botanical garden and additional open spaces.

Franchise owners typically ask for financial support from municipalities to construct stadiums. This scenario would require additional financial strategies to reduce the burden on the taxpayers.

Figure E-43: Aerial rendering, Howard Terminal, Stadium Scenario

Howard Terminal: Transit-Oriented Development Scenario

A different scenario contemplates private development of the site for residential, office, light industrial or hotel uses, with a portion of the waterfront remaining as open space. This scenario could be used to gain public open space and tax base by shifting its costs to the private sector, including: costs associated with the environmental cleanup of the site. The amount of the parcel to be developed or reserved for public access to the waterfront can be decided upon at a future date, should this scenario be chosen.

Figure E-44: Illustrative Plan, Howard Terminal, Transit-Oriented Development

This alternative would require the adoption of state legislation in order to be implemented (to reverse the property from the Tidelands Trust). That said, this concept is supported by the City's General Plan in the Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) which recommends new residential growth at transit served areas and at the waterfront. Additional restrictions for the types of uses would be examined if this scenario is explored further. With such a large parcel, this site allows opportunities that might not be possible in the core of the Jack London District. Besides residential buildings, these could include: tourist and business hotels, a large footprint grocery store, or light industrial businesses that need direct access to a working waterfront.

Figure E-45: Aerial rendering, Howard Terminal, Transit-Oriented Development Scenario

Howard Terminal: Combination Scenario

The preferred option could be some combination of the illustrated alternatives, or a different possibility entirely such as a campus for a school, hospital, or large private employer. Some primary considerations, outlined during the design charrette, apply to all of the scenarios:

- The site is big; any scenario offers the opportunity for the property to function as the western "anchor" of the Jack London District.
- All scenarios could include an extension to the off-street Bay Trail along the shoreline as part of the East Bay Trail System. Currently the trail system ends by the fire station and ferry terminal at Water Street. The extension could continue further east and then jog to the north and meet up with the on-street trail at 3rd street and Market, thus avoiding automobile conflicts on 2nd Street. This is justified by following Objective SA-1 of the City's Estuary Policy Plan, "create a clear and continuous system of public access along the Estuary shoreline."
- A pedestrian entrance could be located at the end of Jefferson Street at the water's edge, in front of the fire station where the ferry terminal is located. This would provide an extension of the East Bay Trail connecting Jack London Square to any new activities at the Howard Terminal. This is also where the museum ship USS Potomac, Roosevelt's presidential yacht, is anchored.
- The existing power utilities along the Embarcadero add an interesting character to the neighborhood.
- The long view of the estuary in the southeast direction is incredible and should be exploited as part of the open space provided. The view offers a different perspective for people visiting and enjoying the waterfront.
- The shipping cranes are well loved by the community. They are thought of as works of art. Efforts should be made to keep one or more of them to preserve part of the history of the site.
- There is a concrete platform underneath the cranes for stabilization that extends over the natural shoreline edge. This platform could be incorporated into a redevelopment scenario.
- If the west side of Howard Terminal remains in active maritime use, it is logical to put large footprint buildings or parking structures toward this edge of the property. This could free up the eastern side of the property, which offers the best direct connection to Jack London Square for pedestrian-oriented structures and amenities. While it is likely that a transition on Port property will likely require a phased approach, it is fairly unlikely that only a portion of the property would remain a permanent maritime use.
- Large surface parking lots are avoided in all scenarios. If drives for vehicular access are utilized, then parallel, on-street parking spaces could be provided.
- The main reason to redevelop Howard Terminal is to create a destination that people will want to go to, and to have a positive "spillover" effect on Jack London Square and vice versa.
- If the property becomes a destination that requires a lot of parking and the train tracks remain at grade, an effort should be made to provide the parking north of tracks located along the Embarcadero.
- The success of any scenario at this site would be enhanced if the new BART line being contemplated to cross the Bay provided a station somewhere along the Market Street or Brush Street corridor south of I-880.
- Open spaces should be landscaped with drought tolerant plants and materials.

I-980 CONVERSION

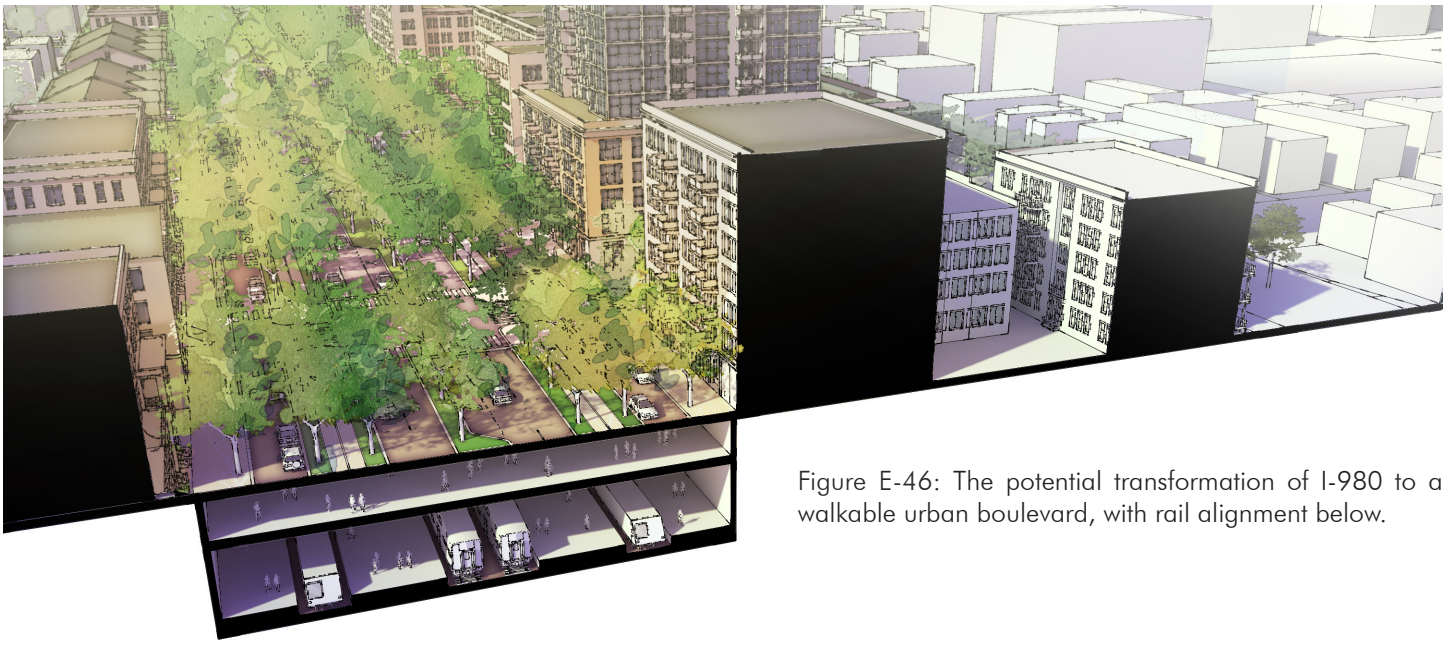


Figure E-46: The potential transformation of I-980 to a walkable urban boulevard, with rail alignment below.

Interstate 980 currently divides West Oakland from Downtown with high-speed traffic, limited pedestrian crossings and an unwelcoming swath of asphalt. Finished in the 1980s, the freeway was originally drawn up as a way to connect to a second Bay Bridge to San Francisco, but that bridge did not materialize. More than 40 acres of blocks between Brush Street and Castro Street were demolished to make way for the new freeway, and West Oakland was cut off from Downtown. Today, I-980 carries only a fraction of the traffic it was originally designed to handle, and much of the downtown grid is cut off by the freeway. With few east-west connections, there are few options for pedestrians and bicyclists making their way across.

- A reimagined I-980 corridor should be part of any conversation about the future of the Bay Area and about what transportation options should be given priority in a future of evolving technologies. The Embarcadero and Hayes Valley in San Francisco have already seen a rebirth of their neighborhoods following the removal of freeways. Oakland has the opportunity to reinvest in its downtown neighborhoods in a similar way.

- The swath of land that is I-980 can be replaced with an attractive, walkable and bikeable surface boulevard that accommodates traffic and takes up a fraction of the land. The remainder of the land can be used to recreate a new set of blocks for both public spaces and appropriately scaled development with a mix of market and affordable housing units, office and retail spaces. These new development opportunities can help reconnect West Oakland with Downtown, and provide a relief valve for new housing demand in the Oakland area. Streets that were previously cut off by the freeway can be reconnected across the new boulevard, giving West Oakland access to Downtown's amenities and jobs.

- The I-980 corridor could also possibly serve as the alignment for a second trans-bay crossing for BART, Cal-Trans, and possibly high-speed rail. These additional rail lines are of unique regional significance, and can all be laid underneath a multi-way boulevard on the I-980 corridor. Having additional transit options would also encourage additional density along the Boulevard. Low to mid-rise buildings would gain additional height and intensity, providing housing and ground floor retail space at the heart of the city. Having readily accessible transit would allow additional affordable and market-rate units to be built with little or no additional parking.

- The transformation of I-980 can be a catalyst for walkable, mixed-use development. Small blocks of 220 feet by 200 feet provide multiple crossings and intersections, further encouraging walkability. A mix of low-rise and mid-rise buildings with doors and windows facing the street could create a safe environment that can foster a memorable and creative urbanism.

A carefully designed multi-way boulevard is an asset that benefits all users. A multi-way boulevard is a unique street type that would accommodate both local and through traffic, provide parking for businesses and residents, and support generous accommodations for walking, biking and transit. The center of the roadway is envisioned to have two lanes in each direction for through traffic with a central tree-lined median with left turn pockets. Local traffic would be separated from the through traffic lanes with wide tree-lined medians. These side medians allow for separate paths for biking and walking lined by a double row of trees. Each side access lane has one narrow lane of traffic that is used to access a row of parallel parking spaces. The side access lanes here could be designed to flow in a clockwise direction to avoid some of the conflict points typically associated with multi-way boulevards. As an added benefit, bikes would be able to travel in both directions on both sides of the boulevard using the side medians to travel in one direction and the side access lanes to travel in the opposite direction.

