

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

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update the Planning Commission and public on the progress made to date in developing a Specific Plan for Downtown Oakland, as well as to provide an overview of the social equity component of the specific planning process. Finally, this report provides next steps anticipated in the planning process.

The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan will establish the framework for how downtown Oakland will grow and change over the next 20 to 25 years. The Specific Plan will include clear plans for connecting downtown Oakland's distinct neighborhoods and waterfront areas, and help guide the city's future public investment decisions. The Specific Plan is projected to improve downtown's role as the economic engine of the City, and thereby support the delivery of services to residents throughout the whole city. Policies and initiatives will be included that address social equity.

Once completed, the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan and its Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will:

1. Provide a comprehensive, clear and certain set of development standards, requirements, regulations and other criteria that will govern downtown development in a predictable way;

2. Provide a comprehensive environmental analysis, along with concurrent downtown-wide mitigation measures, under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);
3. Provide short-, medium- and long-term public sphere and infrastructure improvements needed to support the land uses and developments desired in the plan. These include, but are not limited to transportation, sewage, water, energy, and other essential services;
4. Provide an economic development strategy that includes specific actions and initiatives consistent with the Economic and Workforce Development Department's projects and policies;
5. Provide a comprehensive downtown transit-oriented development strategy that includes specific actions to increase transit ridership, walking and biking, and supports BART's goal of increasing ridership in the reverse commute direction;
6. Provide land-use goals that balance environmental, economic, preservation, social equity and quality of life-related interests; and
7. Provide an inclusive community engagement process, community-driven social and racial equity goals and outcomes, and community-driven action items to achieve those equity goals and outcomes.

BACKGROUND

Initial Community Engagement Process

The process of developing a specific plan for Downtown Oakland began in July 2015. Through a series of community meetings and public workshops, residents and businesses have been involved in every stage of the planning process to date. Over the last year and a half, significant milestones have been reached, including the publication of an existing conditions report titled, *Priority Development Area (PDA) Profile Report*; completion of a 10-day public design charrette; publication of the *Plan Alternatives Report*; and a two-day neighborhood design session held for the Jack London area (the first of four such sessions to be held in the various districts throughout downtown).

The City received over a thousand public comments on the *Plan Alternatives Report*. These comments came in the form of emails, handwritten drawings, notes taken in meetings, and contributions via the City's "Speak Up, Oakland!" online forum. The majority of community feedback received centered on issues of affordability, gentrification, displacement, and the perception that the outcomes of the Specific Plan will negatively affect historically marginalized communities of color. After careful consideration of these comments, staff concluded that the City needed to obtain expert guidance on how to thoroughly address these equity concerns.

Therefore, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a social equity strategy for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan. In the development of a social equity strategy, the City will engage the community in a dialogue about social and racial equity issues, and develop specific policies and implementation measures that include improved culturally-sensitive methods of community engagement; comprehensive information collection (including the addition of crowd-sourced data); and equity impact assessments of potential policies and programs that will lead to a refined and actionable equity framework.

Fundamental Shift in the Approach to the Development of the Specific Plan

In an effort to better address community concerns regarding affordability, gentrification, and displacement, staff has partnered with the City's Department of Race and Equity and selected an equity consultant team lead by I-SEED to work collaboratively with the existing Dover Kohl lead consultant team to revise the Downtown Plan process. Additionally, the City has received additional grant funding for additional transportation, economic and environmental analysis that will be included in the revised plan process.

As *Attachment A* depicts, the original specific plan community engagement process was centered on an early design charrette. While the charrette was successful in terms of generating interest, ideas and momentum for the Downtown Plan process, it didn't provide a sufficient forum to drill down on the many equity issues the community expressed. The scope enhancements will include additional community engagement, additional analysis to support recommendations in the plan, and a higher level of environmental clearance from the environmental impact report (EIR). The process to develop the draft specific plan will be modified to identify stakeholders from communities who have not yet been engaged, and to hold a capacity-building workshop for leaders from these communities. Additional community meetings will be held (including leaders from under-represented stakeholder groups) to refine the plan goals to more thoroughly integrate social equity into the Downtown planning process and to identify equitable plan outcomes. A series of technical meetings (covering topics such as housing, economic development, art and culture, transportation, etc.) are planned to develop the draft proposals that will ultimately be included in the plan. Similarly, neighborhood design sessions are planned to focus on urban design, development, and equity issues within the various districts of downtown. Implementation working group meetings are planned to prioritize implementation actions based on equity outcomes and feasibility.

As a result of these project scope enhancements, the draft specific plan will now be able to include more detailed transportation recommendations, land use recommendations that support an equitable economic development strategy, culturally responsive design interventions, and a community-supported social equity policy framework. The EIR for the Plan will also be more in-depth, and include project-level analysis of greenhouse gas emissions, enhanced noise analysis, including collection of noise measurement data and additional historic resources impact analysis.

