



# The Downtown Oakland Preliminary Draft Plan

JANUARY 16, 2019

# DOWNTOWN OAKLAND SPECIFIC PLAN – PRELIMINARY DRAFT PLAN

Prepared by the Dover, Kohl & Partners team for the City of Oakland

January 2019



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*Planning Bureau; Strategic Planning Unit*

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*Housing & Community Development*

*Public Works*

*Race & Equity*

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Photo: Greg Linhares, City of Oakland

# INTRODUCING DOWNTOWN OAKLAND

***Downtown Oakland is undergoing rapid change. This change brings new energy and opportunities for growth, but also challenges the City's ability to stem displacement and to sustain community and culture.***

.....

The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan will update the policies that guide downtown development by considering Oakland's current and projected economy, community needs, and by protecting what makes downtown "authentically Oakland." Plan policies must balance and serve the broad needs of the entire Oakland community – including inclusive economic opportunity and security; anti-displacement measures to protect residents, businesses and community institutions; a welcoming public realm that is safe, engaging, and inclusive; and reduction of disparities in accessing opportunity and quality of life.

While there is an undeniable urgency to achieve these goals, it is critical to take time to: hear all voices representing the community; explore new ideas; and advance a plan that reflects the actual values of Oaklanders.

.....

### Purpose of this Plan

This Preliminary Draft Plan is an initial version of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan, describing transformative ideas and recommendations that connect the community's downtown goals to potential strategic actions. The Preliminary Draft Plan shows the relationship between the community's desired future for downtown and existing conditions today. It then presents a first draft of potential supportive programs, policies and physical improvements to embrace opportunity, address racial disparities and take downtown from its current condition to a desired future that seizes Downtown Oakland's remarkable capacity to serve its many residents, workers, and visitors.

The Preliminary Draft Plan's initial recommendations have emerged through community input, technical analysis, and review of the City's existing policies. An equity assessment of possible impacts of potential strategies is being used to refine the Plan's proposed policies and projects toward more equitable outcomes. Feedback on this Preliminary Draft Plan will inform the Draft Specific Plan, which will also include a draft strategy for plan implementation. Anticipated next steps and feedback loops are shown in the graphic below.

Given the rapid changes Oakland is undergoing, there is an urgent need to evaluate the City's existing regulations, policies, and programs to ensure sufficient support for downtown residents, businesses, artists and employees, some of whom are being displaced as this planning process is underway. This deliberate path to completing the Final Specific Plan has been designed to create a transparent process and a final plan that is implementable and effective in achieving a better quality of life for Oaklanders.

#### *How to Provide Feedback on This Document*

1. Attend public hearings and give testimony:

- Planning Commission, Jan. 23;
- Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, Feb. 4;
- Planning Commission, Feb. 6;
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, Feb. 13; and
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, Feb 21

2. Send email with comments to [plandowntownoakland@oaklandca.gov](mailto:plandowntownoakland@oaklandca.gov)

3. Check the project website for additional ways to get involved: [www.oaklandca.gov/topics/downtown-oakland-specific-plan](http://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/downtown-oakland-specific-plan)

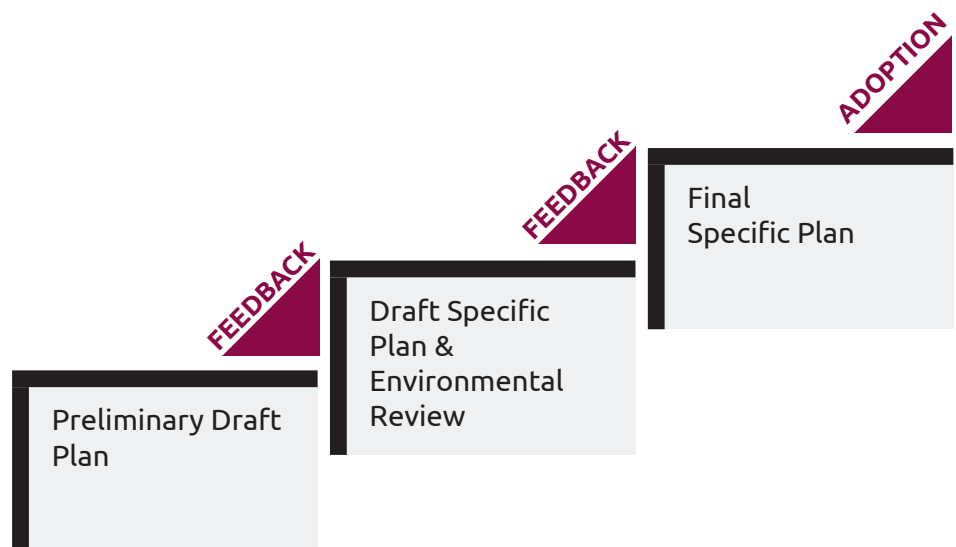


Figure I-1: Steps to the Final Specific Plan

## How to Use this Plan Document

This section explains the organization of the Preliminary Draft Plan, and how to understand and access the information presented in it.

### INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

This Introduction & Background Chapter describes the purpose and process of community engagement that has been used to create the Preliminary Draft Plan. It also provides an historical overview of downtown, including the physical conditions and social movements that shaped its uses, layout, and development; and a summary of the findings of the existing conditions analysis, including key racial disparities and issues that plan policies must address.

### VISION & GOALS

The Vision & Goals Chapter provides an overall vision for Downtown Oakland, including a snapshot of the Preliminary Draft Plan's key concepts. It presents six overarching goals and their related outcomes. The plan goals articulate the steps for achieving a vision for a Downtown Oakland that serves the needs of all Oaklanders. Toward that end the outcomes and policies in this Preliminary Draft Plan that support our residents are centered on equity and reducing disparities so that Oaklanders who now have the least access to opportunity will be able to see themselves fulfilled in these outcomes. An Equity Framework describes: the Preliminary Draft Plan's overarching equity goal; the key disparities the plan addresses; and how the plan will be used to advance equitable outcomes.

While the Preliminary Draft Plan's goals apply across all of downtown, it is critical to understand the distinct vision for each of downtown's unique neighborhoods and districts, where different scenarios applying land use and zoning concepts, opportunity sites, transportation alternatives and public realm improvements will realize those respective visions. The Neighborhood Vision describes the community's aspiration for each district and neighborhood.

### PLAN OUTCOMES, STRATEGIES AND SUPPORTIVE POLICIES

Organized by topic, the next six chapters of the Plan include desired outcomes along with quantitative and qualitative measures of success, additional detail about corresponding existing conditions, assets and disparities, a framework of proposed strategies and public improvements, and supportive policies to implement these concepts.

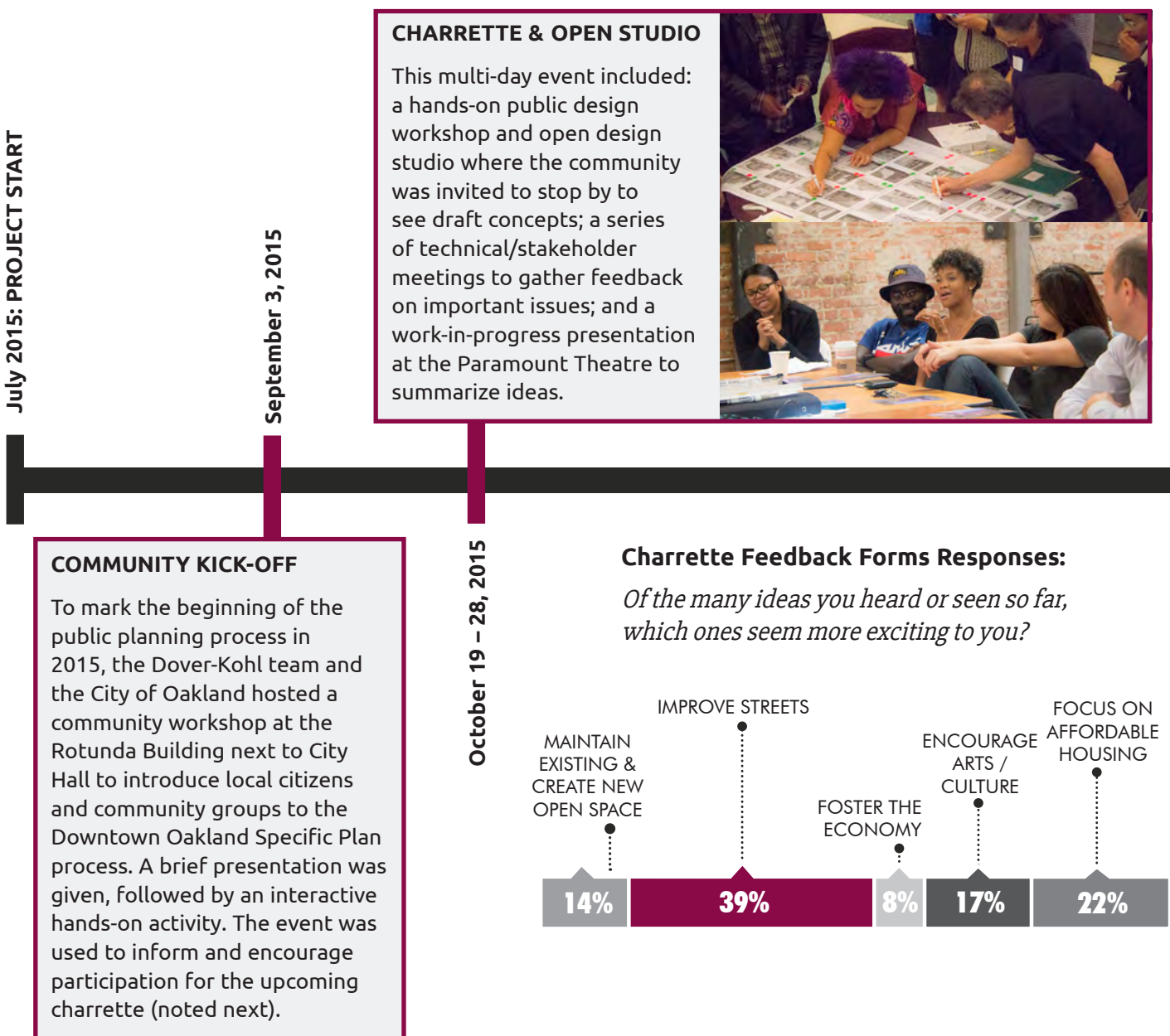
The final section, the Appendix, includes detailed project lists and technical appendices that have informed the Preliminary Draft Plan.

#### ***Plan Topics:***

- 01: ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**
- 02: HOUSING & AFFORDABILITY**
- 03: MOBILITY & ACCESSIBILITY**
- 04: CULTURE KEEPING**
- 05: COMMUNITY HEALTH**
- 06: LAND USE & URBAN FORM**

# Planning Process: Phase I

*Launched in 2015, the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan process has provided numerous and various opportunities for local stakeholders and community members to be involved. Participant feedback has shaped the strategy options in developing this Preliminary Draft Plan. Key milestones and efforts to-date are summarized in the following timeline.*





## PLAN ALTERNATIVES REPORT

The Plan Alternatives Report describes a draft vision and initial concepts for downtown, based on charrette input. The Report is posted online and was reviewed at community meetings with groups including the Community Advisory Group (CAG)\*; Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC); Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB); Youth Advisory Commission; Bicyclist & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC); and Planning Commission. The Plan Alternatives Report was presented at a large community presentation and open house held in March of 2016 at the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts.

November 2015 –  
July 2016

## YOUTH SUMMIT AND COURSEWORK

The City collaborated with the Y-PLAN (Youth: Plan, Learn, Act, Now!) program at UC Berkeley to introduce MetWest and Skyline students to planning and get their ideas for the downtown, as well as holding an after-school Youth Summit with Y-PLAN students and youth who participate in many of the youth and young adult programs downtown, including Civicorps and BAY-Peace.

Summer 2016

March – April 2016

## STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Meetings were held with additional existing stakeholder organizations such as the Art + Garage District, Oakland Creative Neighborhoods Coalition, Chinatown Coalition, Old Oakland Neighbors, the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce Land Use Committee, Malonga Center resident organizations, and downtown schools and youth services. The City also used the “Speak Up, Oakland!” online forum to solicit feedback from individual Oaklanders.

Spring 2016

## PLAN ALTERNATIVES REPORT COMMENTS MEMO

This memo was produced to summarize all public input on the Plan Alternatives Report. Over 1,000 comments were received and organized to refine the plan vision and goals.

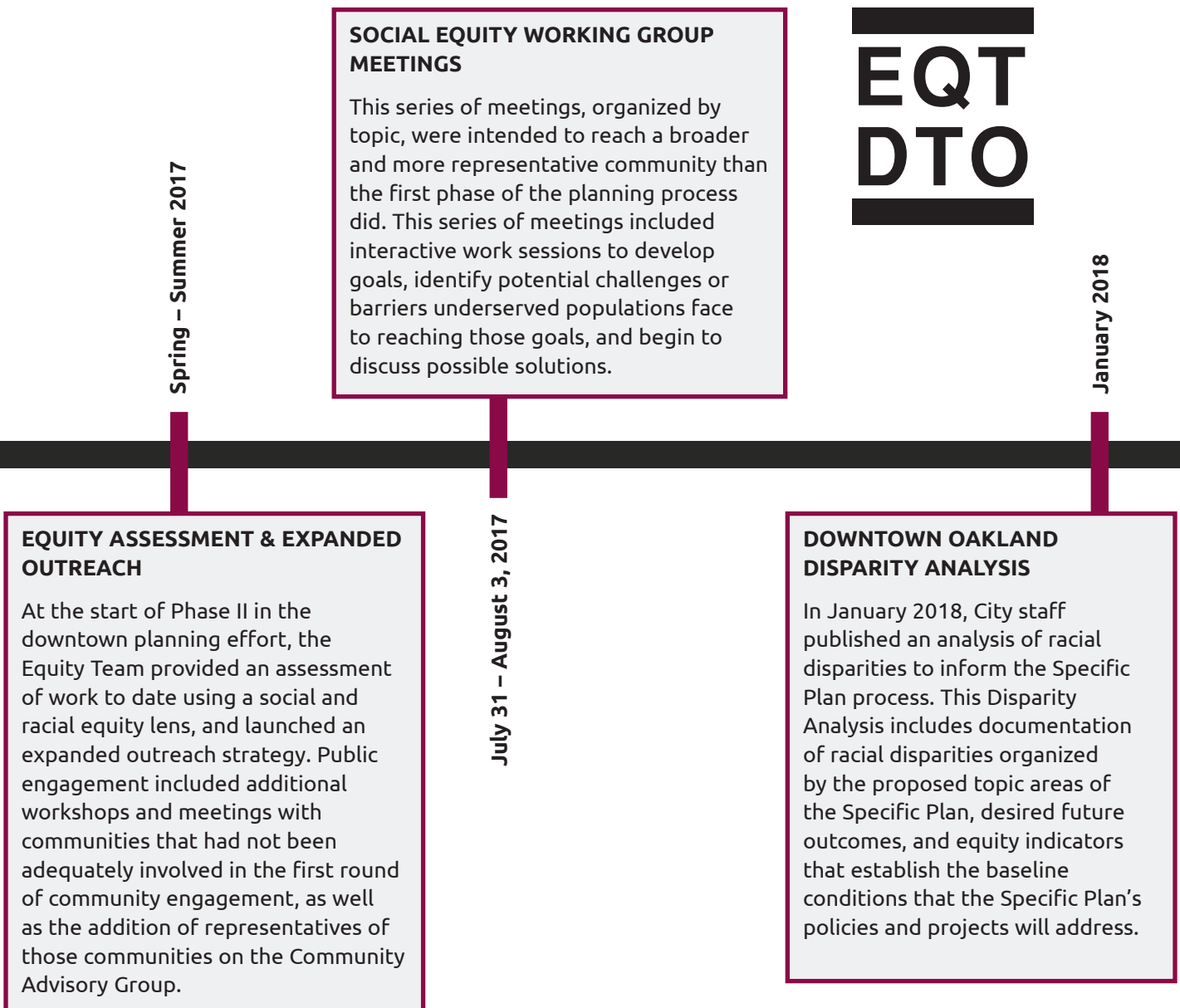
## JACK LONDON NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN SESSIONS

Community workshops and a series of stakeholder meetings were held over a two-day period in August of 2016 to discuss opportunities and challenges specific to the Jack London District.

\*A Community Advisory Group (CAG) has been formed to provide input and help direct the policies of the plan, comprised of professionals with technical knowledge on plan topics, as well as representatives of the local neighborhood groups, artist community, health and advocacy organizations.

# Planning Process: Phase II

*In early 2017, the City of Oakland kicked off a new phase of the downtown planning effort with an expanded focus on social and racial equity, adding an “equity team” of consultants to provide an assessment of the work to date, deepen engagement from historically marginalized communities, document disparities, and evaluate the potential equity impacts of draft plan policies.*



## CREATIVE SOLUTIONS LABS

The Creative Solutions Labs were organized by topic and built upon the Social Equity Working Group meetings. The objective was to workshop strategies to address issues previously identified by the downtown community. The discussions were informed by an overview of existing conditions and racial disparities, example ideas to mitigate them, and successful strategies used in other communities facing similar challenges.

## NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN SESSIONS: CENTRAL CORE, UPTOWN & KONO, OLD OAKLAND, & CHINATOWN

In February 2018, members of the public were invited to a series of Neighborhood Design Sessions, where they gathered around maps to identify opportunities and problem areas for specific neighborhoods and discuss their vision and potential solutions.



Summer  
2018

Fall  
2018

Creative Solutions Labs: Feb. 5 – 8, 2018  
Neighborhood Design Sessions: Feb. 10 – 13, 2018

## ACCESSIBILITY SURVEY

City staff worked with disability community advocates to better understand accessibility challenges downtown, including developing and administering a paper and online survey targeted to older adults and people with disabilities.