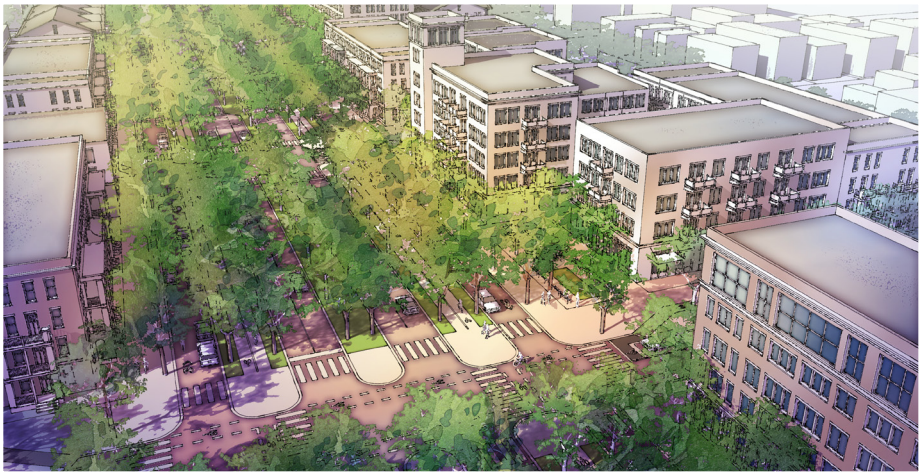


Figure E-47, above: The multi-way boulevard that could replace I-980; various scales of new development are shown lining the streetscape for comparison.

Figure E-48, below: Existing conditions, I-980

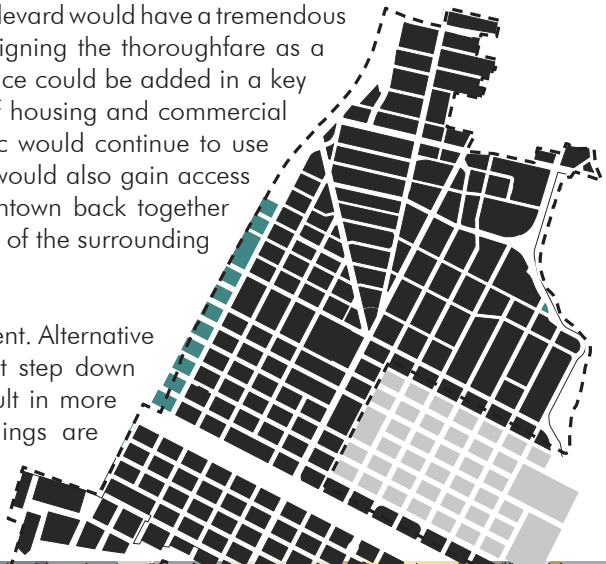
Figure E-49, left: Existing conditions, I-980

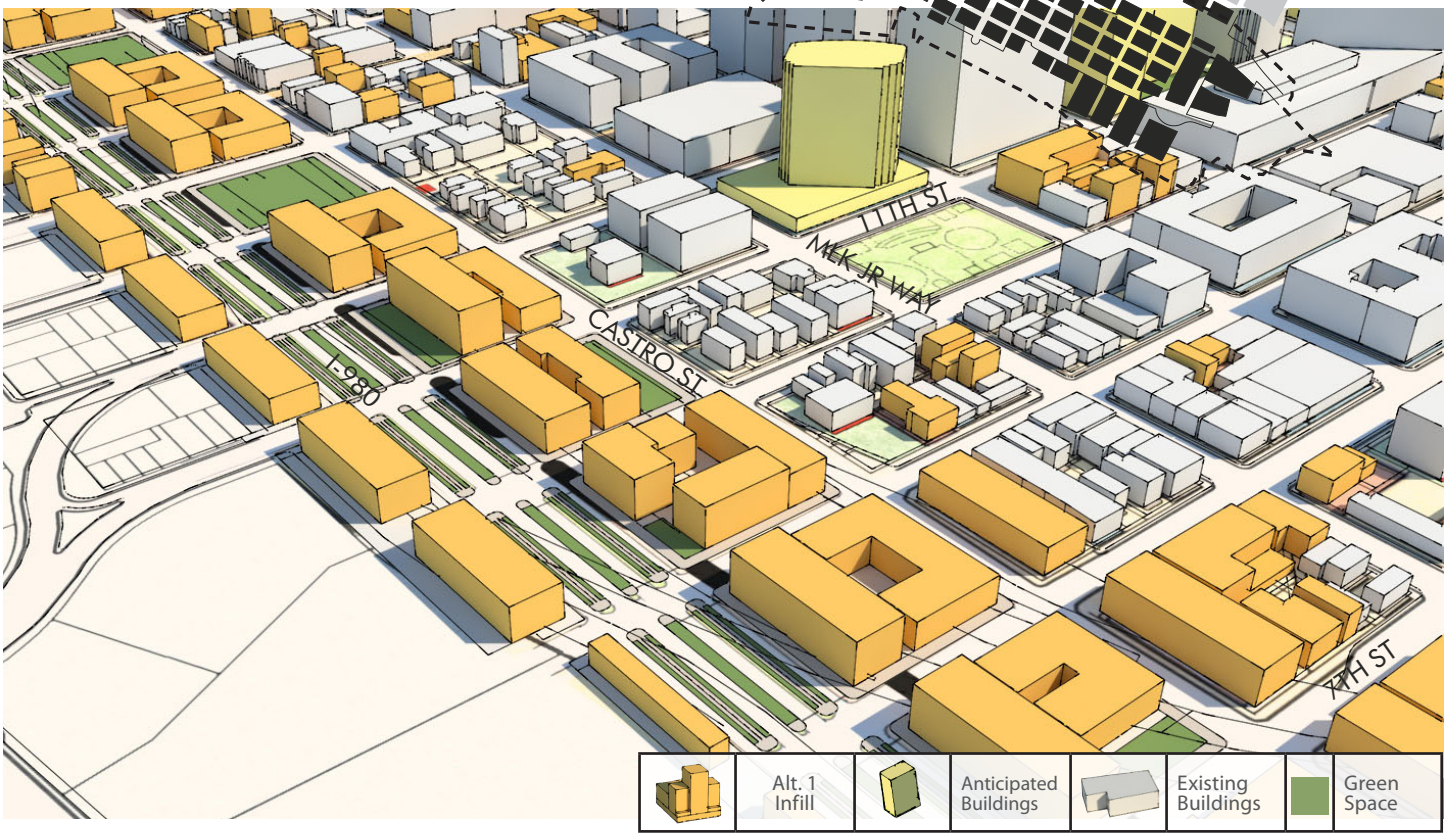
Figure E-50, right: Potential alignment of the new multi-way boulevard, new development blocks, and public greens that reconnect Downtown and West Oakland. At present, I-980 is a barrier to Downtown. Removing I-980 and stitching a block structure back into the urban fabric, will create at-grade, walkable street connections. A re-imagined boulevard in the place of I-980 would connect directly to Howard Terminal. Coupled with new development at Howard Terminal, the southern end of the new boulevard would be an ideal location for a transit hub.

STUDYING THE VISION FOR I-980

Converting Interstate 980 in Downtown Oakland to a multi-way boulevard would have a tremendous positive impact. By reducing the right-of-way dimension and designing the thoroughfare as a boulevard, more housing, commercial, office and institutional space could be added in a key location downtown. This would greatly contribute to the supply of housing and commercial space, and could have economic benefits for the City. Car traffic would continue to use the redesigned road, while pedestrians, cyclists and transit users would also gain access to the boulevard. The proposed improvement would stitch Downtown back together with West Oakland and would be sensitive to the height and scale of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Two alternatives were studied, with varying scales of new development. Alternative #2 has taller buildings along the boulevard, with buildings that step down toward surrounding neighborhoods. The greater density can result in more housing options, while maintaining neighborhood scale. Buildings are taller along the boulevard adjacent to the City Center, where it is appropriate, and less intense in the direction of West Oakland.





I-980 OPTION: Plan Alternative #1

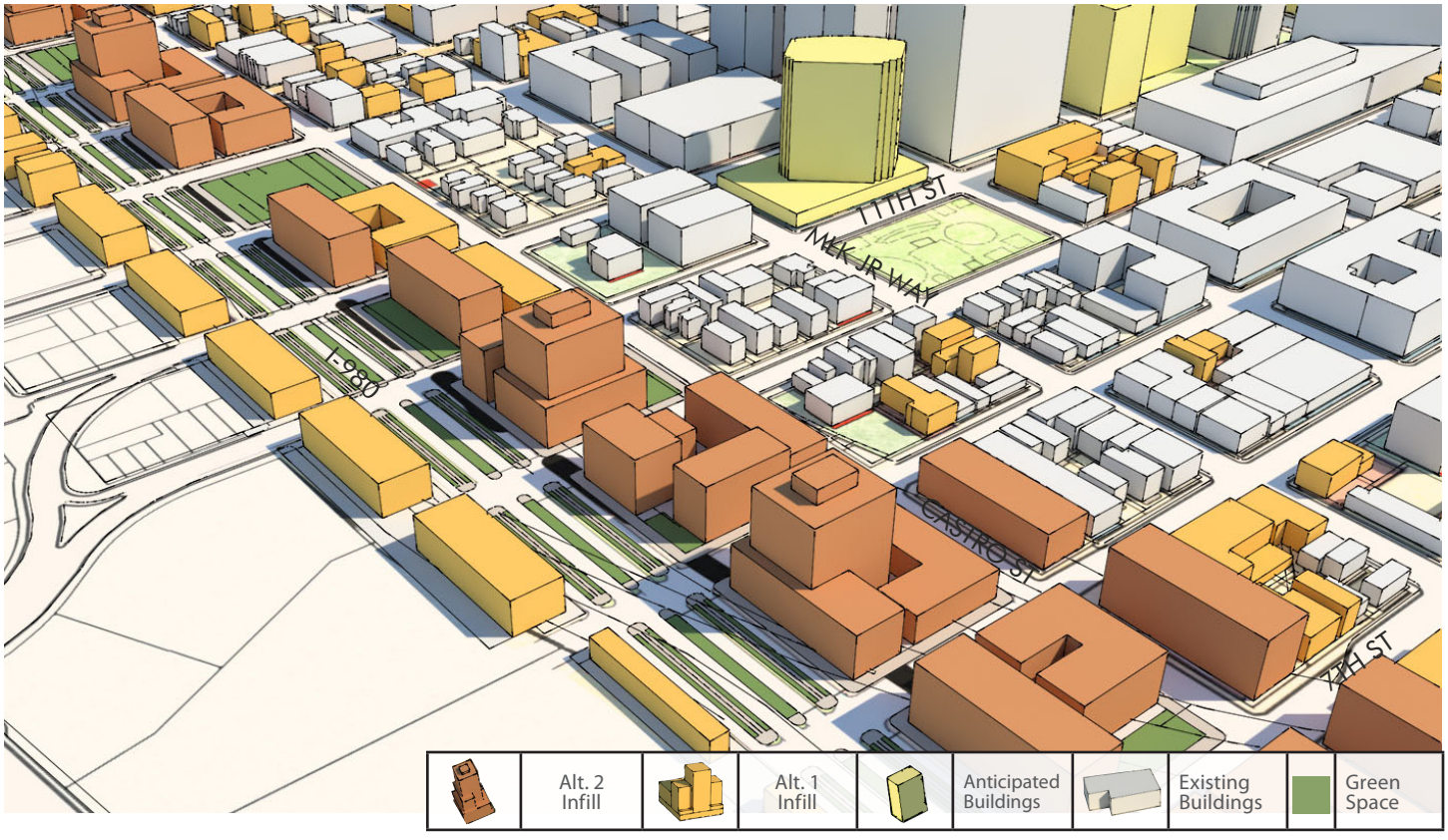
TOTAL NEW UNITS	1,010 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACE	379,900 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	242,200 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	29,715 SQUARE FEET

GETTING THERE: PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

The potential transformation of the I-980 freeway into an urban boulevard with street-oriented buildings represents an exciting opportunity to recapture Downtown land area for new street oriented development that supports many forms of mobility (walking, biking, driving, and using transit). This improvement furthers many community goals, including improved connections between Downtown and West Oakland, the restoration of adjacent neighborhoods that have been negatively impacted by noise and high vehicle speeds, and the addition of opportunities for new affordable housing, mixed-use development, and open spaces.