PROJECT UPDATE

The *Plan Alternatives Report* was presented to the Planning Commission in April of 2016. Since then, staff has completed a competitive process to hire a social equity consultant to work in collaboration with the existing Dover Kohl lead consultant team. The selection process, explanation of a racial impact assessment and next steps are discussed below.

Social Equity Consultant Selection

The I-SEED social equity consultant team, which includes Oakland-based companies, was selected through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

The I-SEED team was selected for the following reasons:

1. The team has demonstrated ability with designing and implementing successful authentic community engagement strategies, including strong facilitation skills, building capacity in low-income communities and communities of color and social equity policy development and evaluation.
2. Members of the consultant team are Oakland-based and reflect the diversity of the City.
3. The team's innovative mobile mapping app, "Streetwyze," is designed to increase community engagement with vulnerable populations, and help make cities smarter, more just, and sustainable through culturally and community responsive participatory planning practices.
4. The I-SEED team's partners will each bring a unique lens to the work, from nationally recognized organizations such as Policy Link and the Center for Social Inclusion to newer start-up creative place-making partners such as Popuphood. The team's leaders will assist the City with a social equity strategy that is rooted in creative collaboration, shared leadership, informed decision-making and accountability.

5. Khepera Consulting, an Oakland-based firm specializing in racial equity training and coaching, with local, statewide, and national affiliations will design meetings that are culturally sensitive and use innovative facilitation techniques.
6. The team's leaders have long-standing ties to the community and have been selected for their ability to engage populations that may not feel welcome using traditional approaches. They will produce a variety of visual media that may be more readily accessible than traditional planning documents.
7. The team met the minimum 50 percent Local and Small Local Business Enterprise participation requirement.

The I-SEED team will develop a community-supported social equity policy framework for the Downtown Plan, based on a racial equity impact assessment, for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan.

What is a Racial Equity Impact Assessment?

A "racial equity impact assessment" is a systematic examination of how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by a proposed action or decision. It will provide a mechanism for disclosing potential impacts of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan, as well as potential mitigation strategies. The racial equity impact assessment that will be prepared for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan will include the following steps:

- Step 1 Identify baseline conditions, including socio-economic data disaggregated by race, and acknowledge existing disparities
- Step 2 Identify under-represented communities (who might be most impacted) and engage stakeholders
- Step 3 Develop draft equity goals and outcomes
- Step 4 Examine the root causes of disparities, adverse impacts
- Step 5 Prepare for problem solving phase – review peer jurisdictions and analyze lessons learned, studying policy and investment practices that have shown promise in preventing displacement, maintaining community identity and advancing equity in the development process
- Step 6 Report back with policy recommendations and opportunities for advancing equitable impacts

This racial equity impact assessment work will be folded into the revised draft plan development process outlined previously in this staff report (see page 2, Fundamental Shift in the Approach to the Development of the Specific Plan). Specifically, the plan's goals and outcomes will be filtered through an equity lens, the economic analysis prepared for the plan will establish equity priorities, and the equity impact assessment prepared for the specific plan will assist with identifying potential equity implications of various policy decisions, and policies to support equitable outcomes and provide a framework for developing an implementation plan for the recommendations included in the specific plan.

Benefits of Hiring a Social Equity Team

Hiring a social equity team for the Downtown Specific Plan aligns with the City's commitment to achieving equitable opportunities for all Oakland residents and communities. The social equity contract that has been added to the Downtown Plan process will provide a careful evaluation of the City's standard community engagement practices, policies and programs, while simultaneously providing more predictability for developers and businesses wanting to locate in downtown. The social equity strategy

will specifically respond to community concerns about the impact of change and development in downtown Oakland, particularly on vulnerable populations, so that the Downtown Specific Plan can guide and mitigate change in a way that is beneficial to all people, including low-income communities of color.

Next Steps

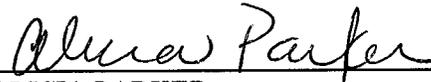
The Downtown Specific Plan process will be re-launched with a robust communication strategy. A series of interactive activities and community events are planned, beginning in May, starting with a capacity building workshop for under-represented stakeholders. This will be followed up with stakeholder meetings, working group meetings and neighborhood design sessions continuing throughout the summer and into fall. All of the feedback received at these community events will inform the preliminary draft plan that is anticipated by January 2018. The formal Draft Specific Plan is anticipated by July 2018, and the final adoption of the specific plan and EIR is anticipated by July 2019.

CONCLUSION

As this Director's Report is an informational briefing only, staff is not requesting any formal action by the Planning Commission. However, staff invites any comments from the Planning Commission and members of the public.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Alicia Parker, Planner III, (510) 238-3362.