## PLAN OPTIONS & EQUITY ASSESSMENT

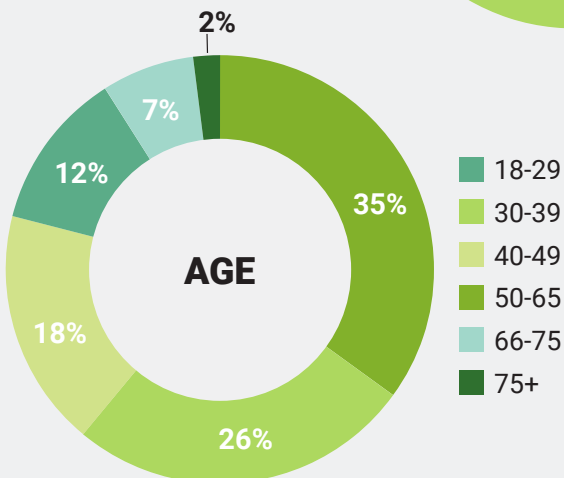
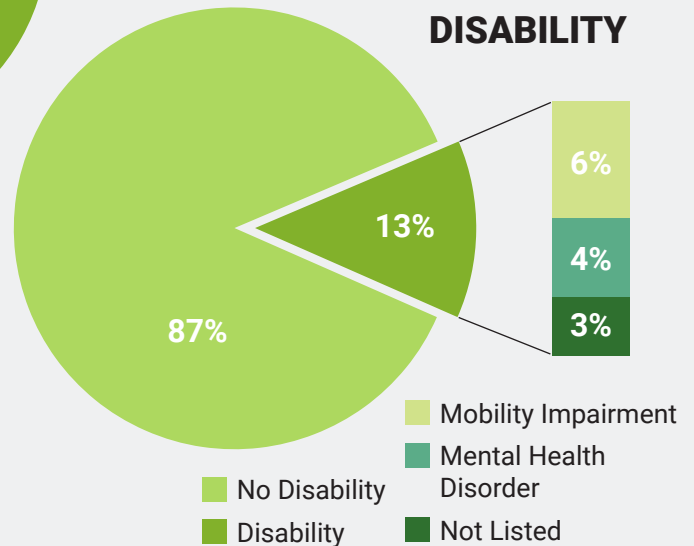
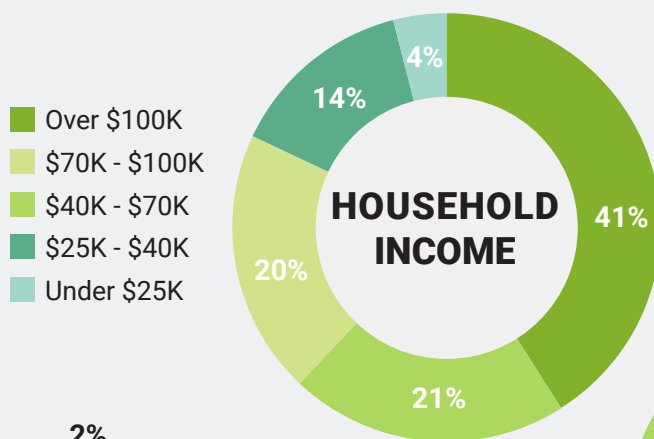
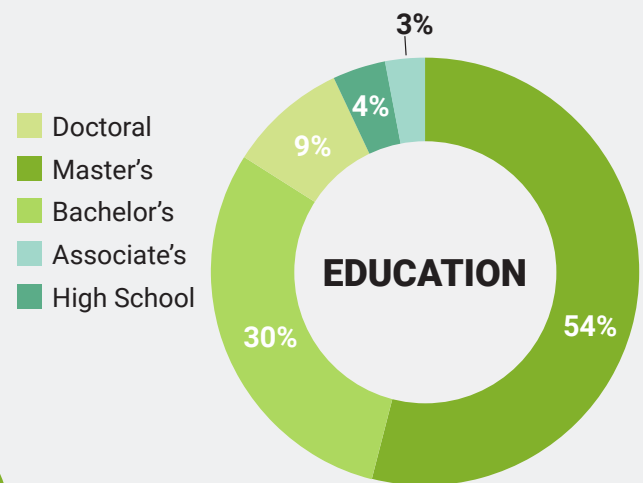
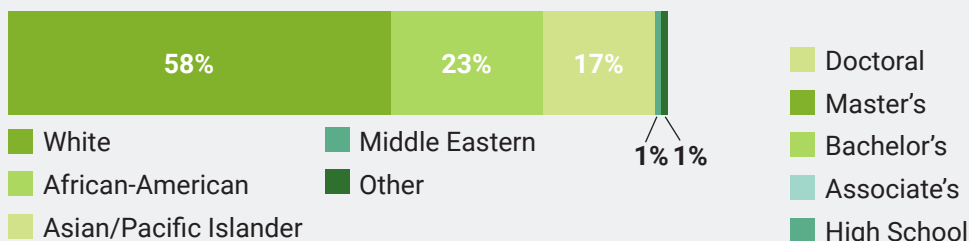
Working from the ideas developed at the Creative Solutions Labs and Neighborhood Design Sessions, the Dover-Kohl team synthesized ideas to date into a collection of policy and land use options to address community priorities for a series of “focus areas” in downtown. The Equity Team provided an assessment of possible equity impacts for each policy and land use option, as well as prioritization and a set of additional recommendations to achieve equity. These documents informed the recommendations of this Preliminary Draft Plan.

January 2019: PRELIMINARY DRAFT PLAN

## Who is Participating?

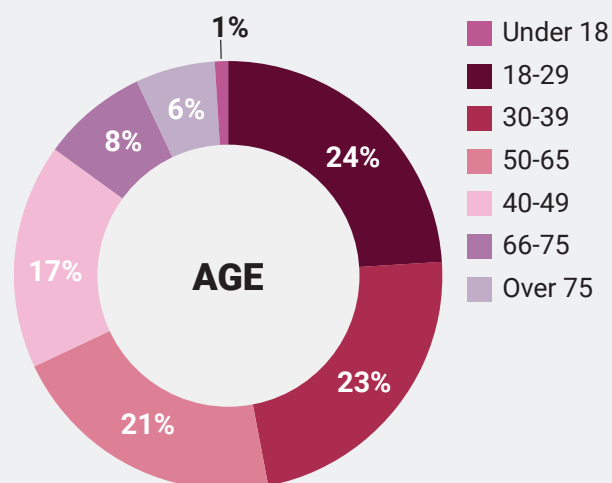
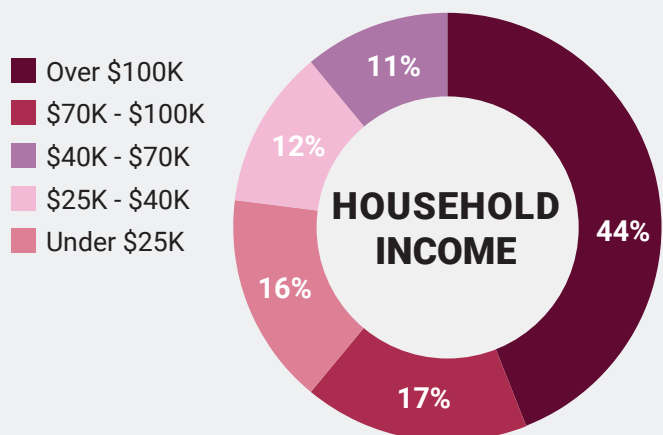
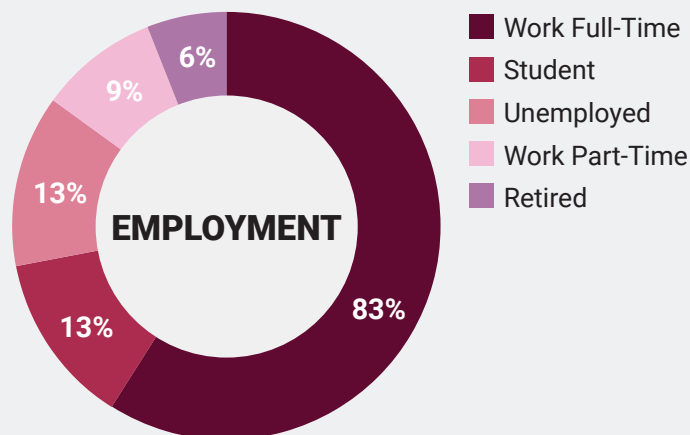
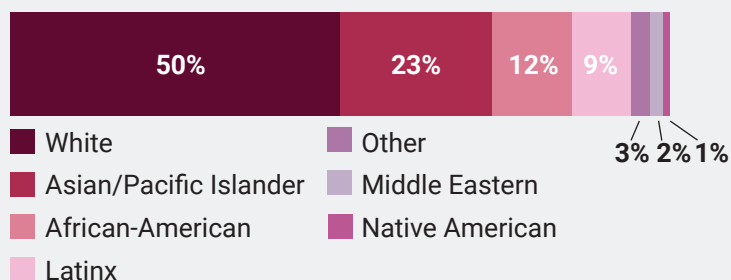
As part of the Downtown Specific Plan relaunch in 2017, expanded outreach efforts were conducted to increase the number of downtown residents and stakeholders, both downtown and citywide, participating in the process. Engagement has included web-based communications, in-person meetings, and personal follow-up to traditionally under-represented populations. Information from demographic cards distributed at the February 2018 Creative Solutions Labs and Neighborhood Design Sessions provides a snapshot of meeting attendees.

### RACE/ETHNICITY

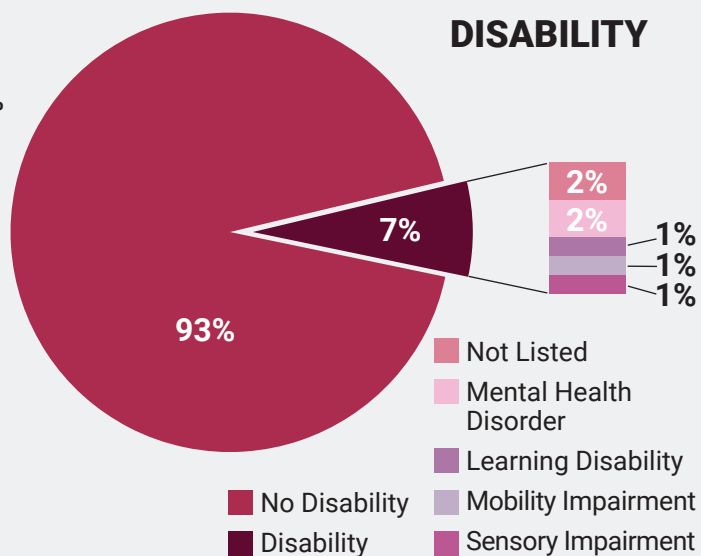
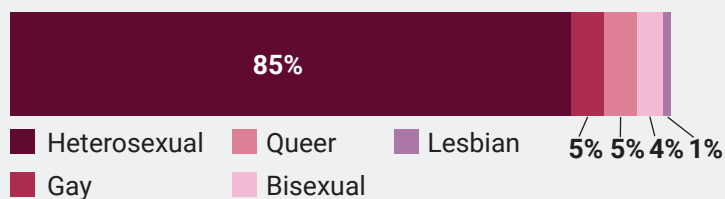


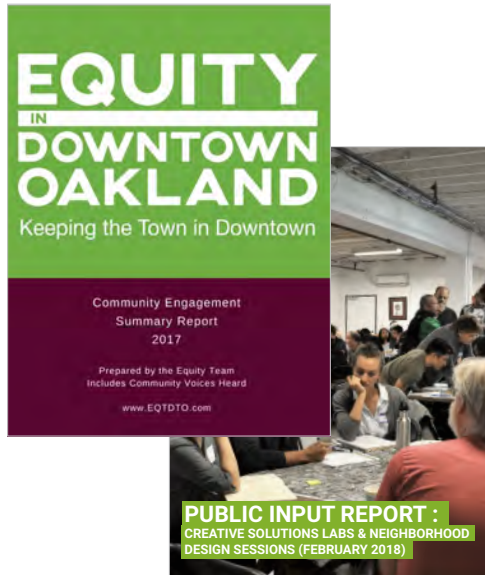
\*Data reflects 80 Demographic Card responses collected from all of the Creative Solutions Labs combined, and 122 Demographic Card responses collected from all of the Neighborhood Design Sessions combined.

## RACE/ETHNICITY



## SEXUAL ORIENTATION





## Community Ideas & Suggestions

The planning process to date has included several opportunities for the Oakland community to provide input into this Preliminary Draft Plan. Feedback, summarized in reports that are on the City's project website at [www.oaklandca.gov](http://www.oaklandca.gov), includes the Plan Alternatives Report and Plan Alternatives Report Comments Memo (2016), the Equity Team Community Engagement Summary Report (2017), the Social Equity Working Group Meetings Summary Report (2017), and the Creative Solutions Labs and Neighborhood Design Session Public Input Report (2018).

Community ideas, concerns and suggestions have directly informed the basis of planning goals, and the desired outcomes and strategies for the Specific Plan. Organized by topic, some of the most often voiced community ideas are presented below.

### Economic Opportunity

- Make available affordable commercial and creative / maker spaces
- Establish downtown core as a 24-hour destination and regional employment hub
- Encourage neighborhood-serving and affordable activities and retail shops
- Fill vacant buildings
- Make available to Oakland residents a variety of quality jobs and employment opportunities
- Provide access to jobs and training
- Encourage and support small businesses, particularly owned by women and people of color
- Eliminate employment barriers for vulnerable populations
- Build sufficient commercial space to meet local employment needs
- Protect community-serving nonprofits from displacement
- Don't become a bedroom community for San Francisco

### Housing & Affordability

- Establish policies to achieve affordable housing goals
- Set target goal for affordable housing
- Stop displacement
- Commit to affordable housing with development
- Encourage more housing near BART / transit
- Enable a diversity of housing types, for different income levels, family sizes and mobility levels
- Preserve existing single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels
- Advance mixed-use development with active, safe streets
- Assist homeless population; pursue temporary housing
- Address housing & park programming with interdepartmental partnerships
- Ensure sufficient housing is built to meet the needs of current and future residents

### Mobility & Accessibility

- Improve bike/pedestrian safety, prioritize pedestrians
- Increase equity through improved, reliable bus transit to and from downtown
- Convert one-way streets to two-way streets
- Make Broadway a better main street and connector
- Provide better connections to Lake Merritt / Estuary
- Improve connections to West Oakland, Jack London & surrounding neighborhoods
- Remove I-980 barrier or improve crossings
- Improve I-880 underpasses
- Prioritize shared vehicle use like car share, shuttle
- Create low-stress bikeways
- Increase pedestrian and wheelchair mobility, safety and amenities (benches, curb cuts, lighting)
- Encourage activity with storefronts, events, etc.
- Provide adequate parking for people with disabilities and to support arts uses



### Culture Keeping

- Create a downtown where people of all ages, races, incomes and cultures feel like they belong
- Create and support arts districts; preserve and enhance the arts
- Preserve cultural identity of Uptown and Jack London
- Support the Black Arts Movement and Business District
- Support art walks, festivals
- Provide affordable arts and maker space
- Add programs for youth
- Invest in existing cultural organizations and anchors
- Keep downtown a place to see/express culture
- Identify funding sources
- Provide incentives to developers to promote arts
- Make it easier to use public spaces (permitting, etc.)
- Open unused venue space to art organizations or artists
- Reduce disparities in who has access to arts permits and funding

### Community Health

- Add more parks and green space
- Increase climate/sea level rise resilience around Lake Merritt and Estuary waterways
- Add more trees and better maintain trees
- Preserve and maintain existing parks; provide more parks for growing community
- Provide more money/fees for parks & maintenance
- Convert excess street area to plants and rainwater treatments
- Provide space for community gardens, farmers' markets
- Budget for mental health services
- Ensure a more sustainable future for downtown
- Make downtown streets and parks feel safe through defensible space principles

### Land Use & Urban Form

- Build mixed-use development with active, safe streets
- Densify around transit
- Preserve and reuse historic buildings
- Transition building heights to respect historic districts
- Implement street improvements, prioritize pedestrians
- Activate public spaces for inclusive and active programs
- Install public restrooms
- Create a predictable, streamlined approval process
- Jointly program public spaces with community
- Create wayfinding / historical maps
- Create a vibrant and inviting downtown with space for political expression, commerce and celebration

## INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

### CONTEXT & KEY ISSUES



# Historic Context & Current Conditions

*Developing a plan centered on equity requires a clear understanding of existing inequities and their causes. Historical context and current conditions data help to uncover the story behind disparities, so that plan strategies and implementation actions can be aligned to achieve desired outcomes.*

This section summarizes key social, cultural and physical changes in downtown's history that have contributed to its current conditions. This text is excerpted from a more complete and detailed community history, which can be found in the Downtown Oakland Disparity Analysis and the Equity Assessment on the project website ([www.oaklandca.gov](http://www.oaklandca.gov)).