These benefits will need to be weighed against the high costs and potential complications of this substantial undertaking. Additional transportation studies will need to be initiated to confirm that the project is feasible, and quantify the likely outcomes for all modes of travel. The opportunity to include an extension of the BART system under the boulevard will also need to be carefully studied and evaluated.

The potential for new development here that improves the public realm and furthers plan goals is great; attention will need to be given to the details, such as specifying the urban form (defining areas of intensity as well as areas where buildings should step down to meet the scale of surrounding neighborhoods) and including provisions for affordability, mix of housing types, and variety of uses.



I-980 OPTION: Plan Alternative #2

TOTAL NEW UNITS	1,150 UNITS
TOTAL NEW COMMERCIAL, RETAIL OR SERVICES SPACEE	337,700 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	988,050 SQUARE FEET
TOTAL NEW PARKING AREA	29,715 SQUARE FEET

INTENSITY & BUILDING TYPES IN THE ALTERNATIVES

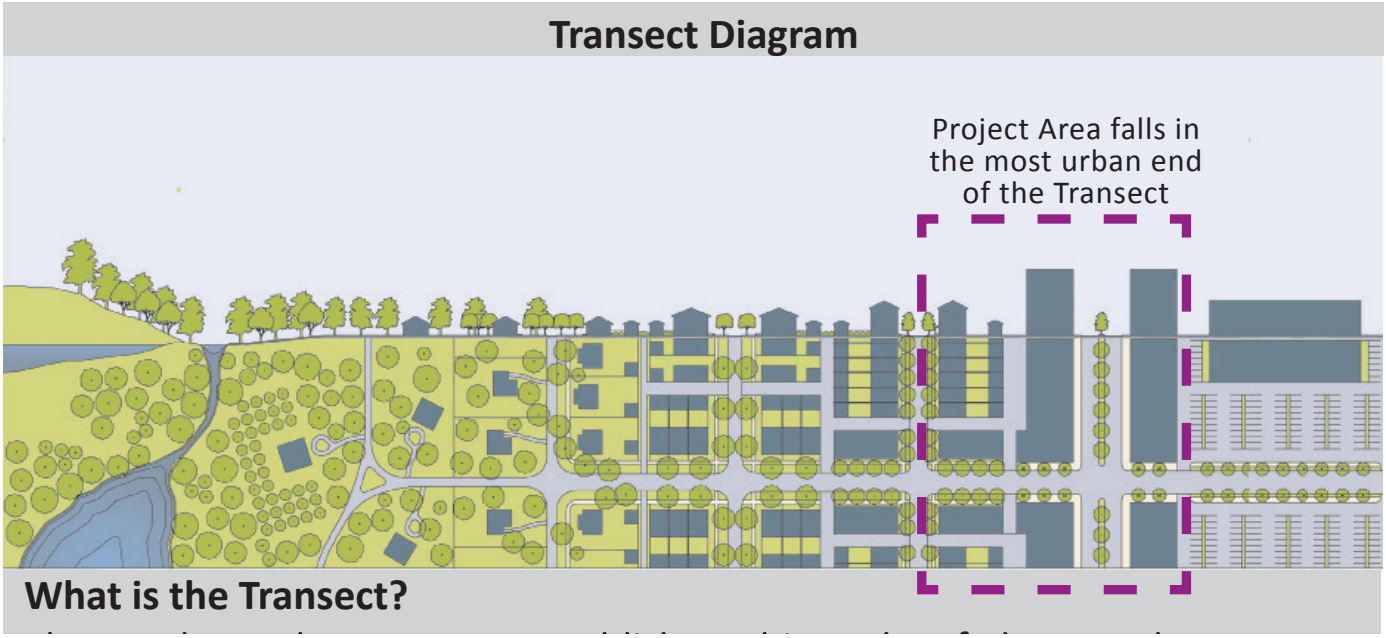


Figure E-51: Diagram of the Rural-to-Urban Transect

In the scenarios shown in this Plan Alternatives Report, buildings of all sizes and heights are permitted, depending on the context of each neighborhood. If the context of the neighborhood includes high-rise buildings, as found in the Lake Merritt Office District and City Center, new development could also be tall. In neighborhoods like the residential Lakeside district, buildings are mid-rise and new infill development, sensitive to the surrounding context, is envisioned to be of a similar type and scale.

The notion of employing "context-sensitive" infill development that preserves historic buildings and neighborhoods, while also allowing healthy growth in Downtown, is an idea that has been supported by members of the community throughout the planning process to date. This concept is similar to the Rural-To-Urban Transect, which explains a natural of urban form transition found in cities.

The Rural-to-Urban Transect establishes a hierarchy of places and contexts from the most rural to the most urban. The designation of each zone along this hierarchy is determined first by the character and form, intensity of development, and type of place, as well as by the mix of uses within the area. "Transect zones" are used to reinforce existing character, ranging from the most rural, Transect Zone One (T-1) to the most urban, Transect Zone 6 (T-6). The intensity of development depicted in the Plan Alternative 3D models follow this Transect model – with the most intense development occurring in the center of the city.

Method for Calculating Plan Alternatives

Based on the Rural-to-Urban Transect, a series of building types have been designed for specific neighborhoods Downtown, taking typical lot sizes into account. The taller and larger scale building types are typically located in the most intensely developed neighborhoods, while the mid-rise building types fill out the urban and compact neighborhoods that surround the center.

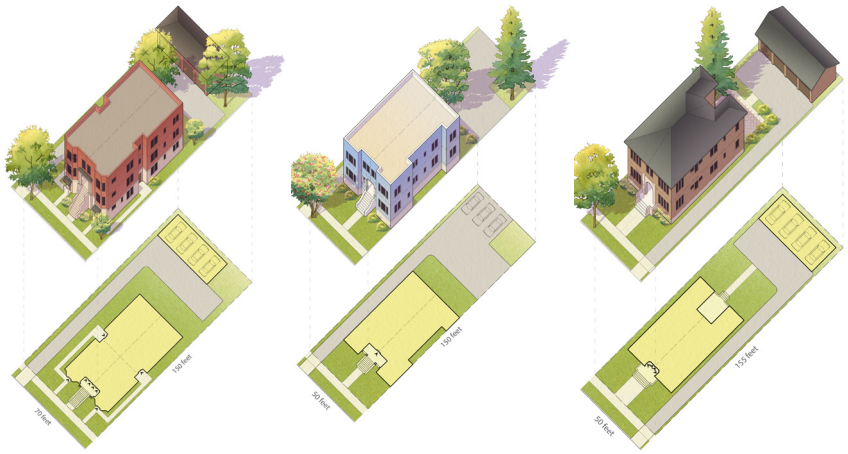
The development depicted in this Plan Alternatives Report uses the prototypical building types illustrated on the following pages; these types have been designed specifically for Oakland, based on local, historic precedent. The illustrations include a floor plan, with a number of units drawn. The total number of units per building is listed next to each type. Commercial space (e.g. retail or services) and new office space have been incorporated into each neighborhood, as a part of these building types, based on projected need and potential capacity for the future. New parking is assumed in a very reduced amount in all of Downtown, and is assumed to utilize forward thinking and space saving techniques, discussed on page 5.13. All uses and space allocated for parking will be adjusted and refined throughout the remainder of the planning process.

Parcels that are irregular in size have been illustrated and calculated based on the individual footprint, rather than using one of the building types on the following pages. For example, in Old Oakland, many parcels are extremely small. An infill building that is the size of the parcel has been assumed and any residential units have been calculated by dividing available floor square footage by 1,000 to generate an average number of new units. All uses and spaces will be adjusted and refined throughout the remainder of the planning process. For example, an even distribution of unit types has been assumed; this can be adjusted as the preferences for a specific alternative in each neighborhood is refined.

BUILDING TYPES AS "INGREDIENTS OF PLACE"

Building types are classifications for buildings based on a combination of their form and use. These classifications identify patterns that describe the type of buildings found in different neighborhoods within a city. Building types are a component of place because they inform the physical character that sets one neighborhood apart from another; they speak to an area's scale, density, and walkability. A specific building type classification is based on characteristics shared by multiple similar buildings. These characteristics include, but are not limited to, number of dwelling units, arrangement of dwelling units, typical uses, arrangement of typical uses, size, form, and relationship to other buildings.