Prepared by:



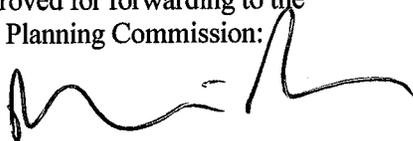
ALICIA PARKER
Planner III

Reviewed by:



ED MANASSE
Strategic Planning Manager

Approved for forwarding to the
City Planning Commission:



DARIN RANELLETTI, Interim Director
Department of Planning and Building

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Graphic of Original and Enhanced Specific Plan Development Process

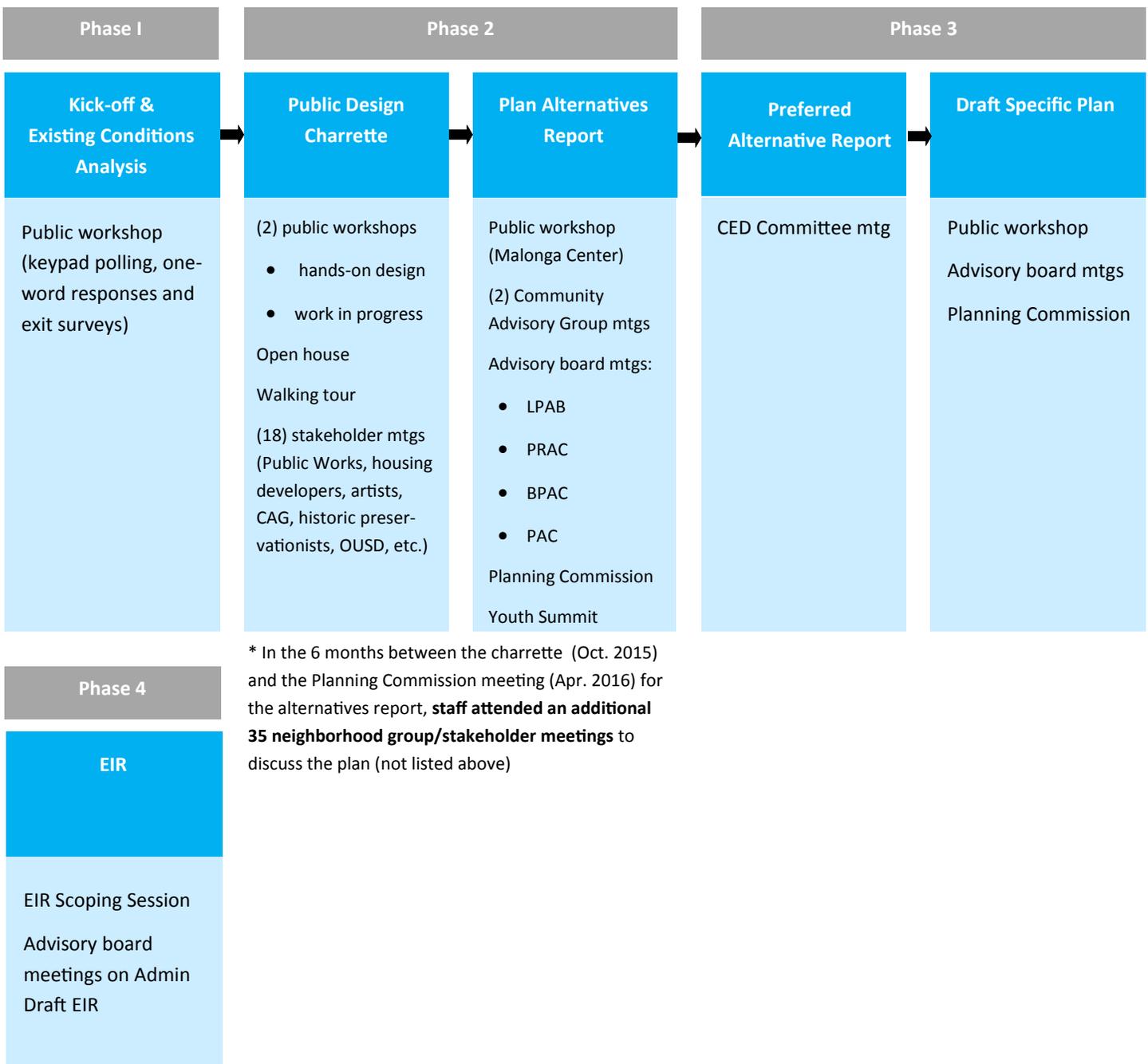
Council approved a contract amendment (Resolution No. 86588) to enhance the services from the originally envisioned process to develop the specific plan to:

- Respond to strong community feedback to incorporate social equity
- Provide a higher-level of transportation, economic and environmental analysis and recommendations

Council Resolution Authorizing:

- \$255,000 for contract w/ I-SEED for social equity work (Planning Dept. restricted funds)
- \$453,440 for enhanced services from Dover Kohl for additional design sessions/collaboration w/ Equity team (Planning Dept. restricted funds)
- \$45,000 contingency fund (Planning Dept. restricted funds)
- Accept \$600,000 FTA grant for enhanced transportation, economic and environmental analysis

Original Downtown Specific Plan Development Process



Enhanced Downtown Specific Plan Development Process

The scope enhancements will enable a more robust process to develop the specific plan, as well as more transportation analysis, economic analysis and environmental analysis. In response to strong community feedback, an equity lens will be a through-line throughout the development of the plan. The green boxes (and text) below describe the enhanced services. The red text is specific to the equity team's work.