**Figure I-2** (top row): 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 I-3** (bottom): Historic map of Oakland depicts the extension of the Key Route System Streetcar (1 to 2 miles) that linked Oakland to San Francisco

## A Brief History of Community, Planning, and Race in Oakland

*Oakland's history is a story of the dynamics among people, power and policy. Like many cities across the country, the lack of opportunities for wealth accrual and social mobility for African Americans and other people of color that resulted from this history have had ongoing effects in current development processes and outcomes.<sup>1</sup> The following historical overview is presented according to key moments in Oakland history that address how these disparities became established.*

Prior to being incorporated as a city, Oakland and the Bay Area were the ancestral land of the Shuumi/Ohlone, whose descendants still inhabit the Bay Area. In 1869, the Pacific Transcontinental Railroad established its West Coast terminal in Oakland attracting many Black men to the city who found work with the Pullman Palace Car Company, which had a policy of only hiring Black men as porters. While this policy was restrictive and racist, the steady employment opportunities encouraged hundreds of Black families to relocate to Oakland from the South.<sup>2</sup> Black railroad company workers often resided in company-owned rooming houses,<sup>3</sup> but also in the inexpensive housing that the area now known as West Oakland offered.<sup>4</sup>

First recruited to work in California gold mines, Chinese workers relocated to cities including Oakland<sup>5</sup> and remained mostly segregated during the first half of the 20th Century.<sup>6</sup> In the 1880s, Oakland Chinatown covered a dozen blocks when Chinese immigration was restricted by the U.S. Chinese Exclusion laws, which were re-enforced forty years later by the Walter-

1 "Race, Space and Struggles for Mobility: Transportation Impacts on African Americans in Oakland and the East Bay," A. Golub, Marcantonio & Sanchez., 2013, p 704.

2 "Black in School: Afrocentric Reform, Urban Youth & the Promise of Hip-hop Culture", Shawn A. Ginwright, 2004, p. 96.

3 "The Black Professional Middle Class: Race, Class, and Community in the Post-Civil Rights Era", Eric. S. Brown, 2013, p. 28.

4 "Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980", J. Theoharis, K. Woodard, 2016, p. 95.

5 "Lake Merritt BART Station Area Community Engagement Report," Asian Health Services., 2009, p 2.

6 Web: <http://oakland-chinatown.info/chinatown-history/>

McCarran Act. The concentration of the Chinese population in a small area of Oakland's downtown was enforced by a segregated school system (until 1947), California's Alien Land Law (that prohibited Asian immigrants from owning land or property until 1949), and enforceable covenants against many ethnic groups, including the Chinese, that prevented them from living in many Oakland neighborhoods.<sup>7</sup>

The history of Mexico-US migration is also complex due to the forceful annexation of northern Mexico to the United States in 1848. Latinxs have had a strong presence in Oakland for generations, dating back to the original Spanish land grants. A gradual stream of migrants from Latin America, most of Mexican decent, began in the early 1900s. Some came early in the twentieth century as a result of the unsettling aftermath of the Mexican revolution.<sup>8</sup> Mexican migration increased during World War I as part of the first Braceros Program between the United States and Mexico to bring Mexican laborers to supplement the limited American labor available at the time, as there were no quotas on the number of immigrants from Mexico. During this time, the migration networks of information expanded connecting immigrants with transportation, housing, jobs and receptive places where they could find a sense of community. World War II similarly produced labor shortages and Latinx workers continued to migrate to California to work through the second Braceros Program. In September 1942, 1,500 braceros arrived to labor in agriculture. The following year, 52,000 more braceros came to the work on the Southern Pacific Railroad. Other braceros worked in Hayward's fruit canneries or in the Bay Area's shipyards. Even after the wartime, the Bracero program recruited millions of workers. Legislation was passed in 1965 that established a quota on visas for immigrants from Latin American, including Mexico, resulting in unauthorized entrants from Mexico into this country. More laws were passed to try to stem the tide of unauthorized migration from Mexico, however, the demand for labor and the social networks established for Mexican immigrants continued to fuel migration.<sup>9</sup> Today, millions of Latinxs continue to labor in California's agriculture and service industries. In Oakland, Latinxs also form a large percentage of the working class residing in the neighborhoods southeast of Lake Merritt and the Fruitvale district.<sup>10</sup>

The growth of the rail and shipping industries in Oakland, as well as the growth of manufacturing industries that supported the nation's efforts in World War II, led to more job opportunities for Black communities. Motivated by better economic conditions, as well as Jim Crow policies in the South, many Black

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7 "Lake Merritt BART Station Area Community Engagement Report," Asian Health Services., 2009, p 2.

8 Alex Saragoza. Life Stories: Voices from the East Bay Latino Community, 2003. pp 6.

9 Ibid., pp 7

10 Web: <http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=studentawards>

families migrated to places like Oakland,<sup>11</sup> and particularly to West Oakland, where the Black community had created a strong cultural and economic enclave.<sup>12</sup> This financial stability led to a growing Black presence in Oakland, which spawned political and economic backlash in the form of restrictive covenants.<sup>13</sup> In the 1910s and 1920s, ordinances requiring segregated housing and mortgage red-lining began a period of lawful segregation in Oakland. Federal housing programs of the 1930s and 1940s funded housing projects with covenants and occupancy criteria that maintained segregation in public housing. Until 1963, the Oakland Tribune ran “White only” real estate listings.<sup>14</sup>

Struggles over segregation in jobs and unions continued throughout the 1950s. The construction of Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and new freeways were set to provide the largest number of jobs in the area since the New Deal in the 1930s. In order to participate in these economic opportunities, many civil and worker rights advocates fought for quotas for minority workers, job training, union integration and funding for relocated households. BART eventually instituted an affirmative action hiring program in 1967.<sup>15</sup>

The creation of the nation’s interstate, mass transit, and commuter road systems set the stage for “White flight,” a term used to describe White society fleeing to suburbs, where Blacks were excluded from many employment, housing, and educational opportunities. Another impact common to post-war, urban renewal transportation infrastructure such as highways and mass transit systems was neighborhood displacement and blight that, in the case of Oakland, impacted many Black, Asian, and Latinx neighborhoods.

The civil rights and environmental movements of the 1950s and 1960s altered the approach and application of urban development policy and planning as outright institutional support for segregation ended.<sup>16</sup> Oakland saw the growth of Black youth activism beginning in 1965-1970, resulting in the establishment of anti-poverty centers supporting the federal War on Poverty, where local youth could seek job placement, legal assistance and other services. These centers also contributed to a strong political infrastructure of small grassroots organizations. It was within this context that Bobby Seal and Huey Newton formed the Black Panther Party for Self Defense as one of the groups that emerged nationally to advance the Civil Rights Movement during

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11 “The Great Migration (1915-1960)”, BlackPast.org.

12 “Black in School: Afrocentric Reform, Urban Youth & the Promise of Hip-hop Culture”, Shawn A. Ginwright, 2004, p. 37.

13 Ibid, 37.

14 “Race, Space and Struggles for Mobility: Transportation Impacts on African Americans in Oakland and the East Bay,” A. Golub, Marcantonio & Sanchez., 2013, p 706-707.

15 “Race, Space and Struggles for Mobility: Transportation Impacts on African Americans in Oakland and the East Bay,” A. Golub, Marcantonio & Sanchez., 2013, p. 708.

16 Ibid., 713.

the 1960's and 1970's. The Black Panther Party inspired the growth of the Black Arts Movement, an effort co-founded by Marvin X and led by artists to link the liberation movement to cultural arts at Merritt College.<sup>17</sup>

Coinciding with the enactment of the Civil Rights Act was the movement for independent living. The underpinning philosophy of the independent living movement is that people with disabilities have the same rights, options and choices as anybody else. In 1972, the first Center for Independent Living was established in Berkeley, California by Ed Roberts and the "Rolling Quads."<sup>18</sup> Downtown Oakland is a significant destination for the disability community due to the concentration of critical support services.

In 1971, the War on Drugs was established under the Nixon administration, which targeted Black communities that had been ravaged by a lack of employment opportunities and other community destabilization.<sup>19</sup> By the 1980s, unemployment, poor investments in education, the concentration of poverty, and the crack cocaine epidemic afflicted Oakland, as it did in many parts of urban America. The streets got progressively more dangerous as crime rose in correlation with the influx of drugs; and this presence of violence in Oakland fostered a culture of isolation among Black youth, families and communities. The threat of violence also slowly eroded the networks, communities and institutions that Black youth relied on traditionally.

Meanwhile, the creative adaptation of vacant warehouses, and other WWII and Port infrastructure gave rise to the industrial arts movement in West Oakland after the steel industry left in the 1990s. Many artists moved to Oakland during this period and opened studios in response to the tech bubble real estate boom in San Francisco. West Oakland emerged as a major manufacturing hub for furniture and design, becoming home to The Crucible and large-scale public and "Burning Man" style art. Furthermore, Laney College and California College of the Arts developed a welding certification program. This gives context to both the rise of the gallery scene in Uptown/KONO, and the legacy of manufacturing near the Port in the Jack London District.<sup>20</sup>

The housing market crash and foreclosure crisis of 2007-2012 marked another moment in Oakland's history, forcing more population shifts. The subprime mortgage market collapse in 2007 hit Oakland particularly hard with over 35,000 homes lost between 2007 and 2012. These foreclosures were concentrated in Oakland's lower-income "flatlands" neighborhoods that had

17 I-SEED Equity Team. Keeping "the town" in Downtown: An Assessment and Recommendations to Support Racial Equity in the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan. 2018, pp. 39.

18 Web: <http://mtstcil.org/skills/il-2-intro.html>

19 Web: <http://uproxx.com/hiphop/snowfall-1980s-crack-epidemic/>

20 I-SEED Equity Team. Keeping "the town" in Downtown: An Assessment and Recommendations to Support Racial Equity in the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan. 2018, pp. 40.

been targeted by predatory lenders. Many of these families (predominantly people of color) moved out of Oakland to far-off suburbs requiring them to commute long distances to their jobs in the inner Bay Area.<sup>21</sup> Investors (mostly from outside of Oakland) acquired almost half of these foreclosed properties, turning huge profits following the housing market recovery.<sup>22</sup>

In the mid-2000s, the Black Lives Matter movement began in Oakland as a response to the acquittal of a White police officer accused of killing an unarmed Black teenager. On the night the verdict was read, hundreds of protesters took to the streets downtown (and across the country). The Black Lives Matter movement continues to bring awareness to injustice and oppressive systems.<sup>23</sup> In 2016, the City of Oakland formally declared the Black Arts Movement and Business District adjacent to the 14th Street corridor as the first cultural district to support Black businesses, residents and arts organizations.

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21 According to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, commute times increased 9% from 2016 to 2015 and per-commuter congested delay increased by 64% since 2000 (web: <http://www.vitalsigns.mtc.ca.gov/time-spent-congestion>). Additionally, real state resource webpage, Trulia, places Oakland as the 7th metro area with the longest commute times (web: <https://www.trulia.com/blog/trends/renter-owner-commute>).

22 Web: <https://www.kcet.org/shows/city-rising/understanding-rising-inequality-and-displacement-in-oakland>

23 I-SEED Equity Team. Keeping “the town” in Downtown: An Assessment and Recommendations to Support Racial Equity in the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan. 2018, pp. 40.

## Historic Oakland

*Oakland's long and varied history is reflected in its built environment and contributes to the overall appeal that brings so many people to spend time downtown.*

Downtown's first brick buildings were constructed in the late 1850's to early 1860's, clustered around Lower Broadway in today's Jack London District. Commercial development continued up Broadway, Washington and Franklin Streets with elaborate multi-story Victorian commercial buildings, many of which remain in Old Oakland today. A development boom following the 1906 earthquake defined much of downtown as it is today, including Oakland's notable early 20th century skyscrapers, such as the Cathedral Building and City Hall (1914). In the late 1920s, development shifted uptown with the construction of the Fox Oakland Theater and many of Oakland's Art Deco monuments.

Downtown's wealth of historic structures is identified on the Local Historic Register, as well as Areas of Primary Importance (API) and Areas of Secondary Important (ASI) Historic Districts. Mapping of historic buildings and districts is included in Chapter 06: Land Use & Urban Form. Downtown's varied mix of historic buildings form an important part of community character and identity; maintenance and continued use will ensure they are preserved for future generations to enjoy.



The Western Pacific depot, Third and Washington streets, Oakland.



**Figure I-4** Examples of historic Oakland buildings and resources

(top row): The Western Pacific Depot (built 1910)

(middle row): The African American Museum & Library (AAMLO), Ratto Building in Old Oakland (built in the 1870s)

(bottom row): City Hall (built 1914), Tribune Tower (built 1923)

# Summary of Key Findings

*This section summarizes the findings of the existing conditions analysis, including key disparities and other issues that the Plan must address. The findings begin with an assessment of downtown's role in the region, followed by a discussion of downtown's most pressing issues, including housing & affordability; economic opportunity; mobility & accessibility; arts & culture; and community health. The public realm and land use recommendations are presented last to illustrate how these strategies might address the goals through development projects or modifications to the built environment.*

## Downtown's Role in the Region

Downtown Oakland plays many important roles in the City of Oakland and the entire Bay Area, including serving as a regional employment center, transit hub, civic and cultural center, and visitor destination. Greater Downtown Oakland<sup>24</sup> is the largest employment center in Oakland and the East Bay, accounting for one third of all jobs in Oakland in 2016. Economic activity in Downtown Oakland also generates tax revenues that support municipal services for Oakland residents throughout the city. Hotel, retail, and office uses, as well as arts, entertainment and nightlife all generate significant fiscal benefits for the city since visitors, shoppers, employers, arts patrons and nightlife revelers pay a variety of taxes and fees.

Downtown Oakland's office space accommodates a wide range of job opportunities. The public sector accounts for nearly one-third of the employment in Greater Downtown. "Professional, scientific, and technical services" is the largest and fastest growing private industry sector. Downtown's expanding tech cluster accounts for the majority of new jobs created in both the professional, scientific and technical services sector, and in the information sector. In addition to these office-based jobs, Downtown Oakland is home to many jobs in food services, retail, and arts and entertainment.

<sup>24</sup> The geography of the analysis for "Greater Downtown" includes the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan Area and Chinatown. Although Chinatown is subject to a separate specific plan (the Lake Merritt Specific Plan), it functions as an integral part of Downtown Oakland's economy.

Given Downtown Oakland's competitive advantages for employment in office-based sectors, maintaining the availability of office space – while also balancing office development with the need for housing, arts, civic, and other uses that create a balanced place – is critical. While downtown has a significant amount of developable land, including many vacant parcels and parking lots, there are a limited number of prime sites for major office development (i.e., parcels of sufficient size, on or near Broadway, close to the BART stations).<sup>25</sup>

Downtown also serves as a major hub for the region's rail and bus transit network. This competitive advantage makes downtown Oakland accessible for residents from across the city and the region; has helped attract employers; and supports downtown's role as a major commercial center. This transit connectivity makes downtown an excellent location for future employment (as well as residential) growth, and necessitates investment in bus stops and transit stations and their immediate vicinities to shift mode share to greater transit use. Locating jobs within walking distance of transit is particularly important for low- and middle-income workers, including a large percentage of people of color, who tend to be more transit-dependent than higher-wage and White workers. Increasing the number of jobs in transit-accessible Downtown Oakland could also help reduce the region's vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emissions, and make BART and AC Transit's transbay routes more sustainable by taking advantage of unused transit capacity in what is currently the reverse commute direction.

Many of the social and civic service providers serving the city and county are located downtown, making it an essential civic and cultural center. Because of the downtown's central location and transit access, people across Oakland and throughout the region can easily access critical services, such as: business assistance; workforce development; government services; health services; youth services; homeless services; and disability services located downtown. However, community-serving nonprofit organizations are facing the threat of displacement downtown where office rents have increased by 80% since 2014 and vacancy has fallen below 5%.<sup>26</sup>

Maintaining affordable space for these services as office rents increase is critical. Nonprofit organizations and other service providers also play a key role in supporting downtown's continued economic development, providing technical assistance to entrepreneurs and small businesses, connecting youth and other workers to downtown jobs, and convening business owners and workers around issues affecting specific industries.

Greater Downtown is also home to arts clusters and artisan production spaces that are being displaced or are at risk of displacement from conversion to office, restaurant, or cannabis operations, which can typically afford to pay higher rents than arts and production uses. Cultural arts and community gatherings such as Art Murmur, First Fridays and Chinatown Streetfest help

<sup>25</sup> 4 SPUR, A Downtown for Everyone: Shaping the Future of Downtown Oakland, May 2015.

<sup>26</sup> Agenda Report, Displacement of Oakland Nonprofit Organizations Due to Increase in Commercial Rents. CED Committee. March 20, 2017.

shape Oakland's identity; establish cohesion among the community's diverse cultural groups; generate entrepreneurship and employment in the creative industries; and reinforce Oakland's appeal as a destination for visitors.

Over the past five to ten years, downtown has become a local and regional destination for dining, nightlife, and entertainment businesses. The emergence of new dining and entertainment options complements the wide variety of existing independent retailers. Downtown Oakland also has a distinctive retail cluster of shops owned by younger entrepreneurs of color that give the downtown a unique, multicultural identity. In particular, new, small, Black-owned businesses have opened, adding to long-established Black-owned clothing shops, barber shops, beauty parlors, and other businesses. This is in addition to the long-standing region-serving Chinatown area, which has been a stable source of economic revenue for the city from business investment and retail tax revenue. Maintaining opportunities for diverse entrepreneurship and business ownership is critical to leverage this competitive advantage by growing new markets and diversifying the consumer base.

Greater Downtown is also attracting an increasing number of overnight visitors, benefiting both the growing employment base and increasing tourism. This activity benefits the City's General Purpose Fund through increased sales and hotel tax revenues, which supports investment in the cultural arts; however community members have voiced concern that additional funding is needed to support cultural vibrancy throughout the city.

### **Primary Challenges Related to Downtown's Vital Economic Role in the Region:**

1. Regional imbalance of jobs & housing, leading to transit overload and inadequate opportunity for residents
2. Inadequate revenues to fund City services
3. Displacement of nonprofit service providers and small, culturally relevant businesses

## Economic Opportunity

An analysis of how closely the education and skill levels required to work in Downtown Oakland jobs match the education levels of Oakland residents is important to identifying equitable outcomes for Oakland residents. Overall, more than 70% of downtown jobs require an associate's degree or higher level of education. This reflects the education requirements of many jobs in professional services, finance and insurance, information, management, and other knowledge-based industries that are concentrated downtown. These educational requirements place most downtown jobs out of reach of many Oakland residents, especially people of color. Approximately 25% of all Oakland residents aged 25 years and over have completed some college or an associate's degree, and about 40% have achieved a bachelor's degree or higher. In contrast, more than 70% of U.S. born, White and Asian residents have completed an associate's degree or higher, a much higher rate than for Oakland's Black, Latinx, or immigrant communities.