House-Scale Multifamily Residential Types



Small Lot Size: 50 - 75 feet by 150 feet

Yield Calculations:
Lot Size: 50' x 150'
Pedestal + 6 floors x 4 units/floor (front)
+4 floors x 2 units/floor (rear) = 32 units
7,500 s.f. lot => 188 du/ac

Lot Size: 50' x 150'
Pedestal + 6 floors x 6 units/floor
= 36 units
7,500 s.f. lot => 210 du/ac

Lot Size: 75' x 150'
Pedestal + 6 floors x 7 units/floor
= 42 units
11,250 s.f. lot => 163 du/ac

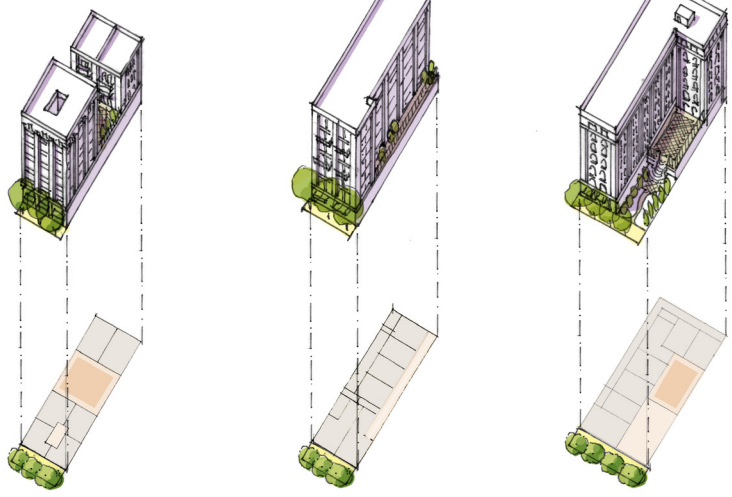


Figure E-52: Building type illustrations

The building types illustrated on these pages correspond to buildings illustrated in the different alternative scenarios on the previous pages. The illustrations of each building type are drawn as an axonometric, with the floor plan sketched at the bottom of each diagram. The size of units ranges from small units to large, providing an even mix. At full build-out, each building type would be designed by the property owner and would likely look very different from one another, as they do now in Downtown Oakland and downtowns across the country.

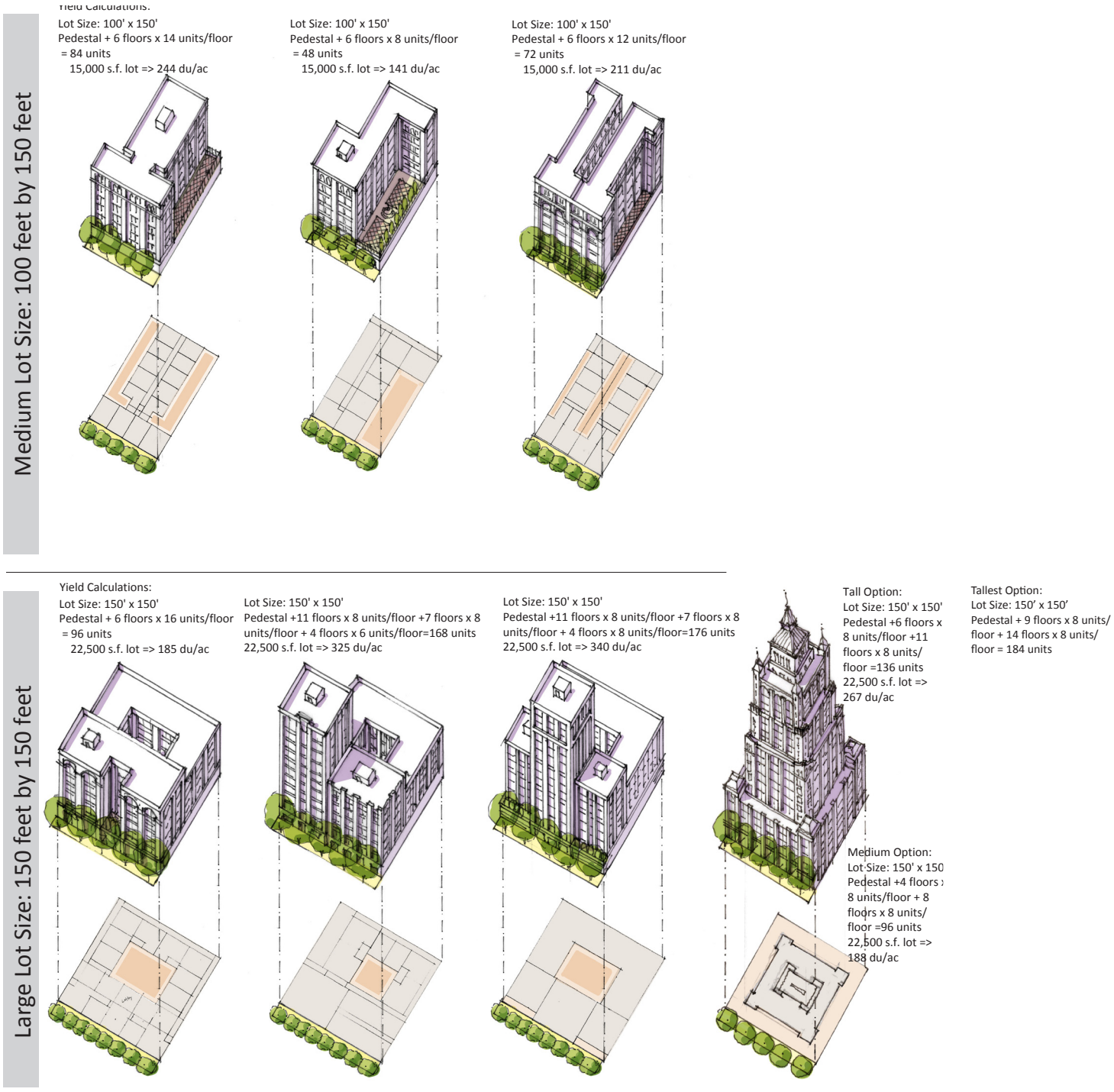
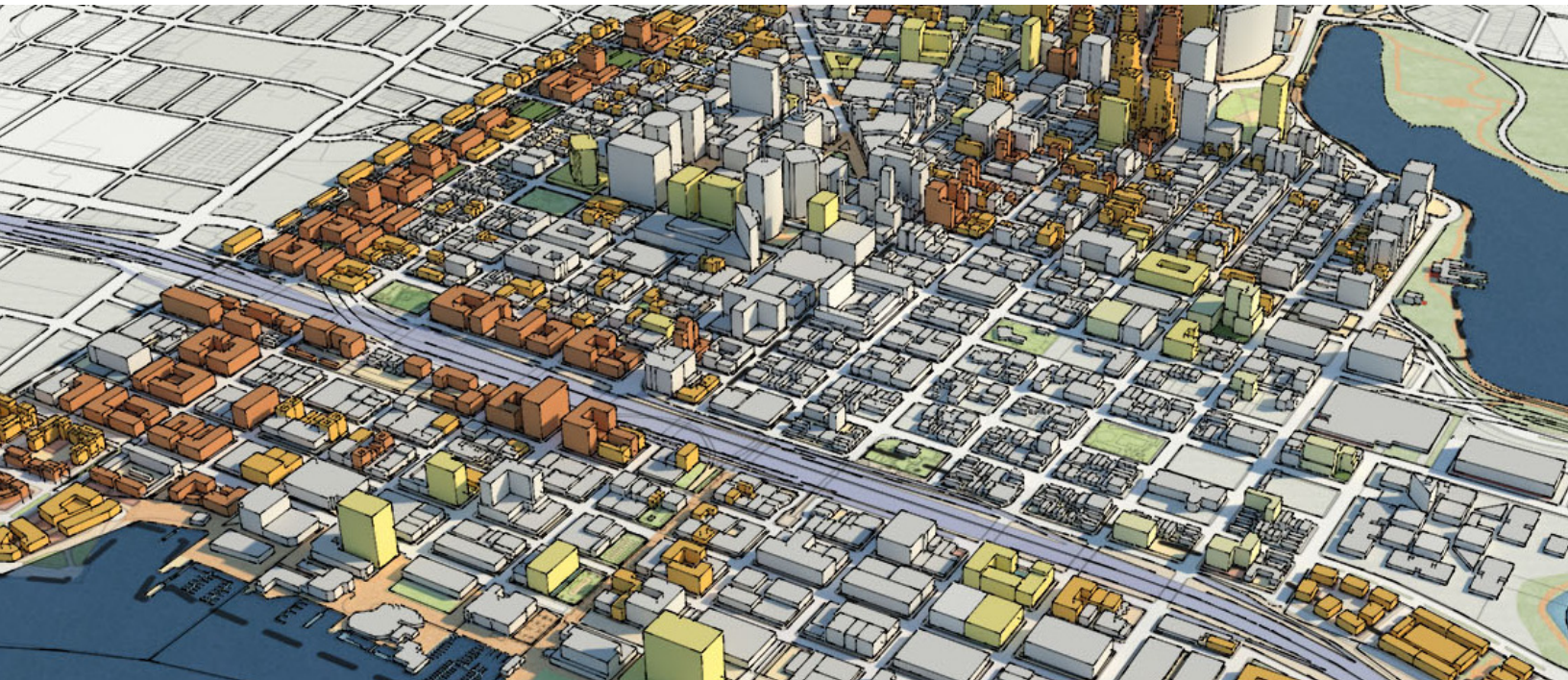


Figure E-53: Building type illustrations

TRIBUNE
TRIBUNE

EVALUATING ALTERNATIVES

Criteria for Evaluation	6.2
Continued Trend Scenario	6.4
Plan Alternatives: Preserve Character, Maintain Diversity & Grow Strategically	6.8
Scorecard: Evaluation of Plan Alternatives	6.10



PLAN ALTERNATIVES & CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The working goals and considerations for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan (described in detail in the previous sections), fit into the general categories of Affordability & Equity; Arts & Cultural Heritage; Built Environment, Preservation & Housing; Open Space & Recreation; Environmental Sustainability; Connectivity & Access and Economic Development. In the Specific Plan, policies will be outlined and illustrated to clarify these goals as they evolve throughout the planning process.