The Equity Assessment prepared for this Preliminary Draft Plan identified the significant racial and ethnic disparities in educational attainment among Oakland residents as one of the most important indicators to address in plan policies. In addition, the Equity Assessment identified "disconnected youth,"—teenagers and young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither working nor in school—as another area where there are significant existing racial disparities, with African American youth disproportionately represented at 20.8% compared to 8.3% White. Ensuring that Oakland's youth are educated, healthy, and ready to thrive in the workforce is essential for economic prosperity; but too many youth—particularly youth of color—are disconnected from educational or employment opportunities. Not accessing education and job experience early in life can have long-lasting impacts including lower earnings, higher public expenditures, lower tax revenues, and lost human potential.

A similarly disparate picture exists for people experiencing unemployment. In 2015, the average unemployment rate in downtown for the White population was 5.7%, but for the Asian population was 10.3%, and for the Black and Hispanic population was much higher at 14.1%. These figures do not take into account underemployed residents, who are working part time and would rather be employed full time. Racial differences in employment result from differences in education, training, and experience, as well as barriers to employment for workers of color such as English-language ability, immigration status, criminal records, housing insecurity, lack of transportation access, and racial discrimination and bias among employers and institutions. The Equity Assessment identified unemployment as a key equity indicator. In order to reduce racial disparities in unemployment, the plan must address policy and systems changes that remove barriers and increase education and job training

opportunities to lead to greater labor force participation and a stronger Oakland economy.

Downtown offers a range of occupations, including many living wage job opportunities in information technology, professional services, and government that offer pathways to increased responsibility and higher wages. The Plan must include actions the City can take to link Oakland residents to downtown jobs and training opportunities.

### Primary Challenges – Economic Opportunity:

1. Youth — particularly youth of color — are disconnected from educational or employment opportunities
2. Barriers to employment for workers of color, such as English language ability, immigration status, criminal records, lack of transportation access, and racial discrimination and bias among employers and institutions
3. Current job opportunities and incomes do not meet the needs of all Oakland's residents, and growing sectors downtown may not provide jobs that match Oaklanders' education and training without proactive steps to connect residents with these jobs
4. Small businesses are vulnerable to dramatically increasing rents, and their success is also hampered by perceptions of crime and blight, limited foot traffic and competition for space with restaurants and bars
5. Wealth and income disparities are growing

Additional data and analysis is included in Chapter 01

## Housing & Affordability

Downtown Oakland has become a highly desirable market for new housing and is likely to remain so, due to: regional growth pressures; downtown's retail and entertainment amenities; strong regional transit connections to jobs; and its convenient location within the core of the region. The following summary of downtown's resident income and housing stock characteristics provide the context for the key issues and findings.

Median household incomes in Downtown Oakland are rising rapidly as growth occurs, yet remain relatively low throughout much of downtown. The Downtown Oakland Disparity Analysis reported the median income of Oakland's Black households was 43% that of White households (\$85,489), and Asian and Latinx households earned just over half the median income of White households. Differences in income levels among Oakland residents contribute to a high housing cost burden.

Rapid job growth in the region is driving demand and rising housing costs, which means there is a dramatically increased need for affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households. The cost of housing is a more significant part of a household's budget for low-income families and households of color. In 2015, Oakland's White-owner households had the lowest housing cost burden at 29%, and Black-owner households had the highest housing burden at nearly 45%. An even larger disparity exists between White and Black renter households, for whom the burden is 40% and 63%, respectively.

Downtown Oakland makes up only about 8% of total existing citywide housing units, yet accounts for a high share of the city's recent, planned and proposed development activity. Approximately 3,000 housing units were either under construction or completed downtown in the 2016-2017 period, which accounted for over a third of citywide housing development activity. Although downtown currently contains 21% of Oakland's income-restricted affordable units, recent downtown development activity has included few income-restricted affordable housing units, although new residential projects are now required to contribute impact fees to fund the construction and preservation of affordable housing.

Addressing displacement and homelessness is a critical issue for the Plan to accomplish. Based on analysis of current conditions and community input, the equity consultant team concluded "the greatest threat to equity identified in Oakland today is displacement...Anything that the City pursues to promote equity requires a focus on slowing and stopping displacement to ensure that Oakland's diverse populations are still here to benefit from any city improvements. Pathways must be built for new development to prioritize those who have either been pushed out of the city or are exposed to that threat based on current trends."<sup>27</sup> Additionally, several significant threats to Downtown Oakland's existing income-restricted affordable housing stock exist, including expiring affordability restrictions, conversion of SRO units to higher-rent housing, and loss of rent stabilized housing units due to conversion to ownership, such as condominium conversions.

The UC Berkeley Center for Community Innovation developed an index to characterize places that historically housed vulnerable populations, but that have since experienced significant demographic shifts, as well as real estate investment. According to the index, much of Downtown Oakland is characterized as undergoing "ongoing gentrification/displacement."<sup>28</sup> Displacement is an urgent issue for equity, because it impacts not only access to housing, but also access to jobs and services, to social networks, and to all of the opportunities present in downtown. Current growth will increase the housing stock overall, and increased supply may help to reduce median rents; however additional actions directed at affordability and displacement are needed to reduce the supply gap and provide housing for people at the lowest income levels, whose needs will never be met by the market.

<sup>27</sup> Keeping "the Town" in Downtown: Equity Consultant Comments and Recommendations on the Working Draft Plan Options to Support Equity in the Development of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan

<sup>28</sup> City of Oakland Planning & Building Department. Downtown Oakland Disparity Analysis. 2018, pp 28.

During a 2017 survey in Oakland, a total of 2,761 individuals were experiencing homelessness, which represented a 26% increase from 2015. Oakland's homeless population represented nearly half (49%) of the total number of persons counted in Alameda County in 2017. Of individuals experiencing homelessness, more than two-thirds (68%) identified as Black or African American, despite Black or African-American residents constituting only 26% of Oakland's population. The number of individuals experiencing homelessness exceeds the capacity of the current system of care.<sup>29</sup> With growing levels of displacement, and more and more people being unable to afford housing, the city is seeing high levels of homelessness, tent encampments and associated deterioration of health, mental health and social outcomes.

### Primary Challenges – Housing & Affordability:

1. Large wealth disparities
2. Highest displacement and housing cost burden experienced by people of color (particularly African Americans)
3. Insufficient affordable housing
4. Growing homeless population

Additional data and analysis is included in Chapter 02

### Mobility & Accessibility

Downtown Oakland is a transit hub for the city, as well as a regional destination. AC Transit and BART services provide a primary means of transportation to many people—with AC Transit in particular serving people with lower incomes, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities. Transportation costs and travel times from downtown to surrounding areas can be improved to better serve the community. For example, a trip from East Oakland to downtown may require the use of multiple buses and BART, as well as additional transit fare and multiple transfers.

Improvements to bus frequency and reliability combined with reductions in transit fare for low-income households could improve transit utilization by a range of Oakland residents. The East Bay Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project is currently under construction, and will provide enhanced transit service and connections between East Oakland and downtown.

Downtown Oakland has the highest concentration of pedestrian activity of any neighborhood in the city. While pedestrians are typically the most vulnerable users of a road system and are at greater risk among all user categories of being seriously injured in a collision with a motor vehicle, this

<sup>29</sup> City of Oakland 2017 Homeless Census & Survey Jurisdictional Report. Applied Survey Research, pp. 81.

is particularly true in downtown, which has the highest rate of pedestrian injuries of any neighborhood in the city. In Oakland, there is also a correlation between race and likelihood of being injured as a pedestrian. Black, Latinx, and Asian pedestrians are twice as likely to die from a collision as compared to White pedestrians.<sup>30</sup> Older adults, children and people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to unsafe street crossings, fast-moving traffic, encroachment onto the sidewalk, and inadequate provision of pedestrian amenities—such as shade, benches, high-visibility crosswalks, and modern street crossings.

Recent street improvements have reallocated some street area to pedestrian and cyclist facilities, increasing safety for these modes. Additional opportunities to slow vehicular speeds and continue to improve safety and access for all modes should be explored. For example, converting some of downtown's one-way streets back to two-way can improve wayfinding, decrease vehicular speeds, and be more conducive to a multimodal, walkable area.

The periphery of downtown presents even more challenging conditions for walking. The I-980 and I-880 freeway crossings separate the downtown core from West Oakland, Jack London, and other surrounding neighborhoods. The access roads adjoining the freeways and on/off-ramps are unpleasant walking environments that disrupt the pedestrian grid and create a barrier to walking safely to downtown from surrounding neighborhoods. The sidewalk network has gaps, including around Lake Merritt, around freeways, and in Jack London District.

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30 2017 Oakland Pedestrian Plan

### Primary Challenges – Mobility & Accessibility:

1. Undependable and circuitous transit access creates barriers for those who already face the most challenges
2. Many streets are unsafe/unwelcoming for seniors and people with disabilities; high rates of pedestrian accidents (African Americans more likely to be harmed)
3. Freeways on the west and south edges of downtown and uninviting gateway streets into and out of the core cut off downtown from the rest of the city

**Additional data and analysis  
is included in Chapter 03**

## Culture Keeping

Racial and ethnic groups have had a significant impact on the culture of downtown. For example, Chinatown is a regional cultural resource with deep roots in the history of downtown, and downtown's nationally influential African American artistic, political and economic history is celebrated by the City's adoption of the Black Arts Movement and Business District. However, changes in the racial, cultural, educational and income makeup of downtown have raised concerns about cultural displacement, and initiated discussions about equity. Since 2000, the African American population has declined by 7%

### Primary Challenges – Culture Keeping:

1. Declining shares of African American and Asian residents
2. Unaffordable and limited artisan production and art space
3. Displacement of artists, arts organizations, nonprofits, and ethnic and cultural businesses

### Additional data and analysis is included in Chapter 04

in the downtown area and 26% in the city overall. The share of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders declined from 42% of downtown's population to 39% of this population over the same period.<sup>31</sup>

Oakland's arts and creative community is one of the largest and most diverse in the country. Downtown provides the physical infrastructure necessary for many artists and makers to develop and market their work. However, the innovative and unique character of much of downtown is vulnerable to displacement, as these sectors, and particularly low-income artists of color, are most likely to struggle with rising rents. Maintaining and growing the arts community should be a priority to sustain the city's identity, attract visitors, and contribute to the economy.

Artists in general are at a high risk of displacement, which the Equity Assessment identified as being a critical topic to address in the Plan. A 2015 citywide survey found that artists are experiencing displacement, either from their workspace (23%), living quarters (28%), or both (49%). Of those reporting displacement, three in five moves were the result of rent increases or building sales. Nearly half (46%) of surveyed artists rent living space month-to-month; more than half (52%) of surveyed artists rent workspace month-to-month.<sup>32</sup> Black artists are among the highest at-risk population, with artists of color generally more vulnerable to displacement than White artists.

Small businesses in the downtown plan area are being challenged by the pressures of rent increases; and the loss of ethnic and cultural businesses to

<sup>31</sup> City of Oakland Planning and Building Department. Preliminary Draft Plan. 2019. pp. 122-123

<sup>32</sup> 2015 Housing and Workspace Task Force Survey

displacement changes the character and community of downtown. Similarly, nonprofit organizations and foundations focused on social and economic issues have also been affected by downtown development pressures and rising rents. Their services are critical to downtown residents, and also to Oaklanders citywide, who can access them best when they are in downtown locations well-served by transit.

## Community Health

The downtown plays a critical role in helping the city reduce its contribution of harmful pollutants that exacerbate climate change by providing dense, transit-oriented development to shift people from using single-occupancy vehicles and by building new buildings that don't rely on polluting, nonrenewable resources. Further, investment in green infrastructure to improve water quality entering storm drains will provide additional benefits such as improving air quality, reducing urban heat island effect, reducing noise, improving mental health, and improving the experience of the public realm.

Healthy neighborhoods provide residents with access to parks, healthy food, clean air, safe streets, health care, and social services. In communities where these needs are not met, people are more likely to suffer from chronic disease such as asthma and obesity. The Downtown Oakland Disparity Analysis prepared for this Preliminary Plan shows that in downtown (and in Oakland as a whole) African American and Latinx populations exhibit the highest levels of obesity. In addition, from 2013 – 2015 the African American population had almost twice the rate of asthma hospitalization compared to all other races. Black carbon from diesel engines is a leading cause of respiratory illness and is of concern for the high-population neighborhoods adjacent to I-880 and I-980 where concentrations of pollution are the highest. These areas include Jack London, Chinatown, Old Oakland, and West of San Pablo.<sup>33</sup> Now climate change also threatens the city with the potential for episodic events such as coastal floods and increased wildfire risks and associated indirect health impacts.

<sup>33</sup> 2018 Downtown Oakland Disparity Analysis

### Primary Challenges – Community Health:

1. Sea level rise and other environmental stressors leaving those in disinvested areas most vulnerable
2. High asthma rate for African Americans
3. Small businesses unable to thrive due to limited foot traffic, fear of crime
4. Lack of green infrastructure (including parks and street trees) to support community needs

Additional data and analysis  
is included in Chapter 05

Many of Oakland's historic streets include canopy trees that provide shade, improve air quality, and create sense of place. Gaps in the street tree network are most prevalent in Uptown, City Center, and the KONO neighborhoods. Oakland contains several signature open spaces, including Lake Merritt and Frank H. Ogawa Plaza; however, additional park spaces will be needed to serve downtown's projected increase in population, and existing spaces should be programmed and better utilized to accommodate gathering and multiple community needs.

## Land Use & Urban Form—Putting it All Together

How will the issues and ideas presented in the preceding sections be addressed in the built environment? Where should land be designated for employment-generating industries and to house people? How can we prevent displacement of our most vulnerable residents and small businesses? How does downtown capitalize on its regional transit resources? How can connections be made to, through and within downtown to maximize access to opportunity? How can the physical environment instill a sense of cultural belonging and pride among our diverse community members? How do we promote people's health and environmental sustainability? All of these questions involve important decisions about public policy, land use and priorities for capital improvements and the approach toward designing each development so it creates a greater whole through sound urban design principles. Before explaining the potential strategies to tackle these questions, an assessment of downtown's physical environment is provided.

Downtown Oakland consists of many identifiably diverse areas distinguished both by their use and their aesthetic character. Many of these commercial and residential activity nodes are disconnected from one another to the detriment of their own potential as well as to the contribution to a more vibrant downtown. An analysis of potential development sites downtown indicates that there is opportunity throughout for infill and redevelopment on surface parking lots, vacant parcels, and underutilized sites. It also reveals opportunity for significant transformation in areas, such as Victory Court area in Jack London, along the Lake Merritt Channel waterfront, along 7th Street near Old Oakland, and in the Lake Merritt Office District. An analysis of opportunity sites reveals there are currently only a limited number of prime sites for office development (i.e., parcels of sufficient size, on or near Broadway, close to the BART stations). Given the strength of the residential real estate market, there is a need to prioritize some key sites for new office development to ensure that downtown can accommodate continued job growth.

Parks and open space conditions vary and are particularly poor on the edges of downtown near West Oakland. The public realm conditions also vary downtown. For example, Old Oakland is best known for its walkable mixed-use center where two- to three-story commercial buildings on tree-lined streets create a memorable sense of place. However, much of downtown lacks street trees, as do the areas close to the I-980 and I-880 freeways. Downtown also has a shortage of public restrooms, leading to incidence of public urination/defecation (with the burden of cleaning often shouldered by local businesses). There are also many gaps in “active” street frontages, which include buildings with blank walls or exposed parking structures that disrupt the safe, comfortable pedestrian environment.

Oaklanders are vulnerable to environmental stressors such as sea level rise, drought and rising temperatures. Poor air quality results in high asthma rates, which disproportionately impact African Americans. Personal safety, particularly for older adults and individuals with a disability, are an issue. Although downtown has three BART stations, a ferry terminal, an Amtrak Station and is the central transit hub for the East Bay, its transit stations suffer from disinvestment and from inadequate bike and pedestrian connections between them.

The Preliminary Draft Plan presents potential strategies for tackling the tough questions surfaced within these key findings. These strategies involve:

- Accommodating growth of housing, jobs, business and cultural innovation;
- Protecting residents and businesses from displacement;
- Improving gateways and connections into and out of downtown;
- Making public places for people that celebrate Oakland’s people and unique heritage;
- Integrating resilience and sustainable design and practices into the built environment; and
- Incentivizing public benefits in downtown development and targeting them to benefit all members of the community.

### Primary Challenges – Land Use & Urban Form:

1. Need to shape a built environment that supports housing, economic development, culture, mobility, health and sustainability needs
2. Rationalize and simplify existing land development regulations to achieve predictable results
3. Establish a development framework (strategies for design and regulation) that addresses community needs

**Additional data and analysis  
is included in Chapter 06**

## INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

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### CONTEXT & KEY ISSUES

# **Vision & Goals**





Photo: Eric Arnold, Diamano Coura

# OAKLAND DIVERSITY VISIBILITY

*The message received both from stakeholder engagement and through data analysis is that diversity and community are the City of Oakland's most precious assets and that downtown has the potential to be their greatest showcase.*

Diversity, equity, and inclusivity have been integral threads in Oakland's ongoing discussions about its community values for decades. Any responsible planning process must honor these discussions and the culture of community that generates them. Moreover, at this time, the concern about cultural displacement has led to an even greater need for extensive outreach effort to ensure that this plan's values reflect the input, needs, and insights of all Oakland's residents, workers, and community leaders.

The diverse voices, races, cultures, arts, places, neighborhoods, and businesses here today—and in recent history—constitute the essential baseline from which Oakland should project its future. Furthermore, concepts for improved connections, upgraded public spaces, and economic growth must go hand-in-hand with strategies for reducing racial disparities and closing inequity gaps, so that all Oaklanders are included in downtown's future growth and prosperity.

As Downtown Oakland grows along with the city and the region, the Preliminary Draft Plan seeks to balance and integrate these goals by defining physical improvement projects and supporting policies to meet community priorities for a sense of place, shelter, economic opportunity, cultural belonging, and mobility, centering the needs of its most vulnerable stakeholders.

## A Shared Vision, Centering Equity

The Preliminary Draft Plan describes a shared community vision for downtown that serves all Oaklanders and accounts for the needs of populations who are currently underserved. Community input shaped six plan goals around the topics of Economic Opportunity, Housing and Affordability, Culture Keeping, Mobility, Community Health, and Land Use and Urban Form. Desired outcomes describe what Downtown Oakland could look like when the Plan goals are realized.

Equity is a primary focus of this Plan; all of the goals, outcomes and supporting projects and policies meet the shared vision, consider equity impacts, and aim to reduce disparities – or at the very least, not widen them. The Equity Framework on the following pages describes the strategies and actions that will continue to advance equity through Plan implementation.



### **Economic Opportunity Outcome E-1**

Economic activity builds community wealth and fuels the ongoing improvement of local conditions.



### **Economic Opportunity Outcome E-2**

Downtown commercial space meets current and future employment needs in projected key industries; sustains a broad array of job skills; and remains accessible and affordable to community-serving nonprofits and other community-desired businesses.



### **Economic Opportunity Outcome E-3**

Access to services, jobs, education, and training gives all Oaklanders an opportunity to find local employment and economic security.

### **Goal 01:**

### **Economic Opportunity**

*Create opportunities for economic growth and security for all Oaklanders.*



### **Housing Outcome H-1**

Sufficient housing is built and retained that leverages all of Downtown Oakland's existing advantages and investments in transit, employment, services, and culture to support the full range of lifestyles and choices essential to Oaklanders.



### **Housing Outcome H-2**

The ongoing threat of displacement is addressed to maintain downtown's historic racial, ethnic, and income diversity so that current and long-time Oaklanders remain an important part of the community.



### **Housing Outcome H-3**

Oakland's artists and creative community are able to find housing and live-work opportunities in downtown that they can access and afford.

### **Goal 02: Housing**

*Ensure sufficient housing is built and retained to meet the varied needs of current and future residents.*



### **Mobility Outcome M-1**

Downtown is well-connected across its internal and adjacent neighborhoods with bicycle and pedestrian networks that are accessible and safe for people of all ages and abilities.



### **Mobility Outcome M-2**

Communities that are more transit-dependent are well-served in traveling to and from downtown with frequent, reliable, and safe transit service.

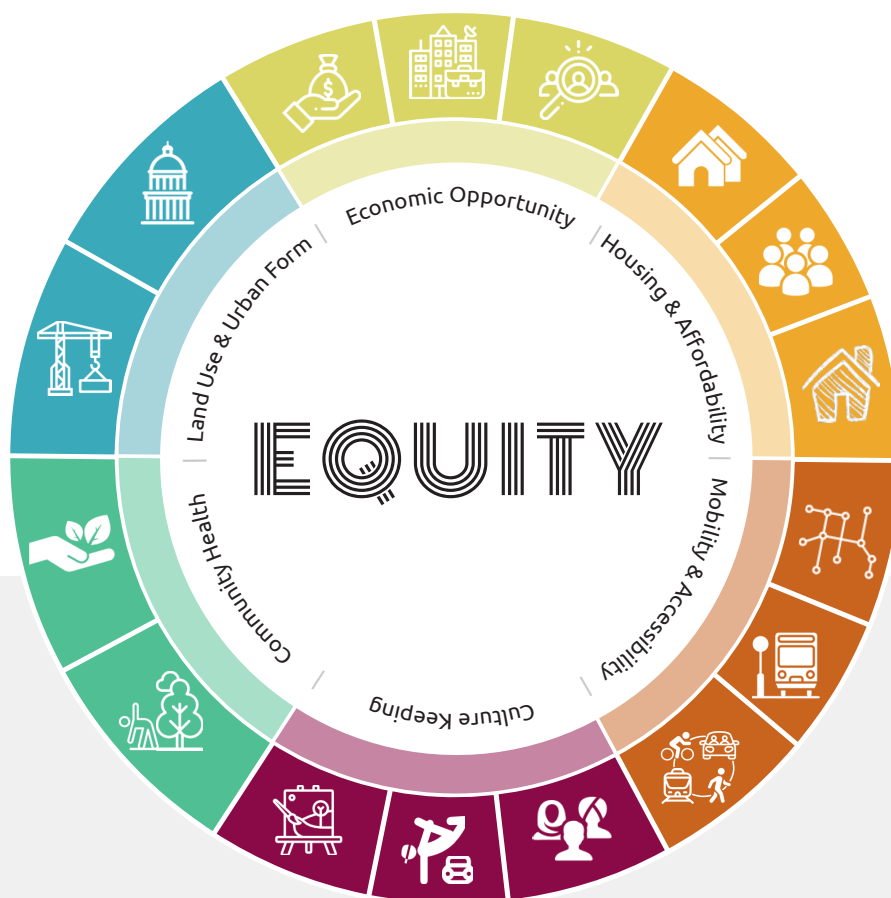


### **Mobility Outcome M-3**

Oaklanders connect to downtown's resources with intermodal and multimodal options that accommodate people of all ages and abilities from their front door to their destination and back.

### **Goal 03: Mobility**

*Make downtown's streets comfortable, safe, and inviting and improve connections to the city as a whole so that everyone has efficient and reliable access to downtown's jobs and services.*



#### Culture Keeping Outcome C-1

Downtown is a place where all of Oakland's residents can see and express themselves and their culture.



#### Culture Keeping Outcome C-2

Festivals, outdoor art installations, and cultural events are integral elements in downtown's public sphere and spaces.



#### Culture Keeping Outcome C-3

Oakland's artists and creative community are able to find workspaces, performance spaces, and galleries in downtown that they can access and afford and see their work integrated into the built environment and public domain.



#### Community Health Outcome CH-1

All Oaklanders can lead safe and healthy lives, enjoying streets, public spaces, and parks downtown that provide opportunities to stay active and build community.



#### Community Health Outcome CH-2

Environmental stewardship informs operational, planning, and capital improvement decisions to create a more sustainable downtown where everyone can adapt and thrive in the face of changing conditions.



#### Land Use Outcome LU-1

Development and design serve Oakland's diverse needs, contribute to improved conditions for all, and enhance downtown's authentic, creative, and dynamic local character.



#### Land Use Outcome LU-2

Oakland's extensive array of historic buildings, cultural enclaves, civic institutions, and landmarks are preserved within downtown's built environment.

### Goal 04:

### Culture Keeping

*Allow diverse voices and forms of expression to flourish.*

### Goal 05:

### Community Health

*Provide vibrant public spaces and a healthy environment that improve the quality of life downtown today and for generations to come.*

### Goal 06: Land Use

*Develop downtown in a way that meets community needs and preserves Oakland's unique character.*

# Equity Framework

*The Downtown Plan's overarching equity goal is to reduce racial disparities by shaping a downtown that provides fair and equitable access to all the opportunities that lie at the heart of Oakland: jobs, training, housing, services, government, cultural expression, and a vibrant civic life. This includes countering forces that have led to the displacement of people, businesses, cultures and communities of color from downtown and citywide.*

## KEY ASSUMPTIONS

The City of Oakland Race and Equity framework centers race because most indicators of well-being in the city and across the nation show disparities by race. Race is an overarching predictor of disproportionately skewed outcomes across the general population and within marginalized groups based on gender identity, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, citizenship status, religion, etc. Whenever we focus on removing systemic racialized barriers to opportunity, then we change outcomes across these specific populations, and for all residents of Oakland who will benefit from living in a transformed city. A flourishing city where all residents experience economic security and live in healthy vibrant communities that provide equitable opportunities for all.

## PROCESS

Communities of color expressed concerns early on that a downtown plan could exacerbate the gentrification and displacement already occurring in Oakland. In response, the City's Strategic Planning Division worked with the

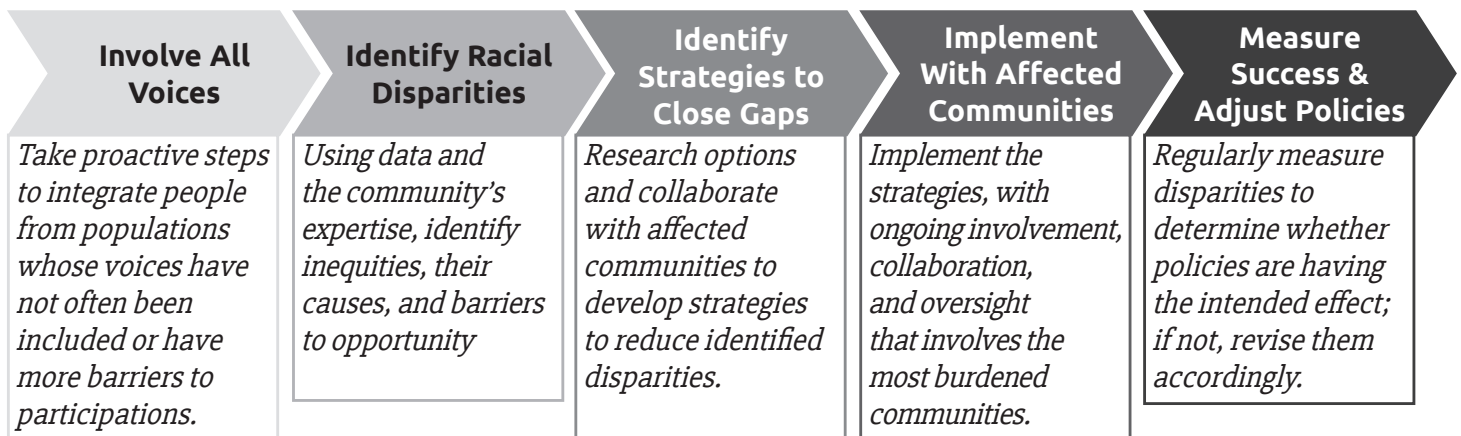


Figure VG-1: Equity Approach

Department of Race and Equity and an equity consultant to center equity and the needs of the city's most vulnerable communities in the Preliminary Draft Plan. The revised process better involved members of those communities, proposed equity-related outcomes, and evaluated possible policy directions. This was done using the racial equity impact assessment (REIA) and results-based accountability (RBA) models, which involve identifying and measuring indicator of racial disparities, including affected communities in identifying and designing solutions to those disparities, and assessing proposed strategies to determine whether they will close or widen the identified disparity gaps.

## Key Downtown Disparities

Some of the primary indicators of disparity that the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan identified are summarized below. Most of these indicators show disparities between different identified racial groups. Regardless of a connection with any one specific group, we believe that addressing all of these indicators can lead to viable strategies that help to improve the lives of all residents including those tied to the indicators.

These equity indicators, plus additional measures specific to each plan topic (such as community health and transportation), will set the baseline conditions against which progress towards achieving equitable outcomes will be measured. As we implement the Downtown Plan, we will evaluate the efficacy of each strategy and policy to reduce the disparities. A list of the measures of success is presented in each chapter of this Preliminary Draft Plan and will be further developed during the next planning stage: the Draft Specific Plan.

### 1. HOUSING COST BURDEN

A housing cost-burdened household spends more than 30% of household income on housing. Housing is usually the single largest expense for households, so when they need to pay more than 30% of their income for housing, particularly low-income families and households of color, it leaves little left for food, health care, education and other needs. According to data from 2015, a large disparity exists in the housing cost burden between White and Black households. White households had the lowest housing cost burden at 29.1% and Black households had the highest housing burden at 44.6%. A larger disparity also exists between White and Black renter households, for whom the cost burden is 40.1% and 63.4%, respectively.

### 2. HOMELESSNESS

During a 2017 point-in-time survey in Oakland, a total of 2,761 individuals were experiencing homelessness, which represented a 26% increase from 2015. Of individuals experiencing homelessness, more than two-thirds (68%) identified as Black or African American, despite Black or African-American residents constituting only 26% of Oakland's population. Over half of the survey

respondents cited “money issues” as the primary reason they are homeless. With more people being unable to afford housing, the city is seeing higher levels of homelessness, along with the associated deterioration of physical and mental health and of social outcomes.

### 3. DISPLACEMENT

The UC Berkeley Center for Community Innovation developed an index to characterize places that historically housed vulnerable populations, but have since experienced significant demographic shifts, as well as real estate investment. According to this index, much of downtown Oakland is characterized as undergoing “ongoing gentrification/displacement”.<sup>1</sup> Although this measure addresses demographics, the community is also concerned with cultural displacement—shifts in culture, culturally relevant businesses, community institutions, and sense of belonging.

### 4. DISCONNECTED YOUTH

“Disconnected youth” refers to young people ages 16-24 who are neither working nor in school. Limited access to education and job experience early in life, along with health impacts and exposure to the criminal justice system, can have lasting impacts like lower earnings, higher public expenditures, lower tax revenues, and lost human potential. Citywide in 2015, the White population had the lowest share of youth who were neither working or in school at 8.3%, and the Black population had the highest share at 20.8%.

### 5. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

In 2015, the average unemployment rate in downtown was: 14.1% for the Black population, 14.1% for the Hispanic population, 10.3% for the Asian population, and 5.7% for the White population. Racial differences in employment result from corresponding disparities in education, training, and experience, as well as barriers to employment for workers of color such as English language ability, immigration status, criminal records, lack of transportation access, and racial discrimination & bias among employers and institutions.

### 6. MEDIAN INCOME

In 2014, median household income for the White population in downtown was nearly twice that of Latinx and Asian households, and more than twice the income of the Black population—nearly \$50,000 higher.<sup>2</sup> Wage and employment gaps by race or gender impact the entire Oakland economy. Closing these gaps by eliminating discrimination, boosting educational attainment, and ensuring strong, rising wages for low-income jobs is good for families, leads to more consumer spending, which is a key driver of economic growth and job creation. Note that wage data does not address the wealth gap between White households and households of color, which considers a household’s savings and assets, and is more significant even than the wage gap.

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1 City of Oakland Planning & Building Department. Downtown Oakland Disparity Analysis. 2018, pp 28.

2 City of Oakland Planning and Building Department. Downtown Oakland Disparity Analysis. 2018, pp 31.

## Key Policies

All policies in the Preliminary Draft Plan — whether related to transportation, economics, housing, urban design or arts and culture — have been assessed for possible equity impacts and revised to ensure that they reduce disparities, or, at least, do not widen them. These assessments are to ensure the Plan addresses racial and economic disparity throughout its recommendations to enhance the economic, cultural and environmental quality of Downtown Oakland and its contribution to the residents of the entire city. However, there are some key policies that have been identified as having greater impact in reducing inequities. The policies expected to help most directly close the identified disparity gaps are identified in the table below (continued on the following pages).

**Table VG-1: Key Policies with Equity Impacts**

Strategy or Policy	Policy Description
<b>Housing Cost Burden</b>	
Housing Strategy 1	Fund new affordable and accessible housing downtown
Housing Strategy 2	Encourage family-friendly and accessible units
Housing (H-1.1)	Create housing for people at less than 30% of Area Median Income (AMI)
Housing (H-1.3)	Use publicly-owned land in a manner that supports housing affordability for Oakland residents (based on goals and allowable uses set by the City's public lands policies)
Housing (H-1.4)	Study increases to jobs/housing impact fee for affordable housing production
Housing (H-1.5)	Explore creation of new affordable housing revenue stream from land value capture
Housing (H-1.6)	Study a density bonus for family-sized units
Housing (H-1.8)	Investigate citywide code updates to strengthen accessibility requirements
Housing (H-2.1)	Purchase and rehabilitate downtown SROs for income-restricted housing
Housing (H-2.2)	Fund acquisition, preservation and rehab of housing and SROs downtown
Housing (H-3.2)	Allow live-work spaces, with tight restrictions to avoid use solely as residences
<b>Homelessness</b>	
Housing Strategy 1	Fund new affordable and accessible housing downtown
Housing Strategy 3	Provide additional shelters and services for homeless residents
Housing Strategy 5	Increase protections and support for residents at risk of displacement
Housing (H-1.1)	Create housing for people with incomes less than 30% of Area Median Income (AMI)
Housing (H-1.3)	Use publicly-owned land to support housing affordability
Housing (H-1.4)	Study increases to jobs/housing impact fee for affordable housing production
Housing (H-1.5)	Explore creation of new affordable housing revenue stream from land value capture
Housing (H-2.1)	Purchase, preserve and rehabilitate downtown SROs for income-restricted housing
Housing (H-2.2)	Fund acquisition and rehab of housing and SROs downtown
Housing (H-2.5)	Target supportive services in affordable housing, including SROs
Housing (H-2.6)	Continue services for encampments; identify additional sites for Cabin Communities
Comm Health (CH-1.3)	Require public restrooms be included with new or improved open spaces
Comm Health (CH-1.10)	Providing secure storage lockers for the unsheltered residents of downtown
<b>Displacement</b>	
Housing Strategy 5	Increase protections for residents at risk of displacement