Based on community ideas and feedback to date, a series of alternative scenarios for the future of downtown's neighborhoods have been created and analyzed. These are described in detail in Section 5, "Illustrating the Vision for the Downtown Neighborhoods." **In this section, the plan alternatives are evaluated for their potential to help realize plan goals, based on a series of evaluation criteria. An analysis of what would be likely to happen if current planning and development trends were continued is provided for comparison. The criteria described below may be used to aid future discussions to determine which alternative should be pursued for each neighborhood.**

The evaluation criteria, derived from plan goals, are described in detail in the scorecard at the end of this section, and include:

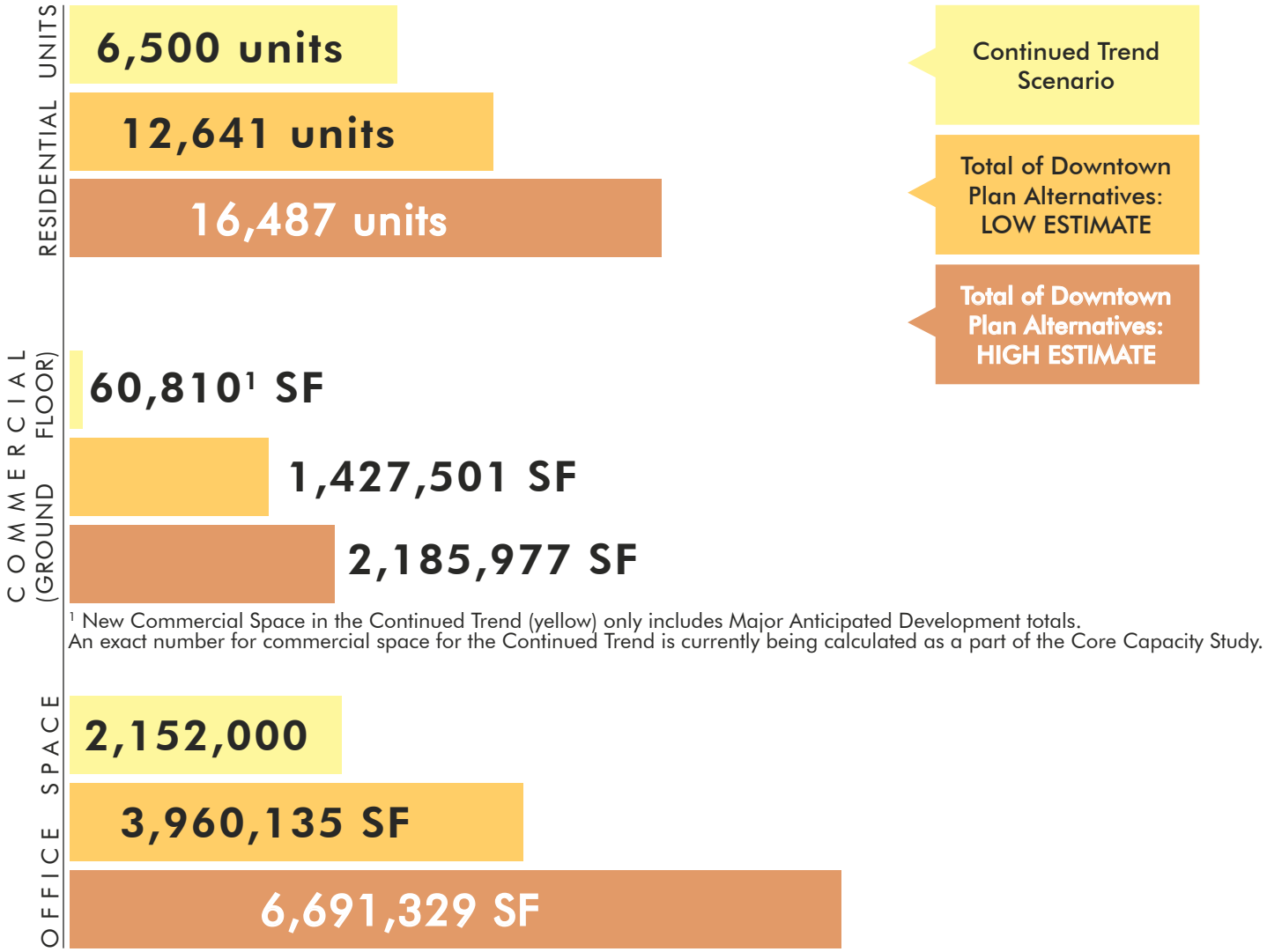
- Variety and Quantity of Housing
- Housing Affordability
- Transportation Choices
- Walkability
- Sustainability
- Historic Preservation & Context Sensitive Growth
- Economic Development
- Public Realm & Open Space (Streets, Plazas, Parks)

Interpreting the Plan Alternatives

The plan alternatives (number totals are listed on the next page) reflect recent trends suggesting that Downtown Oakland may be entering a period of transformative growth. The U.S. Census estimates that over 3,200 of the housing units in the Greater Downtown area were built between 2000 and approximately 2009 to 2013. Housing deliveries peaked between 2006 and 2009, with an average of 600 new units a year completed in the Greater Downtown during that period. After 2010, production declined to approximately 160 new units a year, but an estimate of over 3,800 units are now proposed or approved. Meanwhile, Downtown's employment base has experienced a strong recovery from the recession. Between 2011 and mid-2015, more than 180,000 square feet of office space was absorbed on average in the Plan Area each year. This compares to a long-term average of 133,000 square feet per year since 1997, and negative average annual absorption of office space (i.e., more businesses exiting space than leasing new space) in the decade from 2001 to 2010.

COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

The total numbers listed below reflect the following: the yellow represents the estimated amount of housing, commercial and office for a continued trend scenario that is projected to occur naturally (without a Specific Plan); the light orange represents the low estimate of the total amount of housing, commercial and office space that can be accommodated from the least intense plan alternatives, detailed in the previous section; and the dark orange represents the high estimate of the total amount of housing, commercial and office space that can be accommodated from the most intense plan alternatives. All of these alternatives include the current best estimate of Anticipated Development, discussed in detail in Section 2.



[1] New Commercial Space in the Continued Trend (yellow) only includes Major Anticipated Development totals. An exact number for commercial space for the Continued Trend is currently being calculated as a part of the Core Capacity Study.

Note: Anticipated development projects, which have either been recently approved or submitted for approval to the City of Oakland, are included in the above unit / square footage calculations for the Continued Trend as well as each Plan Alternative. These reflect new housing, commercial and offices spaces that will likely be available in the near future and are approved or under review (but are not constructed yet).

CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO

Figure F-2: Anticipated new development includes a large amount of residential, commercial, and office space.

The Continued Trend Scenario assumes future development in Downtown would continue under the existing zoning and land use controls subject to market demands which include national, regional and local influences. The purpose of analyzing the existing trend is to provide a benchmark against which proposed interventions in the plan alternatives can be measured for their effectivity in achieving plan goals.

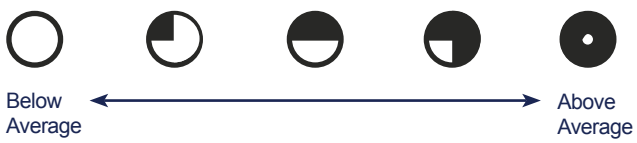
In the last year, Oakland has experienced an increase in development and development interest as a result of regional economic growth, increasing development costs in San Francisco, and greater recognition of the City's positive attributes. The projected development under the Continued Trend Scenario through the year 2040 includes: approximately 6,500 new residential units and approximately 2,152,000 square feet of new office space. Additional commercial space would also be provided (this is currently being calculated as a part of the MTC Core Capacity Study).

Continued Trend Scenario*	
TOTAL NEW UNITS	6,500 UNITS
TOTAL NEW OFFICE SPACE	2,152,000 SF

Anticipated new development in the specific plan area, including developments that are proposed, and recently approved, represent about 3,828 dwelling units, 60,810 square feet of commercial space, and 910,285 square feet of office space. These projects include proposals for high- and mid-rise tower development in Downtown, along with a variety of smaller scale projects. These are the current estimates for anticipated new development; these estimates are included in the number totals for the continued trend, the low estimate of capacity from the plan alternatives, and the high estimate of capacity from the plan alternatives, discussed on the previous pages. To be clear, the anticipated new development is a best estimate, based on current information. Since some of these buildings are under review, many have not been approved and have not begun construction, these numbers will likely shift as projects are completed.

The existing regulations that would result in a continuation of the current trend are discussed in the following pages.

SCORECARD: CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO	
CRITERIA	SCORE
VARIETY & QUANTITY OF HOUSING	
AFFORDABLE HOUSING	
TRANSPORTATION CHOICES	
WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS	
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES	
HISTORIC PRESERVATION & CONTEXT-SENSITIVE GROWTH	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
PUBLIC REALM & OPEN SPACE (STREETS, PLAZAS, PARKS)	



*Source: Strategic Economics, 2016

The Continued Trend Scenario assumes that Downtown will continue to be influenced by recent development trends, resulting in a greater level of development than occurred in the prior ten years. New development would continue to be regulated by the City's General Plan (particularly the Land Use and Transportation Element and the Historic Preservation Element), the Estuary Policy Plan, the Planning Code and Zoning Ordinance, and Standard Conditions of Approval.

This scenario assumes that reasonably foreseeable development would occur in response to market and trends consistent with the existing regulatory environment and that projects Downtown that are approved but not yet built would be developed. The Anticipated Development Projects map in Section 5 illustrates these projects in more detail. Analysis of this map demonstrates that current development often occurs rapidly, and potentially out of context with the scale and type of buildings that surround it.

The Continued Trend Scenario considers development of the specific plan area within two distinct subareas: the Central Business District, which lies north of I-880, and the Jack London District, which lies to the south of I-880. As described above, development within the specific plan area would be regulated by existing plans and policies. North of the I-880, the majority of the Specific Plan area is zoned as Central Business District (CBD) and designated as Central Business District in the General Plan, with the exception of the northwest corner, which is zoned and has the General Plan designation of Urban Residential and Community Commercial. Additional areas that are existing or planned parks or plazas are zoned Open Space. A maximum floor-area ratio (FAR) of 20.0 and residential density of 300 dwelling units per acre are permitted for the entire CBD area per the General Plan.