## VISION & GOALS

### EQUITY FRAMEWORK

Strategy or Policy	Policy Description
Housing Strategy 6	Encourage home ownership, with first-time homebuyer and foreclosure assistance
Housing (H-1.2)	Explore prioritizing a portion of affordable housing funds for projects in downtown
Housing (H-1.7)	Study an inclusionary housing requirement downtown in place of impact fee
Housing (H-1.8)	Investigate citywide code updates to strengthen accessibility requirements
Housing (H-2.3)	Pursue additional funding for expanded renter services and counseling
Housing (H-2.4)	Maintain effective enforcement of rent adjustment and just cause laws
Housing (H-2.7)	Strengthen Condominium Conversion Ordinance to protect additional renters
Housing (H-2.8)	Continue and explore new funding sources for first-time homebuyer programs
Housing (H-2.9)	Implement proactive programs to assist home owners in financial distress
Housing (H-2.10)	Explore targeting homeownership resources to people harmed by discriminatory housing policies
Housing (H-2.11)	Prioritize affordable units for Oaklanders displaced by community-wide policy impacts
Economic Opp (E-2.4)	Develop requirements and incentives to provide affordable cultural spaces
Economic Opp (E-2.8)	Establish additional arts and cultural districts
Economic Opp (E-2.9)	Prioritize façade tenant improvement funds for businesses tied to cultural districts
Culture Keeping (C-1.1)	Establish a cultural districts program, including zoning regulations to protect cultural uses
Culture Keeping (C-1.4)	Invest in cultural districts with marketing, public spaces and streetscape elements
Culture Keeping (C-1.5)	Provide support for Black-owned businesses in the Black Arts Movement & Business District
Culture Keeping (C-2.2)	Expand the Special Event Task Force to reduce barriers to receiving special event permits
Culture Keeping (C-3.1)	Continue leasing City properties for arts and culture at below-market rents (including the Malonga Center and Oakland Asian Cultural Center)
Culture Keeping (C-3.3)	Increase hotel tax funding for arts & culture, particularly for groups most impacted by racial disparities
Culture Keeping (C-3.4)	Support CAST's Keeping Space Oakland program to prevent arts displacement, particularly for artists of color
Land Use (LU-2.3)	Establish cultural district program and identify resources to stabilize vulnerable cultural assets
<b>Disconnected Youth</b>	
Economic Strategy 5	Encourage youth activities and opportunities downtown
Economic Opp (E-3.2)	Incentivize builders to hire justice-involved individuals and groups most impacted by racial disparities
Economic Opp (E-3.3)	Expand industry partnerships to mentor and train a workforce that reflects Oakland's demographic composition
Economic Opp (E-3.4)	Continue developing procurement and contracting policies (including internally) to support participation of businesses owned by members of groups most impacted by racial disparities
Economic Opp (E-3.6)	Pursue a youth employment zone downtown, including job and business training
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	
Housing (H-2.5)	Target supportive services in affordable housing, including SROs
Economic Strategy 2	Incentivize commercial spaces affordable for community-serving organization
Economic Strategy 6	Provide assistance to support small businesses owned by groups most impacted by racial disparities
Economic Strategy 8	Enhance employment opportunities for Oakland residents
Economic Opp (E-3.2)	Incentivize builders to hire justice-involved individuals and groups most impacted by racial disparities
Economic Opp (E-3.3)	Expand industry partnerships to mentor and train a workforce that reflects Oakland's demographic composition

Strategy or Policy	Policy Description
Economic Opp (E-3.4)	Continue developing procurement and contracting policies (including internally) to support participation of businesses owned by members of groups most impacted by racial disparities
Economic Opp (E-3.5)	Partner with nonprofits to support small, local suppliers
Culture Keeping (C-2.3)	Reduce regulatory barriers to street vending
<b>Median Income</b>	
Economic Strategy 6	Provide assistance to support small businesses owned by groups most impacted by racial disparities
Economic Strategy 8	Enhance employment opportunities for Oakland residents
Economic Opp (E-2.6)	Develop master leasing program to provide affordable space for small business
Economic Opp (E-3.2)	Incentivize builders to hire justice-involved individuals and groups most impacted by racial disparities
Economic Opp (E-3.3)	Expand industry partnerships to mentor and train a workforce that reflects Oakland's demographic composition
Economic Opp (E-3.4)	Continue developing procurement policies to remove barriers for businesses owned by members of groups most impacted by racial disparities
Economic Opp (E-3.5)	Partner with nonprofits to support small, local suppliers
Culture Keeping (C-1.4)	Strengthen cultural districts with marketing, public spaces and culturally-relevant streetscape elements
<b>Other Equity Concerns</b>	
Land Use (LU-1.3)	Create a development incentive program with pre-defined community benefits
Economic Opp (E-1.1)	Direct new funds generated by development to underserved communities
Economic Opp (E-3.7)	Partner with businesses to make their spaces more physically accessible
Mobility (M-2.3)	Improve passenger amenities, including wayfinding in multiple languages
Implementation (I-1.1)	Develop a citywide specific plan implementation committee with representation from otherwise underrepresented populations
Implementation (I-1.4)	Review the Downtown Plan regularly to evaluate whether it is achieving equity and other outcomes
Comm Health (CH-2.1)	Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which disproportionately harm groups most impacted by racial disparities
Comm Health (CH-2.3)	Implement Sea Level Rise Roadmap; prioritize assets for vulnerable neighborhoods
Comm Health (CH-2.7)	Add green buffers along highways to filter air pollutants, reducing disparities in asthma rates
Comm Health (CH-2.8)	Accelerate electrification of low-capacity vehicles to improve air quality
Implementation (I-1.5)	Conduct racial equity impact assessments of Plan implementation actions
Mobility (M-1.2)	Implement safety measures along the high-injury pedestrian network, reducing disparities in vehicle collision injuries and deaths
Mobility (M-2.1)	Implement transit priority improvements to improve travel times to and from downtown
Mobility (M-2.2)	Create transit center at Lake Merritt BART to improve bus connections to and from East Oakland
Mobility (M-2.3)	Improve amenities and security at bus stops, disproportionately used by people of color
Mobility (M-2.5)	Improve ADA-accessible access to transit stations
Mobility (M-2.7)	Develop a low-income transit pass
Mobility (M-2.8)	Consider funding increased bus service between East Oakland and downtown
Mobility (M-2.9)	Name transportation facilities to reflect the character of the place they serve (e.g. Chinatown)
Mobility (M-3.2)	Decrease freeway traffic disproportionately affecting safety in Chinatown



DOSP Potential Future Development  
Through 2040



Anticipated Development Through 2020  
(Approved/Under-Construction)

An aerial photograph of downtown Oakland, California, showing a mix of urban development, green spaces, and waterfront areas. A large white rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the title and three paragraphs of text. The background image shows a dense urban area with various buildings, streets, and a body of water (Lake Merritt) visible on the left side. A highway (I-880) runs along the bottom of the image.

# Vision for Downtown Oakland

*Downtown Oakland serves as the setting for a remarkable array of lived experiences. It is both home and gathering space to people of all different income levels, races, cultures, and ethnicities. It supports a wide spectrum of community assets, serving not only local residents, but also visitors and workers from around Oakland, the Bay Area, and the globe. Its economy drives social innovation while reflecting the cultures, political movements, and people who are its heritage.*

Downtown Oakland is a dynamic regional employment center and transit hub where the entire community is welcome. Growth is accompanied by bold strategies to protect vulnerable community members, businesses and cultural organizations from displacement. Investment around transit stations and their immediate vicinities creates active gateways into downtown. Transit improvements increase access to downtown's jobs, services, culture and entertainment options from throughout Oakland and the region. The "Green Loop" and "West Oakland Walk" provide an integrated system of walking and biking paths through downtown that link cultural districts, and connect people to the Lake Merritt and Estuary waterfronts, and to adjacent neighborhoods and districts.

Downtown is a leader in developing resilience to environmental shocks and climate change by implementing innovative strategies. Oakland's youth have access to a network of service providers, mentorship and job training that prepares them to participate in the prosperity being generated downtown. A robust program to leverage development is implemented, and Oakland sees dramatic improvements across all measures of success within five years.

To achieve this full range of lived experiences, downtown must invest in the built, natural, and social environments by creating healthy, vibrant, and inviting places for people to thrive. The goals for downtown are multifaceted and interrelated, including: retaining and celebrating the community's physical and social culture and character; enhancing quality of life; spurring production of affordable options to live and work; offering a variety of jobs and the training to acquire them; optimizing the tax base to generate revenue for City services; unlocking the potential of vacant and underused sites; and connecting Oaklanders of all abilities with safe and inviting walking, biking and transit infrastructure.

# Economic Opportunity

*Central Idea: Make downtown a racially and economically diverse regional employment center by identifying office priority sites, targeting training for living wage jobs to fill those spaces, and by investing in small businesses and businesses owned by people of color.*

Figure VG-2: Street scene in Lake Merritt Office District



Go to **page 106** to see the before and after transformation

## Big Challenges:

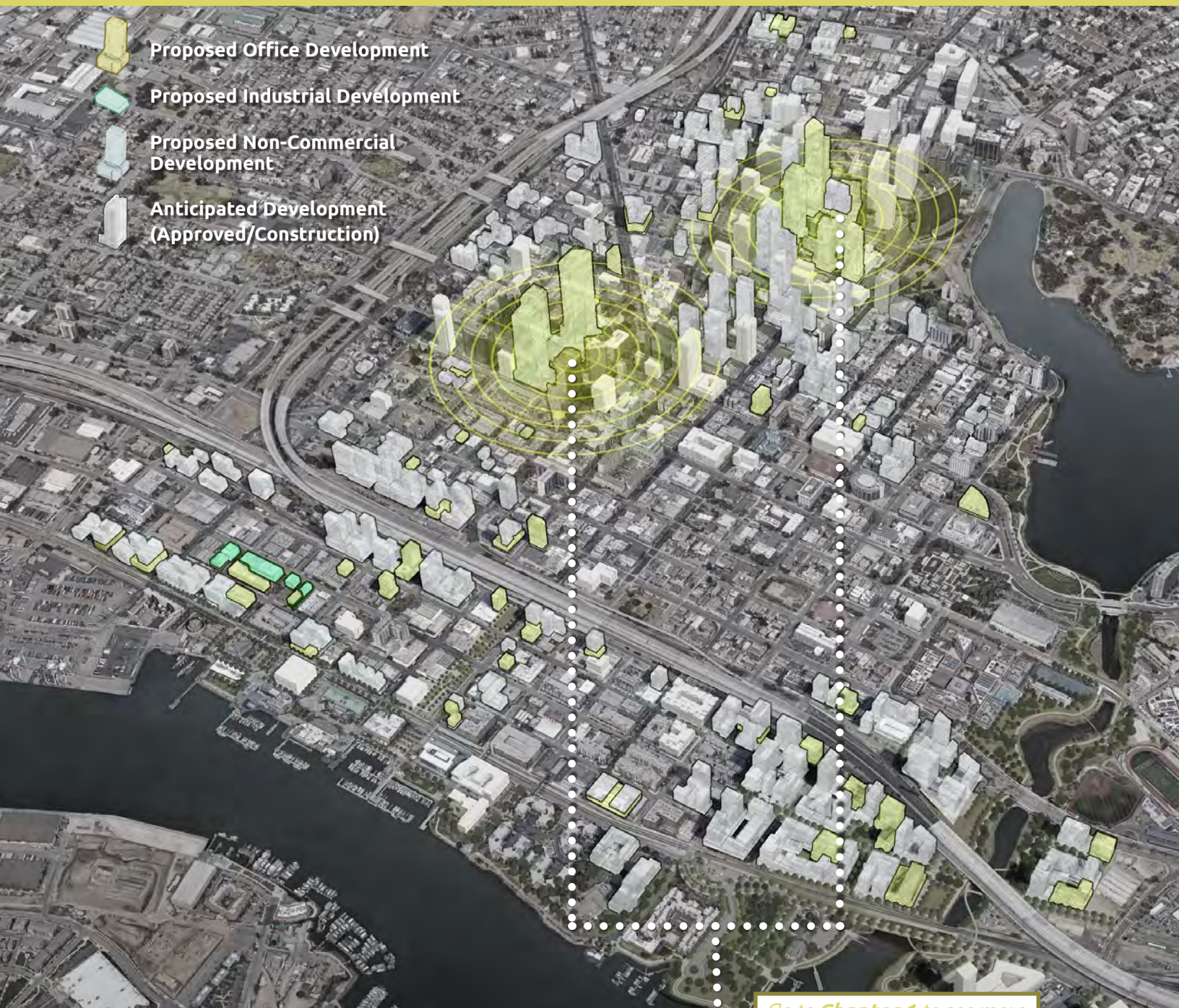
- Low revenues to fund City services
- Huge wealth disparities
- Regional imbalance of jobs & housing leading to transit overload and inadequate opportunity for residents

## Key City Investments & Policies:

- Capitalize on geographic and transit assets by identifying office priority sites and promoting density at downtown's regional transit hubs
- Activate ground floor retail and commercial spaces by developing a City program to master lease vacant retail and commercial spaces, and sub-lease them to small local retailers, artists and artisans
- Expand initiatives and partnerships with the tech sector, and other sectors targeted for expansion, to increase equitable business development and employment opportunities
- Expand existing and develop new local hire and training programs

**THE SPECIFIC PLAN  
UNLOCKS UP TO:**

**+17.2 M Sq. Ft. of New Commercial Space  
+184.3 K Sq. Ft. of New Industrial Space**



**...if built, that generates:**  
**+\$15 Million in Impact Fees for Affordable  
Housing and Roughly 55 Thousand Jobs**

**OFFICE PRIORITY AREAS**

# Housing & Affordability

*Central Idea: Maintain downtown as a mixed-income residential area by creating 4,350 to 7,250 new affordable units*

Figure VG-3: Potential new development near Estuary Park



Go to **page 134** to see the before and after transformation

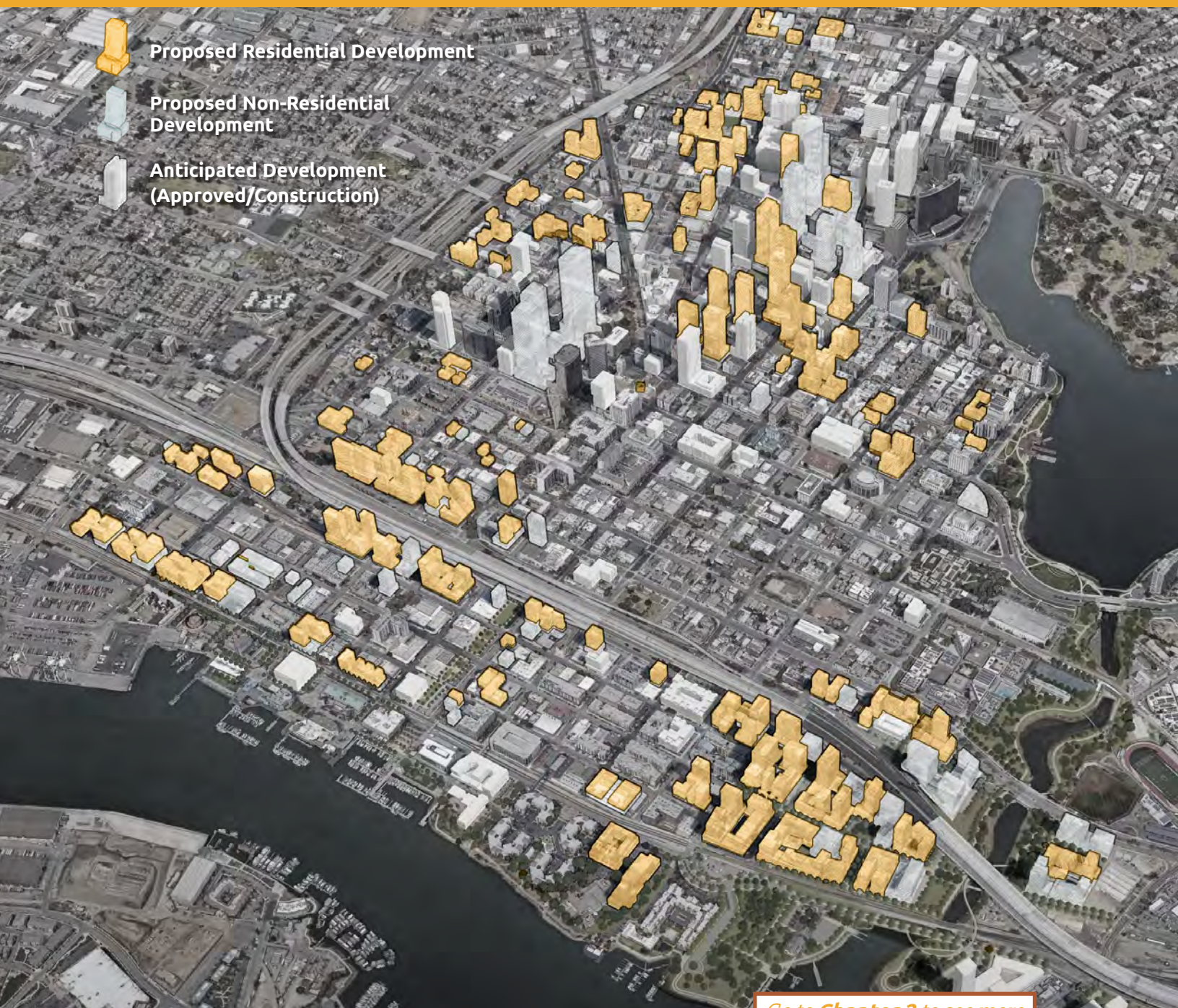
## Big Challenges

- Insufficient affordable housing and funding to subsidize it
- High housing cost burden
- Highest displacement and cost burden among African Americans and other groups historically impacted by disparities in life outcomes
- Increasing share of homeless residents with the highest increase among African Americans

## Key City Investments & Policies:

- Prioritize a portion of citywide housing funds generated by downtown for downtown projects by adapting scoring criteria and/or increasing impact fees
- Study the establishment of an inclusionary housing requirement for downtown that would replace affordable housing impact fees
- Establish a program to incentivize community-desired benefits in exchange for increased development potential
- Encourage large units for families and accessible units for older adults and people with disabilities

## THE SPECIFIC PLAN UNLOCKS UP TO: +29,077 New Residential Units Downtown



*Go to **Chapter 2** to see more*

**...if built, that generates:  
+\$639.7 Million in Impact Fees for new Affordable Housing**

# Mobility & Accessibility

*Central Idea: Connect people across Oakland to downtown and unify downtown by expanding high-quality transit, bicycle facilities, pedestrian access and amenities for an active street life.*

Figure VG-4: Broadway & 14th Street



Go to **page 172** to see the before and after transformation

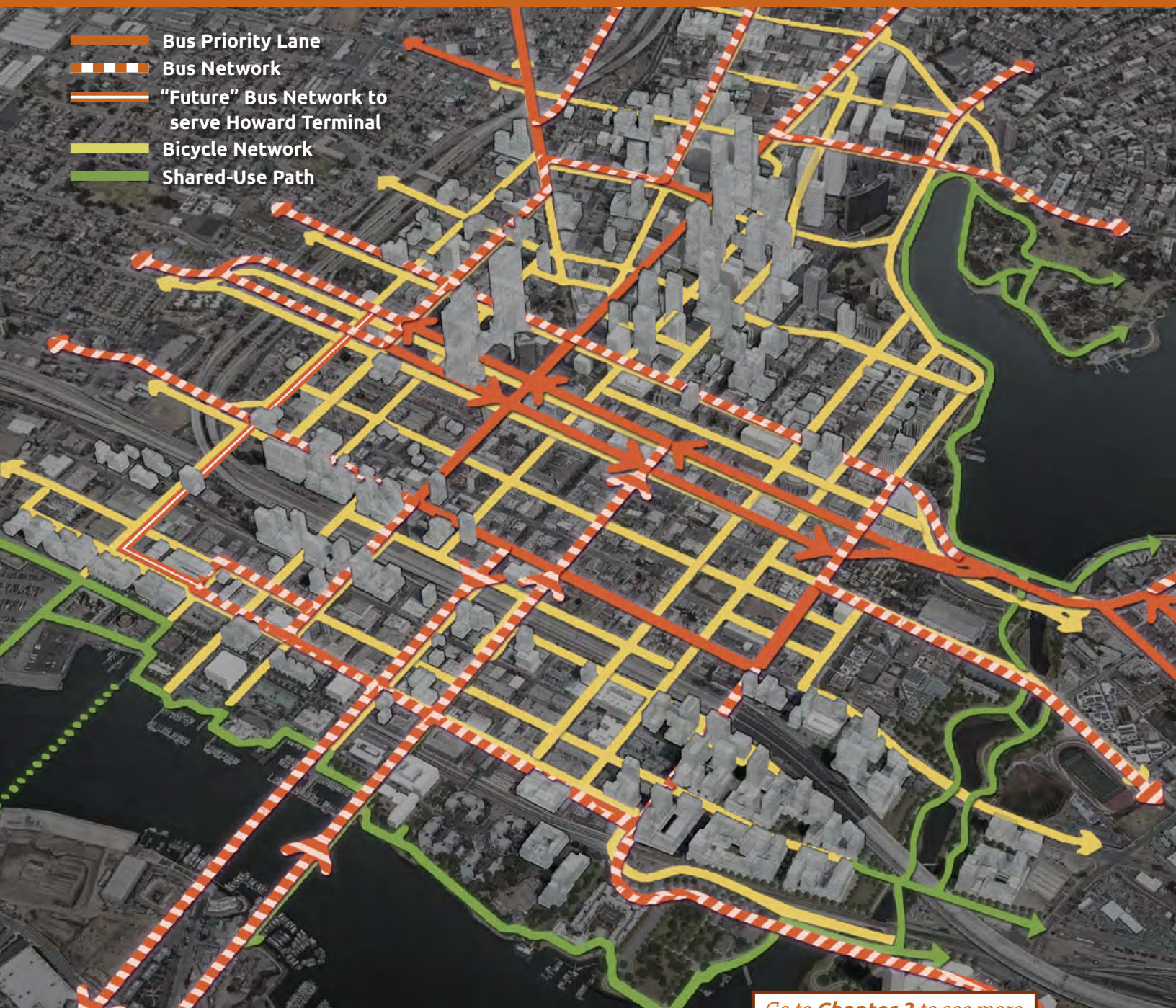
## Big Challenges:

- Infrequent, undependable and circuitous transit access creates barriers for those already most vulnerable
- Pedestrian accidents
- Freeways on the west and south edges of downtown create barriers

## Key City Investments & Policies:

- Streetscape investment, including curb ramps, high visibility crosswalks, landscaping and public space improvements
- Investment in dedicated transit lanes
- Investment in downtown's bicycle network to expand the number of high quality facilities and increase the overall number of connected and continuous routes throughout

## EXTENSIVE NETWORK OF MULTIMODAL STREETS



Go to **Chapter 3** to see more

# Culture Keeping

*Central Idea: Leverage and protect Oakland's diverse cultures as an engine for artistic innovation and economic growth by establishing and implementing cultural districts downtown with support for cultural institutions and businesses.*

Figure VG-5: The BAMBD District on 14th Street



Go to **page 204** to see the before and after transformation

## Big Challenges:

- Declining shares of African American and Asian residents
- Unaffordable art/artisan small-scale manufacturing space and lack of art space
- Displacement of ethnic and cultural businesses

## Key City Investments & Policies:

- Provide affordable space for entrepreneurs, small local retailers, artists and artisans by developing a City-run master lease program
- Dedicated ground floor space for cultural, arts, and maker uses in new developments located in cultural districts
- Construct coordinated streetscape and public space improvements that help identify and enhance arts and culture districts

Jack London  
Maker District

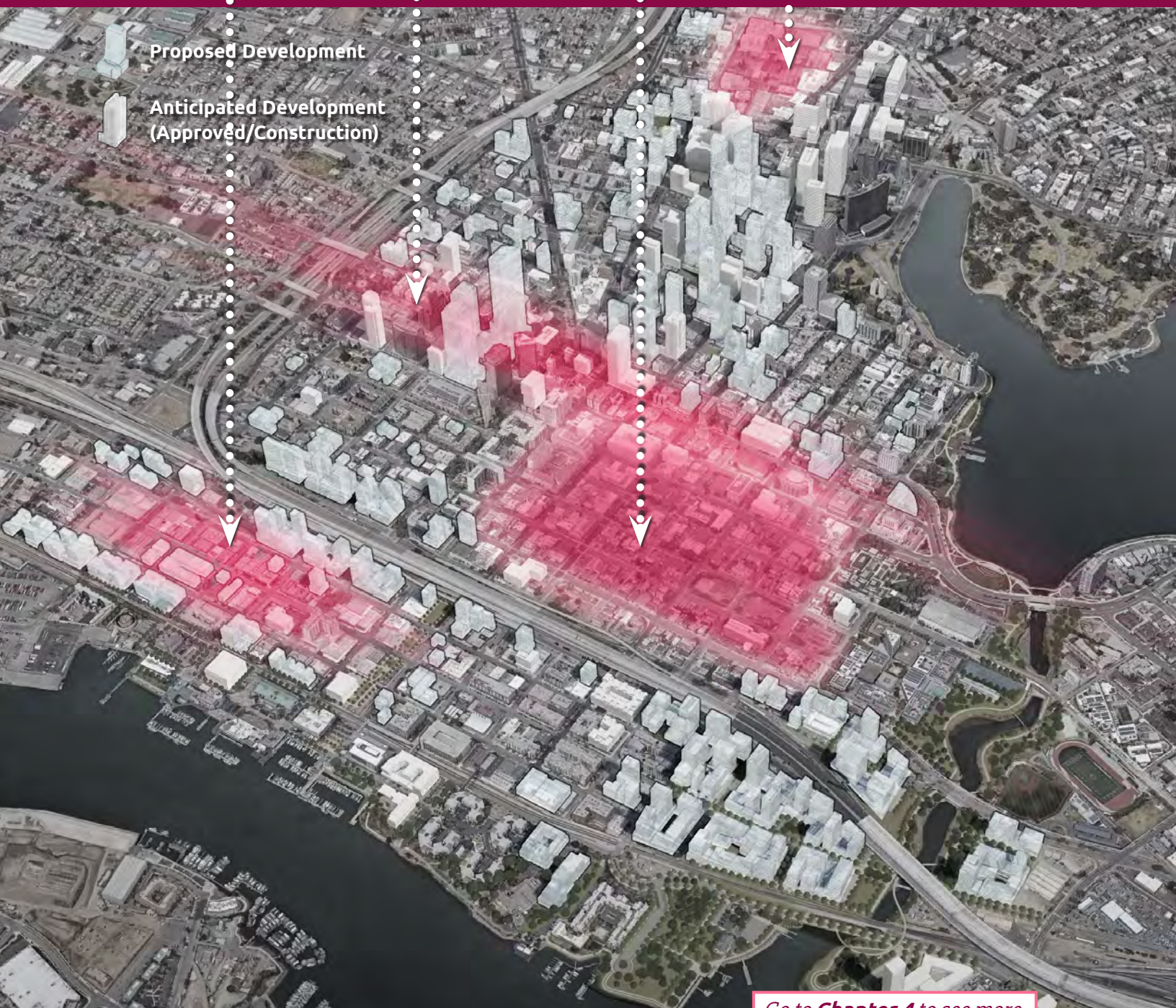
BAMBD

Chinatown

Art + Garage  
District

Proposed Development

Anticipated Development  
(Approved/Construction)



Go to **Chapter 4** to see more

## CULTURAL DISTRICTS

With special zoning and land use regulations to preserve arts & culture.

# Community Health

*Central Idea: Enhance quality of life and health for all Oaklanders by improving and expanding public spaces, implementing urban greening projects, reducing private vehicle trips, and shifting to renewable energy sources.*

Figure VG-6: Webster Green



Go to **page 232** to see the before and after transformation

## Big Challenges:

- High asthma rate, particularly for African Americans and others living along high-traffic corridors
- Sea level rise and other environmental stressors
- Small businesses unable to thrive due to limited foot traffic, fear of crime

## Key City Investments & Policies:

- Create a safe and healthy public realm through street, parks, and open space improvements
- Draft and adopt design guidelines for streets and public spaces
- Support clean transportation modes to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Eliminate fossil fuels from buildings systems and vehicles
- Apply concepts from CURB Strategy, Sustainable Oakland, Sea Level Rise Road Map and others for a more resilient downtown



# Land Use & Urban Form

*Central Idea: Foster new development that serves Oaklanders and addresses housing and employment demand by preserving historic and cultural assets, updating land development regulations, and providing increased building intensity in exchange for pre-defined community benefits.*

Figure VG-7: Aerial view of potential new downtown development



## Big Challenges:

- Limited number of prime sites for office development
- Disconnected commercial and residential activity centers
- Varying condition of parks and streetscapes
- Shortage of public restrooms

## Key City Investments & Policies:

- Develop and invest in a coordinated system of streetscape improvements to link commercial and residential activity centers with the waterfront via the "Green Loop"
- Revise land use & zoning regulations to reflect plan goals and target new density near transit
- Designate "Office Priority Sites"
- Designate arts/culture districts
- Create a streamlined development incentive program to provide increased building intensity in exchange for pre-defined community benefits

Greatest intensity in the  
core, near BART



Opportunity sites  
near Victory Court



KONO

UPTOWN

WEST OF  
SAN PABLO

LAKE MERRITT  
OFFICE DISTRICT

CENTRAL  
CORE

OLD  
OAKLAND

LAKESIDE

CHINATOWN

JACK LONDON  
DISTRICT



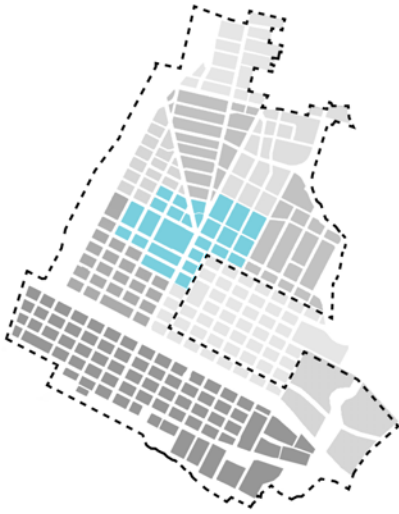
# Neighborhood Vision

*While downtown is a resource for all of Oakland and the broader East Bay Region, it is important to remember that Downtown Oakland is also a series of unique neighborhoods with distinct character, needs and opportunities. Downtown's success as an economic, social, and cultural engine for the city is also dependent on the success of these neighborhoods and commercial hubs.*

Understanding the vision for each neighborhood is critical when considering changes to downtown's land use and zoning regulations, as well as in identifying key opportunity areas for new development, public realm improvements, and transportation alternatives.

Input gathered during the 2015 community design charrette, as well as neighborhood-focused design meetings in 2016 and 2018, have contributed to defining a preliminary vision for each of downtown's neighborhoods and districts. The following pages summarize key features and characteristics found in each neighborhood, as well as a vision for future public improvements and neighborhood development form that supports the Plan's overall Land Use and Mobility frameworks and community goals. This vision is then fulfilled through the projects and policies described by topic in each of the following plan chapters.

LANEY  
COLLEGE



## Central Core

**Existing Condition:** Centered around 14th Street and Broadway, the Central Core area contains the East Bay’s most dense transit corridor and serves as a hub with workplaces, retail, and services. Defining features include government offices; historic buildings; small, well-loved, and unique retail businesses on Broadway; and a variety of well-established, Black-owned businesses centered around the recently-adopted 14th Street “Black Arts Movement and Business District” (BAMBD). The Central Core area is also home to many of Oakland’s residential hotels, known as SROs. Medium to large footprint buildings are found here; some are legacies of the 1966 Central District Plan, which demolished twelve city blocks to build the “City Center” project, Convention Center and Federal Building. Those developments altered the street grid, lengthening walking distances between blocks, and disrupting the historic and contextual pattern with the surrounding blocks, creating dead zones with little activity in some areas.

**Future Vision:** The Central Core area continues to be a hub for people of all ages, cultures, incomes, and races to meet, work, and live. New mixed-use development furthers community goals by offering affordable and mixed-income housing options, a variety of workplaces, and neighborhood-serving commercial uses. The retention of local businesses is prioritized and the Black Arts Movement and Business District influences the design of public art, signage, shopfronts, and streetscape design (particularly along 14th street), providing a distinct identity. The area’s historic buildings are preserved, with new development infilling underutilized sites. Redevelopment in the long term creates opportunities to re-establish the historic block-and-street pattern, and add new iconic office towers that bring more workers to the heart of downtown.

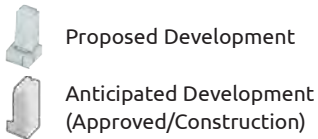


Figure VG-8: Aerial View of Central Core Looking South Down San Pablo Ave.

Existing plazas are re-activated with new spaces to sit, gather, and interact. Buildings and parking structures with blank walls facing sidewalks are retrofitted with active ground floor uses. The “Green Loop” and “West Oakland Walk,” an integrated system of walking and biking paths that include 14th Street, connect the Central Core to Lake Merritt, Jack London, the Art + Garage District, and West Oakland. Bus-only lanes and street design improvements along Broadway have made it Oakland’s premier multi-modal corridor and increase connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods.

## Lake Merritt Office District

**Existing Condition:** Fronting on Lake Merritt, “the jewel of Oakland,” this downtown district offers expansive views and opportunities for outdoor connection with nature. The Lake Merritt Office District neighborhood includes much of downtown’s Class A office space. The 19th Street BART Station and AC Transit’s Uptown Transit Center serve the Lake Merritt Office District. Many existing towers are wide and heavy with ground floors that do not always meet the sidewalk in active or inviting ways; and public rooftop open space, such as on the Kaiser Office Center building, is not easy to access. Some of the office-based nonprofits located here, along with small businesses, struggle with the high rents caused by low vacancy rates. With its easy access to BART and other transit, the Lake Merritt Office District area has the potential to absorb a large proportion of downtown’s future Class A office market demand.

**Future Vision:** The Lake Merritt Office District continues to grow with buildings of greater intensity. Similar to the Central Core, this district contains the most intense development found in downtown, but with a greater focus on workplaces. “Office priority” sites designated in the Land Use Framework have ensured new office and employment space is maximized on key opportunity sites. The increased supply of commercial office space has helped to support Oakland as a local and regional jobs center, employ existing Oakland residents with living wage jobs, and provide greater commercial tax revenues to support City services and capital improvements.

Updated zoning and design guidelines that require buildings to provide active street frontages, such as shopfronts, awnings, outdoor seating, and primary entrances, as well as open space and street improvements, such as pocket parks, regularly spaced street trees, and street vendors, have made the district more welcoming and walkable. 22nd Street has been transformed into an intimate, plaza-like street corridor with decorative paving and special lighting that connects Uptown and the Office District to Lake Merritt.