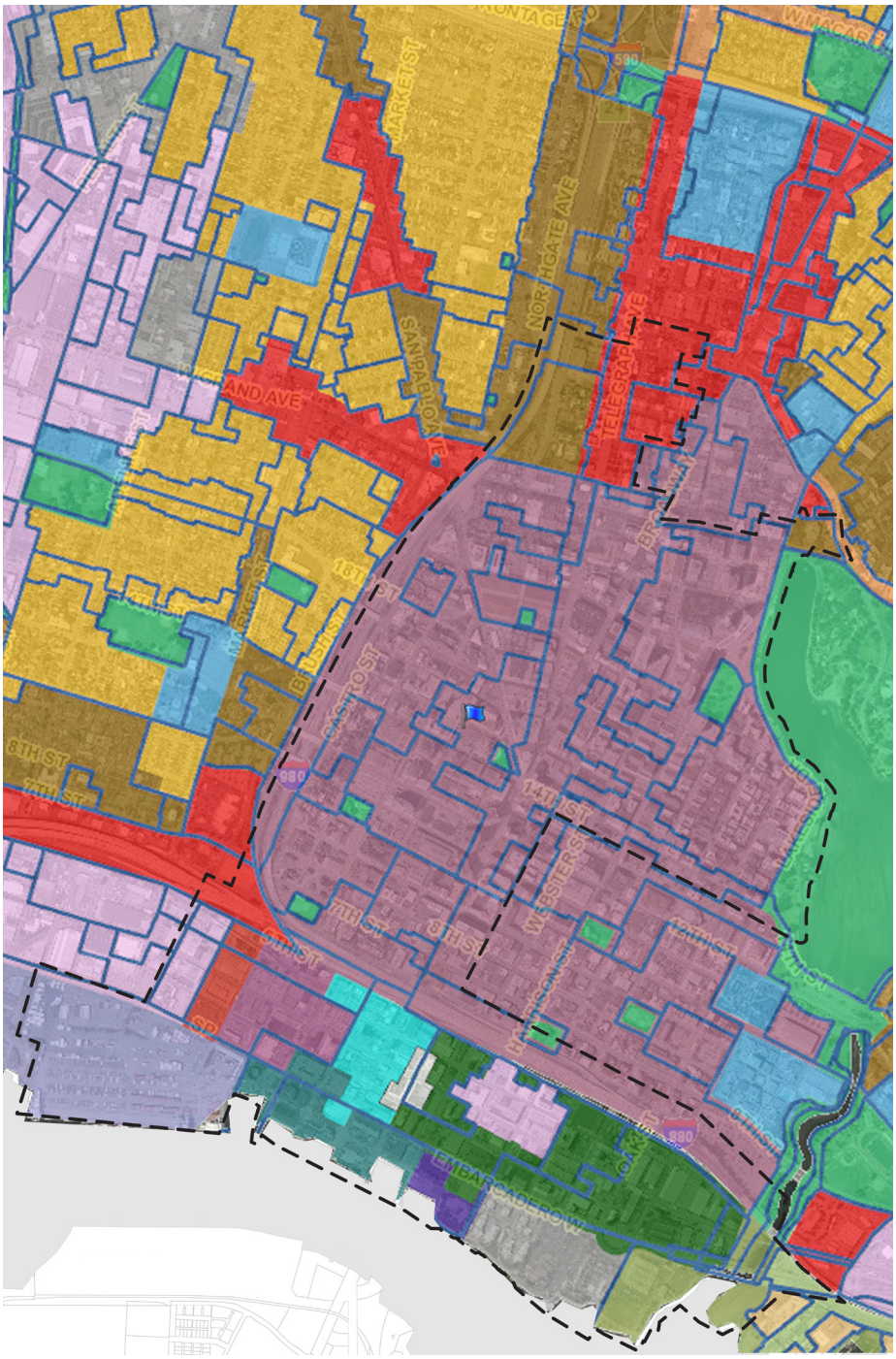


Figure F-3: General Plan Land Use Map, depicting current General Plan designations downtown and in the Jack London District.

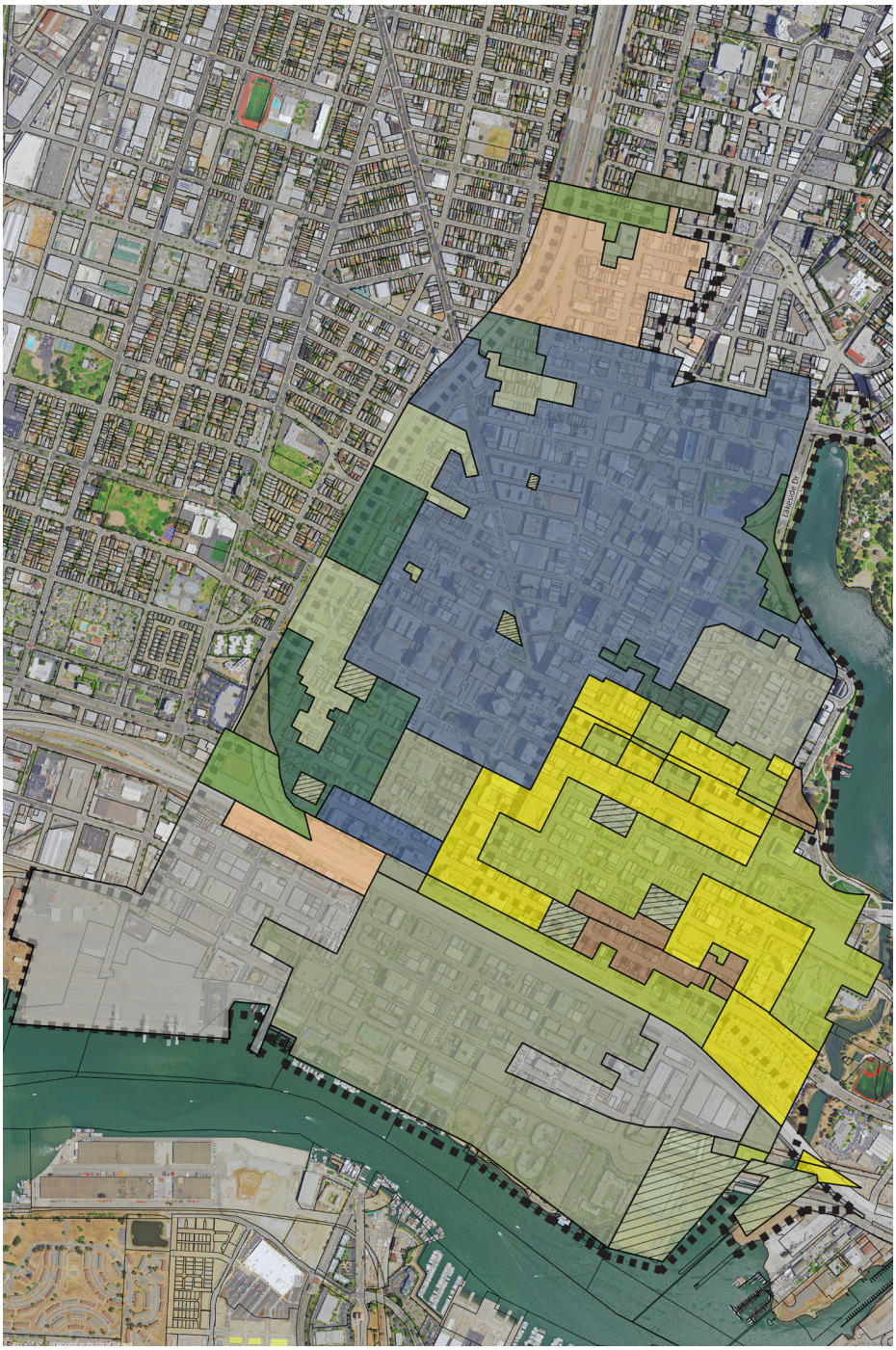


Figure F-4: Map of Existing Density Restrictions

# of UNITS/AC	UNITS per SF LOT AREA
484/AC	1/90 SF
217/AC	1/200 SF
193/AC	1/225 SF
158/AC	1/225 SF
145/AC	1/300 SF
96/AC	1/450 SF
INDUSTRIAL	N/A
OPEN SPACE	N/A

LAKE MERRITT # OF UNITS/AC	UNITS per SF LOT AREA
396/AC	1/110 SF
193/AC	1/225 SF
96/AC	1/450 SF

In the CBD zone, the area closest to the center of Downtown allows unlimited height and a maximum density of 484 units per acre. Moving outward, height limits range from 275 to 55 feet, decreasing in height further from the center. Maximum density surrounding the CBD Zone ranges from 96 units to 217 units per acre. Under the Continued Trend Scenario, these combined development controls would continue to focus high-rise development (such as office towers and high-rise residential) at the center of Downtown, while allowing a high density of residential development throughout most of downtown.

South of I-880, the Specific Plan area land use is currently guided by the Estuary Policy Plan, adopted in 1999, and is zoned Community Thoroughfare Commercial (C-40), Community Shopping Commercial (C-45), Industrial (M-20, M-30), and Open Space (OS). The C-40 and C-45 zones allow for a mix of residential, civic, commercial, and some industrial and agricultural uses. The industrial zone permits commercial and industrial activities and some civic and agricultural activities. Under the Continued Trend Scenario, these existing zoning controls would remain in place.

No height limits are prescribed in the C-40, C-45, M-20 or M-30 zones, with the exception of some limitation along edges shared with lower-intensity zones. In the C-40 and C-45 zones the maximum densities allowed are 96 and 145 dwelling units per acre, respectively, with higher densities allowed for efficiency and rooming units (SROs). Residential uses are not permitted in the Industrial zone or Open Space zone. Under the Continued Trend Scenario, these development controls would be updated to align with recently adopted zoning designations for the Central Business District, Commercial Corridors, and Commercial and Industrial Mix zones as appropriate.

PLAN ALTERNATIVES:
PRESERVE CHARACTER, MAINTAIN DIVERSITY & GROW STRATEGICALLY

Figure F-5: The scenarios explored under the Plan Alternatives are based on the big ideas and goals expressed by the community.

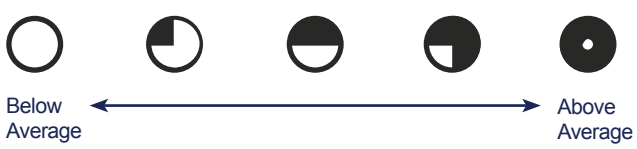
The Plan Alternatives explore the potential for strategic growth in the form of infill development on empty or underutilized sites, to complement the preservation of historic buildings. Plan Alternative scenarios maintain a wide variety of housing types and sizes while identifying opportunities for more diversity and growth, and take steps to achieve affordability of housing and commerce. Improvements are aimed to make streets and plazas places for people, not just cars, and to provide access to more transportation options. New development supports the multimodal transportation vision with street-oriented buildings that create walkable addresses and vibrant public spaces; options are explored that intensify Downtown and its neighborhood centers while preserving cultural assets and historic places.

The Plan Alternatives are estimated to include 12,641 to 16,487 new housing units; 1,427,501 to 2,185,977 square feet of commercial space; 3,960,135 to 6,691,329 square feet of office; and up to 800,279 square feet of area dedicated to parking. These estimates include both the conversion of I-980 to a boulevard (which could result in substantial new mixed-use development) and anticipated new development (development that has been recently approved or submitted for approval). These estimates are itemized in Section 5 so that potential new development proposed in the various neighborhoods can be better understood.

Scenarios explored under the Plan Alternatives are based on the big ideas and goals expressed by the community such as affordability of housing, historic preservation, and expanded transportation options. The Plan Alternatives include:

- Options for new development on opportunity sites in each of Downtown's neighborhoods. This potential new development is adjusted to fit with the height and scale of surrounding existing buildings. The intent is to add more units, commercial and office spaces of a variety of types and sizes.
- Some options include high-intensity growth to fit within the context of Downtown's tallest existing buildings, such as in the Lake Merritt Office District and City Center neighborhoods.
- Various options for new development and public spaces at Howard Terminal potentially include housing, office and light industrial uses, a waterfront park, and potentially a sports stadium.
- Conversion of the I-980 freeway to an urban boulevard framed by new mixed-use buildings of varying scales.

SCORECARD: PLAN ALTERNATIVES	
CRITERIA	SCORE
VARIETY & QUANTITY OF HOUSING	◔ / ●
AFFORDABLE HOUSING	◔ / ●
TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS	●
WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS	●
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES	◔ / ●
HISTORIC PRESERVATION & CONTEXT-SENSITIVE GROWTH	◔ / ●
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	◔ / ●
PUBLIC REALM & OPEN SPACE (STREETS, PLAZAS, PARKS)	◔ / ●



*The range in scoring above reflects what is possible to achieve understanding there are multiple Plan Alternatives that are possible, with some alternatives scoring higher than others.

SCORECARD: Evaluating Plan Alternatives

VARIETY & QUANTITY OF HOUSING

CRITERIA

Housing need is one of the most important priorities expressed by the community about their vision for the future of Downtown Oakland. Two elements that greatly contribute to affordability include the supply of housing stock Downtown and the variety of sizes and types of housing. A substantial increase in the supply of housing will likely place downward pressure on housing costs. In addition, a wide range of unit sizes is required in an affordable city, offering small, yet well designed units, mid-sized units and larger units to house families of all types and income levels. To fulfill the criteria for variety and quantity of housing, the plan needs to meet or exceed the projected housing need.

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) prepares population, household, and employment projections for all Bay Area communities and specific subareas. Included here for the sake of comparison to the different Plan Alternatives, 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. ABAG's allocation of growth to a specific area is driven by a combination of market and regulatory factors.

BELOW AVERAGE

CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO

Under the Continued Trend scenario, an estimated 6,500 additional housing units will be constructed. When compared to the options illustrated in the different alternatives, this does not provide as great of an impact on the affordability of market rate units through the expansion of housing supply. The recent Core Capacity Study projected 6,500 to 12,900 new households (2015-2040) in a study area that was slightly larger and includes Chinatown. That said, the ABAG projects 12,309 net new households over the same period for the Downtown and Jack London priority development areas, in which case 6,500 units falls significantly short of ABAG's projected growth.

SLIGHTLY ABOVE TO ABOVE AVERAGE

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

The Plan Alternatives under review provide an estimated 12,641 to 16,487 additional housing units, including the 1,150 new units from the I-980 conversion option. This represents a significant increase in the supply of housing units over the trend scenario. A wider variety of housing types and sizes are anticipated including studios, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units. If there is demand for more small units, this estimate can adjust in accordance with unit design, to result in a larger quantity.

Plan Alternatives that include greater intensity and building height (such as Alternative #2 in KONO, Lake Merritt Office District, Jack London District, and I-980 areas) support the largest variety of housing units, including additional high-rise residential towers. This expanded supply of housing may help to further mitigate rent and price increases in the existing housing stock by relieving demand pressures from more affluent residents.

The range in scoring reflects what is possible to achieve understanding there are multiple alternatives studied for many neighborhoods, with some alternatives scoring higher than others.

SCORECARD: Evaluating Plan Alternatives

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

CRITERIA

Preserving and expanding the supply of affordable housing is an important goal for the Downtown Specific Plan. The City is currently advancing a range of strategies designed to promote affordable housing citywide, including development impact fees and other new funding sources. The plan alternatives represent a range of future development scenarios that will be impacted by these initiatives, and the final plan will include specific recommendations for the plan area.

For the purpose of this evaluation, it is assumed that increasing housing supply supports housing affordability. To the extent that policy measures are in place that generate funding for affordable housing, alternatives that include more development are likely to generate more new below-market-rate units. Furthermore, expanding the overall supply of housing is an important component of any strategy to help prevent displacement of existing low-income residents. Based on these means of assessing the alternatives' outcomes, the alternatives are compared to the trend scenario in the "scorecard" based on the amount of housing provided, and thus opportunity for policies to impact the quantity of affordable units provided.

Each alternative's assessment notes how many units would be affordable to households with lower incomes (i.e., those earning moderate or lower incomes, as defined by the State of California) if new units achieve a target of 30 percent affordability goal. The 30 percent goal is an illustrative outcome. The final goal and tools will be determined through this planning process and the results of the City's efforts to establish housing impact fees and adopt forthcoming recommendations of the Mayor's Housing Cabinet. For comparison, the Broadway-Valdez and West Oakland Specific Plans adopted 15 percent affordable housing targets for new development, while the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan adopted a 15 to 28 percent target.

SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE

CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO

Continuation of the current trend represents a smaller opportunity to generate funding to support the production of new, income-restricted housing units via policy tools that depend on market rate development. If policies were in place that target 30 percent of units affordable to households with lower incomes, the Continued Trend scenario could generate 1,950 new affordable units by 2040.

SLIGHTLY ABOVE TO ABOVE AVERAGE

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

New units in the Plan Alternatives represent an expanded supply of housing in the downtown area. This may mitigate rent and price increases for the existing housing stock by relieving demand pressures as well as offer opportunities to encourage the production of new, income-restricted units via policy tools that depend on market rate development (e.g. an impact fee). If policies were in place that target 30 percent of units affordable to households with lower incomes, the alternatives could generate between 3,792 and 4,946 new affordable units.

An important consideration for the Plan Alternatives is to what extent each will further the City objective to meeting its regional fair share of housing (HE Policy 1.2, HE Policy 1.7). These Housing Element (HE) policies include the promotion and redevelopment of vacant or underutilized sites to higher density residential uses, and higher density affordable housing in particular. Each alternative heavily utilizes this type of land, and can address how development under the plan will help to meet the regional housing share and balance affordable housing needs.

To this end, HE Policy 1.7 specifies that Oakland will strive to develop at least 14,765 new housing units citywide before June 2023. The residential buildout of the different plan alternatives represents at least 85.6% (less intense alternatives) of the total new housing targeted under the 2015 Housing Element. If alternatives that include greater intensity and building height are pursued, residential buildings would meet and exceed this target.

SCORECARD: Evaluating Plan Alternatives

TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

CRITERIA

A vibrant downtown requires a balanced mix of transportation options, including increased BART service and capacity, efficient buses, a connected bike network, walkable streets and a connected street network for cars. In the near future, on-demand car sharing and transit use are anticipated to increase; self-driving vehicles may further change mobility infrastructure needs. Therefore, a balanced and flexible transportation network, with accommodations for all modes of travel is essential.

The Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) of the General Plan strongly emphasizes the importance of increased transit use and transit-oriented development in downtown. Policies supporting this objective and the degree to which the various alternatives advance each have been used for evaluation, including:

- LUTE Policy T3.3, Allowing Congestion Downtown
- LUTE Policy T3.6, Encouraging Transit ("transit streets")
- LUTE Policy T4.4, Developing a Light Rail or Trolley
- LUTE Policy T4.10, Converting Underused Travel Lanes

To fulfill the criteria for transportation choices, plan alternatives must offer a variety of transportation options, with an emphasis on expanded pedestrian, cyclist and transit networks. Additionally, more development intensity and a denser population contributes to the demand for added transportation options; therefore, as downtown evolves there will likely be a larger demand and rationale for investment in transit and other modes of travel.

SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE

CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO

LUTE POLICY: The City has been making incremental steps towards advancing transportation policies for multimodal improvements, complete streets, and enhanced transit. However, without a specific plan in place to prioritize investments and coordinate the location of new improvements and increased densities, the current trend alternative does not rate as highly the plan alternatives. There are current proposals for converting underutilized lanes for other modes; this could be improved with a plan that identifies and prioritizes improvements that create complete loops/networks. In addition, the Trend Scenario has a lower density and the lower capacity for office expansion and employment, and thus lower support for increased investments in transit infrastructure.

PARKING POLICY: The City of Oakland is in the process of revising its off-street parking requirements for Downtown. The proposed changes, as shown in the public review draft published in October of 2015, would not require parking for residential uses in downtown and would require unbundled parking for new development. This policy incentivizes transit-oriented development.

ABOVE AVERAGE

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

LUTE POLICY: The Plan Alternatives increase the residential population, office space, employment potential, and number of visitors to downtown, thereby increasing trips downtown. There is a focus on multimodal transportation for downtown in the future, including pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure, and converting car-trips to bike, pedestrian or transit trips, advancing Policy T3.3. The larger population will create greater demand for transit systems, increasing the need and justification for investment in improvements.

The alternatives prioritize transit over single-occupant vehicles; street design concepts which include potential for new configurations that accommodate light rail or trolley within the right-of-way have been considered. Policies T3.6 and T4.4 overlap in the support of a light rail or trolleys that connect downtown to the rest of the city and regional transportation networks. Each alternative could incorporate a light rail or trolley line; the location may differ due to the proposed location and intensity of development.

Proposals to repurpose underutilized travel lanes for transit, bike, and pedestrian needs are included. The alternatives identify key corridors to maximize impact, and make use of alternative modes (walking, cycling, and transit) feasible for more trips.

PARKING POLICY: The trend towards a more transit-oriented downtown with lowered parking requirements is supported by the densities proposed in the each of the neighborhood plan alternatives.

SCORECARD: Evaluating Plan Alternatives

WALKABILITY

CRITERIA

A walkable neighborhood can meet daily needs within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of residences. Daily needs and uses include places of employment or education, grocery and convenience stores, spaces for recreation, cultural institutions and venues for entertainment. Coupled with a short distance to daily destinations, walkable places have inviting streets that are comfortable and interesting for the pedestrians. To meet the criteria for walkable neighborhoods, a plan should meet or exceed housing demand while also allowing adequate space for commercial, office and institutional development. For walkability, each neighborhood should have access to daily needs within a five-minute walk (1/4 mile) and should be well connected to adjacent destinations with pedestrian-friendly streets.

AVERAGE

CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO

Downtowns are inherently walkable places when compared to surrounding neighborhoods and suburbs, due to a high concentration of mixed uses in one place. Downtown Oakland is walkable today, yet there can be improvements to maximize on its potential. Vacant lots, surface parking lots, and auto-oriented street design degrade the pedestrian experience, and the presence of highways with poor quality crossings separate downtown from surrounding neighborhoods. In the Continued Trend scenario, infill on vacant lots can incrementally improve the mix of uses in a given neighborhood and street improvements can complete gaps in the walkable street network. However, without a plan in place to prioritize, build momentum and strategically guide infill and street improvements, a cohesive outcome is less likely.

ABOVE AVERAGE

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

The Plan Alternatives propose mixed-use infill within each of Downtown's neighborhoods, further diversifying the mix of uses and improving walkability. In addition, there is a high priority for pedestrian-friendly street design improvements, including strategically located pedestrian-dominant streets, new crosswalks and pedestrian plazas, tree-lined sidewalks, conversion of one-way streets to two-way (which will slow speed and enhance safety), improved highway undercrossings, and the conversion of I-980 to a walkable boulevard. The plan prioritizes specific streets for pedestrian improvements to create linkages to areas of greatest intensity, variety of uses, services, key destinations, and surrounding neighborhoods.

Alternatives that include concentrated density in key locations (such as the Lake Merritt Office and Jack London Districts, Howard Terminal, and in new buildings that front the I-980 Boulevard) can better support transit investments; in addition, transit users become pedestrians on either end of their commute, further activating downtown streets.

SCORECARD: Evaluating Plan Alternatives

SUSTAINABILITY

CRITERIA

Sustainability can be defined as actions that meet the needs of residents without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Reducing carbon emissions and increasing resilience to natural disasters are key ingredients.

The Current Trend and Plan Alternatives support Housing Element Policy 7.3 (Encourage Development that Reduces Carbon Emission) to some degree through the further concentration of development in downtown where transit, amenities, and employment area all easily accessible, thus reducing automobile use. Less automobile use results in fewer emissions from car traffic. The more directly this policy is supported, the greater the sustainability score. In addition, new construction is generally more resilient to earthquakes due to improved building codes. Thus, although there may be increased construction impacts, generally greater density and intensity of new development downtown can yield greater sustainability. Some environmental resources would have very similar levels of impact under the trend as well as the alternatives, and are thus not included in this discussion.

AVERAGE

CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO

All new development results in environmental impacts, due to new trips produced and emissions produced. However, new development Downtown is inherently more sustainable than development in outlying areas of the City, due to the mix of uses and availability of transit that can reduce the need for automobile use.

The Continued Trend scenario has a lower amount of projected density and intensity of new development, and thus ranks the lower than the Plan Alternatives explored.

SLIGHTLY ABOVE TO ABOVE AVERAGE

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

All Plan Alternatives could result in significant new transportation impacts/trips produced. However, the alternatives may ultimately have a lower number of vehicle miles traveled per unit in comparison to the Continued Trend scenario as a result of concentrating development and improving transit access. Additionally, if adequate pedestrian, bike and transit infrastructure is implemented as designed in the plan alternatives, and some car trips are replaced with other modes of transportation, vehicle miles traveled will be further reduced.

In the Plan Alternatives, most downtown streets would be restored to two-way traffic (instead of one-way traffic). This will result in more direct routes, which are likely to reduce the amount of vehicular emissions released into the air.

Alternatives which propose the highest intensity of development would result in the highest number of trips and construction impacts. Conversely, the higher density alternatives (specifically, in Lake Merritt Office and Jack London Districts, KONO, and potentially as part of the I-980 conversion) also most directly supports Policy HE 7.3 by concentrating new development within the downtown, where it has the least impacts compared with new development elsewhere in Oakland and creates greater transit demand that supports investments in enhanced transit facilities.

The range in scoring reflects what is possible to achieve understanding that there are multiple alternatives studied for many neighborhoods, with some alternatives scoring higher than others.

SCORECARD: Evaluating Plan Alternatives

HISTORIC PRESERVATION & CONTEXT-SENSITIVE GROWTH

CRITERIA

Context-sensitive growth respects the historic city fabric by preserving historic buildings and places, while also appropriately locating and developing options for growth and enhancements to the public realm. To fulfill this criterion, historic buildings and open spaces need to be preserved, and growth needs to be simultaneously permitted in appropriate locations and configurations that meet the existing need for more housing, additional centers of employment and neighborhood-serving retail, and quality new open spaces.

CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO

SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE

CONTEXT-SENSITIVE GROWTH: The existing zoning for height, density and intensity in the plan area is organized to allow the greatest level of development in the downtown core in the vicinity of Broadway and Telegraph, from 10th street to the south to Grand Avenue to the north. Sequential height areas are designated in the downtown zoning regulations, with the greatest heights permitted at the core. Density is organized in a similar fashion. These zoning regulations intend to focus the most intense development in the core area, with increasingly lower intensities of development moving out from this center. Recent development approvals have shown some deviation and approved exceptions to these existing policies, with taller buildings in various downtown neighborhoods, including Uptown, Lake Merritt and Jack London Districts. Exceptions have been considered and appropriately approved, yet there is a resulting lack of predictability that could continue should current trends prevail.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION: Existing policies identify resources in the Downtown that require consideration when new development is proposed. These policies could be strengthened to further protect historic buildings and resources. Because the Continued Trend scenario does not follow a specific plan, it could potentially result in a larger impact on historic resources than the alternatives proposed.

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

SLIGHTLY ABOVE TO ABOVE AVERAGE

CONTEXT-SENSITIVE GROWTH: The plan alternatives are generally consistent with the height limits and floor area ration (FAR) currently permitted in the zoning regulations for downtown, with the following deviations:

- The proposed building heights suggested for the Uptown, West of San Pablo and Lakeside districts do not maximize current height and bulk limits, instead reflecting the existing character of these Downtown neighborhoods. The greatest densities are instead focused in areas that already have taller buildings (City Center and Lake Merritt Office Districts), with new development in surrounding neighborhoods designed to be contextual to what is there already.
- Alternatives considered for the Lake Merritt Office and Jack London Districts push buildings closest to the maximum permitted height, resulting in more development while still likely being within existing permitted FAR. Additionally, these alternatives show a greater focus of high-density development near Broadway and Telegraph, which supports existing development patterns and reflects the sequencing of height areas in the underlying zoning.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION: Impacts to historic resources have been minimized in the plan alternatives through the preservation of historic structures. However, proposing new development adjacent to a historic structure or within a historic district can result in an impact to historic resources, if not implemented carefully. Plan policies can be created that further strengthen requirements for preservation.

SCORECARD: Evaluating Plan Alternatives

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CRITERIA

Expanding access to quality jobs, encouraging and supporting businesses, and providing convenient access to retail and services for Oakland residents are important goals for the Downtown Specific Plan. The final plan will include strategies to achieve these goals; for the purpose of the alternatives analysis, it is assumed that alternatives with more employment uses, particularly in office-based sectors, have the potential to improve job access for local residents. Based on these means of assessing the alternatives' outcomes, each alternative is ranked in the "scorecard" based on the amount of new office space and retail square footage provided, and thus opportunity for plan policies to be effective.

SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE

CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO

The Continued Trend scenario includes an estimated 2,152,000 additional square feet of office between 2015 and 2040. Compared to the new Plan Alternatives, this scenario accommodates a lower amount of employment growth.

This job and office space growth is based on preliminary trend analyses underway for the "Core Capacity Transit Study" for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission; the projected demand for office space will likely shift slightly as these projections are refined.

This scenario also includes a smaller amount of new retail space. To the extent that the amount of retail space is constrained relative to future demand, it has the potential to result in increasing rents for existing businesses. Local access to retail and services may be comparable the Plan Alternatives if new retail growth occurs throughout the Downtown area.

SLIGHTLY ABOVE TO ABOVE AVERAGE

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

The Plan Alternatives include between 3,960,135 and 6,691,329 additional square feet of office and 1,427,501 to 2,185,977 square feet of other commercial (e.g., retail and services), varying based on the alternative selected for each neighborhood, and whether is I-980 is converted to a boulevard.

The additional supply of retail space, compared with the Continued Trend scenario, has the potential to help preserve affordable rents for existing businesses and provide space for additional retail and services. However, enhanced preservation of existing businesses and provision of desired local-serving retail and services will require additional policies and programs and will require a continued and expanded concerted effort by city agencies and other partners to assist, support, and promote local businesses. Local access to retail and services may be comparable to the existing trend if new retail growth occurs throughout the plan area. Various parts of Downtown can support differing amounts and types of new retail and services (e.g. Uptown can potentially support a large amount of retail; while other parts of Downtown can not).

The plan alternatives reflect recent trends suggesting that Downtown Oakland may be entering a period of transformative growth. The office space in the low estimate and high estimate alternatives would accommodate approximately 14,345 to 24,330 new jobs in the downtown by 2040. Between 2011 and mid-2015, more than 180,000 square feet of office space was absorbed on average in the Plan Area each year. This compares to a long-term average of 133,000 square feet per year since 1997, and negative average annual absorption of office space in the decade from 2001 to 2010.

The range in scoring reflects what is possible to achieve understanding there are multiple alternatives studied for many neighborhoods, with some alternatives scoring higher than others. Overall, fiscal sustainability within a Downtown area should be viewed within the city-wide context and balanced against other policy goals.

SCORECARD: Evaluating Plan Alternatives

PUBLIC REALM & OPEN SPACE (STREETS, PLAZAS, PARKS)

CRITERIA

The public realm, or the space between the buildings, is important to the future identity of a city. The streets, plazas, parks and open spaces need to adequately serve individual neighborhoods and community centers. To fulfill this criterion, a plan needs to provide streets that are designed for people (not just cars), have ample plazas and gathering places throughout downtown, as well as passive and active parks. The more street improvements and quality public spaces in a plan alternative, the higher the fulfillment of this criterion.

The Open Space, Conservation and Recreation (OSCAR) Element of the General Plan provides policies and recommendations for parks and open space. Key recommendations considered under the Plan Alternatives include the provision of "sunlit plazas, pedestrian spaces, and 'pocket' parks" within the downtown as redevelopment occurs (also found in Policy OS-11 and OS-11.1) and the improvement of access between Downtown and Jack London Square. The OSCAR element also recommends that rooftops be better used to provide open space (also found in Policy OS-11.1). Overall, the OSCAR element emphasizes the need for better access to open space in the downtown through the provision of more open space and better utilization of existing parks and plazas.

SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE

CONTINUED TREND SCENARIO

Under the Continued Trend scenario, there is no Specific Plan in place, and thus no overarching strategy for providing new open spaces; public realm improvements could happen in conjunction with new development, or as part of public infrastructure improvements as opportunities arise. Existing initiatives, such as the proposed improvements to the I-880 underpass are implemented, making incremental improvements to the public realm.

SLIGHTLY ABOVE TO ABOVE AVERAGE

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

The Plan Alternatives provide more open spaces and recreational amenities downtown, including public space at Howard Terminal, in new greens created as part of the I-980 Boulevard conversion, and through various "shared space" streets, plazas, and small parks inserted throughout the downtown neighborhoods. The amount of new open spaces varies by alternative, particularly at Howard Terminal and in the Lake Merritt Office District. In addition, proposed street designs increase access and mobility for all users, particularly cyclists and pedestrians. This increased focus on place-making and quality of street design and the public realm ranks the Plan Alternatives higher than the Continued Trend scenario.