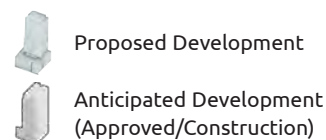
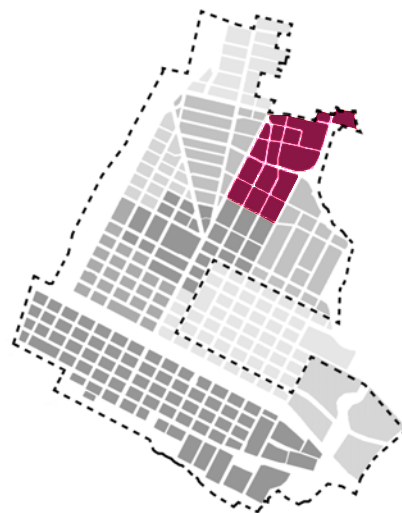
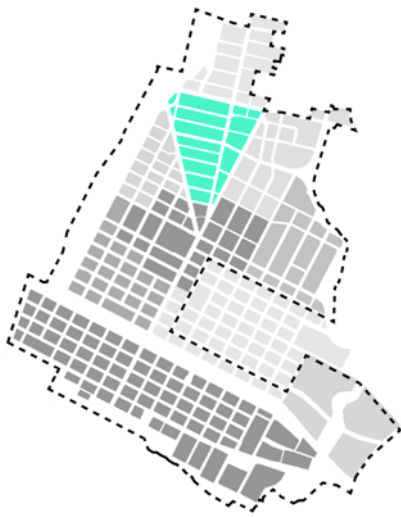


Figure VG-9: Aerial View of Lake Merritt Office District Looking Northwest



## Uptown

**Existing Condition:** Historically a shopping and light industrial district, Uptown has been revived in recent years into a vibrant arts, dining and entertainment destination for both local and regional patrons. Despite this revival, there are still many vacant shopfronts in the neighborhood, particularly on Broadway leading toward the Central Core. Several of Oakland's historic large-scale entertainment venues are in the area, including the Fox and Paramount Theatres. More recently, smaller scale theaters have also located in the area, and art galleries, often run by the artists or by volunteers, are located in brick warehouses. Newly developed housing in residential and mixed-use buildings fill the center of the neighborhood.

**Future Vision:** Uptown continues to serve as one of downtown's most vibrant entertainment areas. Strategic infill of vacant and surface parking lots and the re-purposing of underutilized and historic buildings to meet current needs—such as housing and incubator space for small businesses—help bring new people to the streets of Uptown. A downtown-wide master lease program and new allowances for temporary and pop-up uses keep storefronts filled and active throughout the year. Mixed-use developments transition into flex-use areas north of Grand Avenue to accommodate for a greater range of ground floor uses, including light manufacturing, commercial, and residential. The greatest building heights are located between Broadway and Telegraph Avenue, near the Lake Merritt office areas.

Public realm improvements in Uptown include upgraded streetscapes—particularly on Broadway, Telegraph and Grand Avenues—as well as design guidelines that require minimum transparency on the first floor, visible signage, and the presence of awnings, have made the district even more inviting to pedestrians. Together with the Green Loop running along 20th Street, high-quality bicycle facilities on Telegraph, and mid-block paseos between 20th Street and West Grand Avenue, these improvements have strengthened the connection between Uptown and the surrounding neighborhoods.

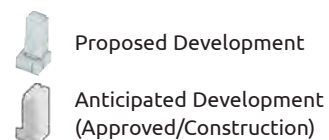


Figure VG-10: Aerial View of Uptown Looking South

## Koreatown/Northgate

**Existing Condition:** The Koreatown/Northgate (KONO) neighborhood has small storefronts along Telegraph Avenue that host a variety of multi-ethnic businesses mixed with local independent maker spaces, art galleries, bars, and restaurants, which has created a robust arts and entertainment scene. East of Telegraph Avenue, existing smaller-scale production buildings establish a unique character in the historic Garage District. Originally an industrial and auto repair area, many of the buildings in the Garage District area today have been converted into art galleries and maker spaces. Currently, some artists and makers, as well as other multi-ethnic businesses in the neighborhood are being priced out. Northgate Avenue is a wide boulevard with few pedestrian amenities that acts as a barrier in the neighborhood. The area near the 27th Street freeway underpass currently serves as sanctioned temporary housing for homeless individuals.

**Future Vision:** Koreatown/Northgate (KONO) continues to grow as an art, maker, and entertainment destination. New development includes strategic infill, the re-purposing of historic buildings, and the retrofitting of parking garages with active frontages. New affordable and mixed-income housing developments are also encouraged in underutilized sites. 25th Street, the heart of the Garage district, has thriving industrial, makerspace, and arts uses, while on surrounding blocks flexible, mixed-use areas permit ground floors to host a variety of uses with potential for housing above. Increased height and/or density along 24th, 26th and 27th Street, Telegraph Avenue, and West Grand Avenue is leveraged as part of downtown's incentive program to provide affordable arts, culture, and makerspaces, as well as public green areas in the neighborhood. An arts/cultural overlay zone provides additional incentives and restrictions within the district to retain the existing character of the district.

Public realm improvements include wider sidewalks, street trees, and active building frontages to improve walkability. A separated protected bike lane on Telegraph Avenue is a comfortable path for cyclists of all experience levels, and a new pedestrian paseo breaks up the long blocks between Telegraph Avenue and Broadway, and provides additional public space to feature art and host community gatherings.



Proposed Development



Anticipated Development  
(Approved/Construction)

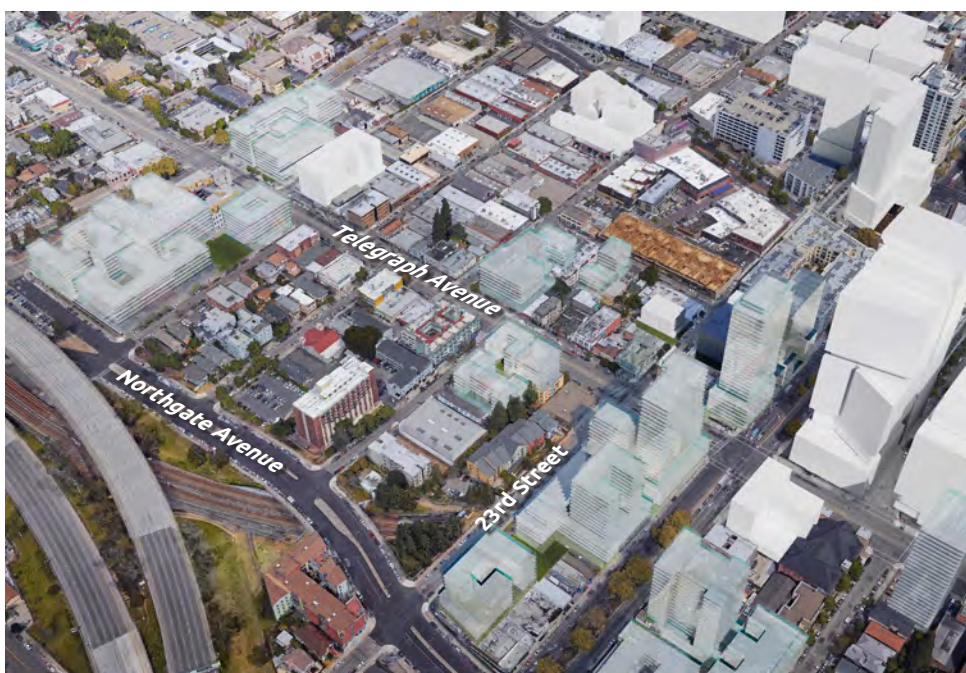
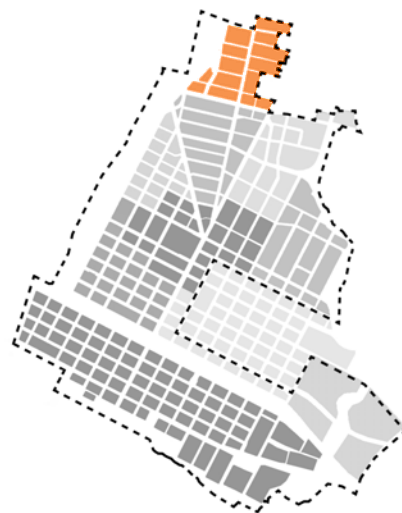


Figure VG-11: Aerial View of KONO Looking Northeast

## VISION & GOALS

### NEIGHBORHOOD VISION



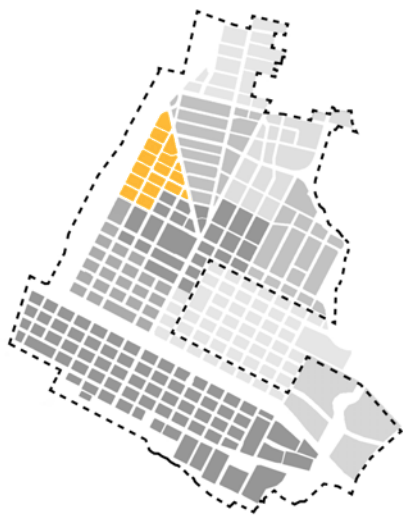
**Figure VG-12: Existing conditions along 17th Street, looking east toward San Pablo Boulevard.**

#### 17th Street West of San Pablo Avenue

The images on this page illustrate improvements that could occur along 17th Street to create a more inviting entry into downtown. Elements include separated bicycle lanes in each direction. The existing right-of-way is wide, with space to add a painted buffer between the bike lane and car travel lanes while maintaining sidewalks of at least 10 feet. Blank walls have also received plants and decorative murals. These upgrades to the public realm will catalyze the redevelopment of underutilized spaces and support infill development, as envisioned in the rendering. New development can be either traditional or modern in design (depending on the developer or architect); what will be required by future regulations is that the ground floor is designed to be inviting along the street frontage.

**Figure VG-13: Proposed Street Improvements and Potential Infill Development**





## West of San Pablo

**Existing Condition:** West of San Pablo is an area that combines small pockets of historically significant Italianate and stick homes (the surviving fragment of a larger residential neighborhood, interrupted by the construction of I-980) with a network of wide, auto-centric boulevards and new, mid-size residential developments. Existing and historic African American communities in this neighborhood and West Oakland were damaged by the construction of I-980, and are now displaced or at risk of displacement. Historic resources include areas of primary and secondary importance. There are gaps in the building fabric along some of the street edges, which would be appropriate for infill development. The neighborhood includes 17th Street and 20th Street, which are gateways to downtown and West Oakland.

**Future Vision:** The area West of San Pablo maintains quaint pockets of smaller scale and historic buildings, some of which have been adapted for new uses, with new strategic infill development that closely matches the scale of existing and surrounding structures. Greater intensity permitted near the Central Core and along San Pablo Avenue, allow the neighborhood to accommodate more residents and workers, though any developments adjacent to historic properties must step down in height and bulk to allow for a better physical transition. Public realm and mobility improvements, including the Green Loop running along Martin Luther King Jr. Way, bicycle facilities along 17th Street, and bicycle and bus facilities along 14th Street and San Pablo connect the area to the surrounding neighborhoods.

While beyond the scope of this plan, the possibility of remaking I-980 into a green multi-way boulevard with new transit amenities, public open spaces, housing, and jobs, would be transformational in accommodating more growth and reconnecting the urban landscape between West Oakland and Downtown Oakland. As the feasibility of transforming the highway into this surface amenity is explored, a restorative initiative to address the historical damage done by urban renewal to West Oakland's Black community should be initiated. This would produce a plan for equitable social practices and design with targets and incentives for affordable housing, social services, and a mix of jobs that focuses on the needs and priorities of West Oakland's Black residents and existing small businesses to ensure they benefit from the potential highway conversion and participate in improvements to this neighborhood. This I-980 multi-way boulevard concept will require future feasibility studies.



## VISION & GOALS

### NEIGHBORHOOD VISION

## I-980 Corridor

When construction of I-980 was completed in 1985, its 560-foot wide excavated trench separated West Oakland from downtown. The highway was designed to connect I-580 to a second crossing of the Bay Bridge that was never built. The road is over-engineered for the amount of vehicles it serves today, and has highway crossings that are unfriendly to pedestrians and cyclists; so there is a long-term opportunity to reimagine the design and function of this corridor to better serve all Oaklanders.

**Vulnerable Populations:** Historic African American communities in West Oakland that have been damaged by the development of I-980 and are now displaced or at risk of displacement.

**Why Consider Changing?** Opportunity to better connect West Oakland to downtown; opportunity to restore communities that were disrupted by highway construction; redesigning the corridor yields a large quantity of publicly-owned land that could be used for public benefit including housing, improved streets, and open space

### I-980 Conversion to a Multi-Way Boulevard

A freeway conversion of I-980 south of Grand Avenue is a big idea for future study that would add immeasurable value to Oakland, and reconnect West Oakland with downtown. Such a project would open up new areas for mixed-income and affordable housing, as well as new accessible work space and much needed public green space. The replacement boulevard would feature tree-lined, protected bicycle paths, vehicular side-access lanes with on-street parking, and the potential for a new submerged BART alignment. The redesign of the I-980 freeway is a long-term prospect that will require additional feasibility analysis, so it is outside the scope of the Downtown Plan.

In the short term, maintaining the freeway and improving the connections across it could bring immediate benefits. Existing overpasses can be retrofitted to be more bike- and pedestrian-friendly by reallocating a portion of existing vehicular lanes to widened sidewalks and bike paths.



Figure VG-14: Potential Multi-Way Boulevard

**IF DEVELOPED AS ILLUSTRATED ABOVE, THE I-980 CORRIDOR COULD ACCOMMODATE:**

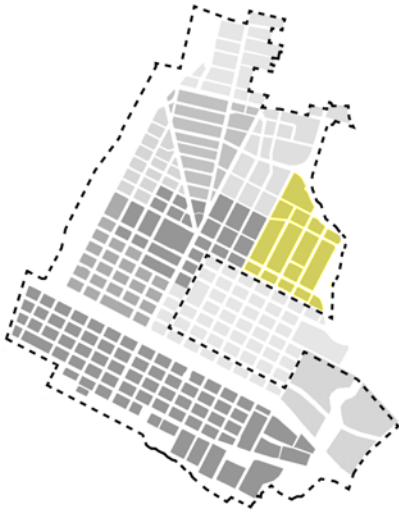
**+4,983 Residential Units**

**+1.5 M Sq. Ft. of Commercial Space:**

- 907.6 K Sq. Ft. of Office Space and
- 600.3 K Sq. Ft. of Retail/Neighborhood-Serving Commercial Space



Figure VG-15: Existing I-980 Boulevard



## Lakeside

**Existing Condition:** Lakeside is an established neighborhood providing urban housing in a densely developed but quiet setting. The neighborhood is comprised mostly of closely spaced apartment buildings with little or no setback from the sidewalk. Some prominent historic landmarks and cultural centers are contained in the neighborhood, including the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts and the Scottish Rite Temple. The typically smaller building footprints found here are a result of the lot scale, which is consistent with the original platting (land divisions) established in downtown.

**Future Vision:** New infill development in Lakeside blends seamlessly with existing historic and high-quality buildings that have been thoughtfully preserved, while improved civic spaces support and enhance local cultural institutions. This incremental infill development has filled in longstanding gaps in the existing block network and helped to further activate the neighborhood. Street design improvements along 14th and 15th Streets connect residents to Lake Merritt and the Central Core with walkable, pedestrian-friendly settings.

The center of the neighborhood is predominately residential, including a section of its core with a mix of small- to medium-sized residential types. The lower heights maintained in Lakeside help diversify the housing types available downtown and preserve the existing character of the neighborhood. To the north and west, the neighborhood transitions into the more intense development found in the Central Core and Lake Merritt Office districts. The concentration of Class A office development in those areas has allowed the edges of Lakeside to focus on more affordable office spaces with a variety of office types and sizes.

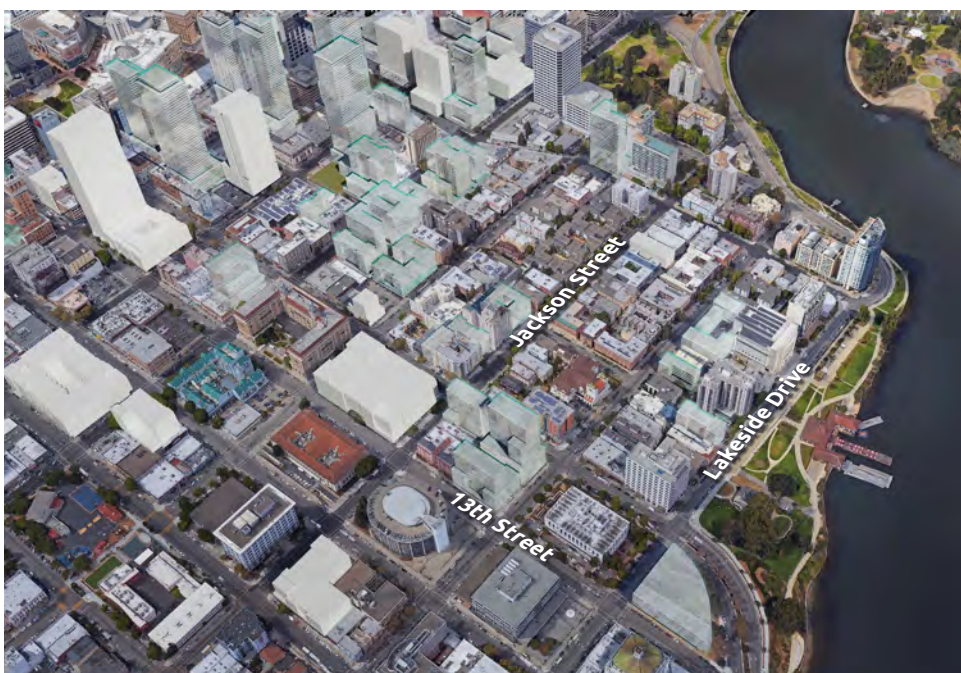
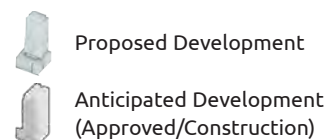


Figure VG-16: Aerial View of Lakeside Looking Northwest



## Old Oakland

**Existing Condition:** Old Oakland is comprised of historic buildings, residential communities, small shops, and businesses. The Old Oakland neighborhood is best known for its historic, walkable mixed-use center where two- to three-story brick commercial buildings on tree-lined streets create a shopping and dining center. Preservation and enhancement are a major focus in the core of this area. Despite the concentration of buildings and shops along 9th Street, there are several underutilized surface parking lots along 7th and 8th Streets. Currently, the blocks at the southern edge of the neighborhood facing onto the I-880 freeway contain large-scale buildings with civic uses, including the Oakland Police Department, County Courthouse, and Detention Center. To the north, the neighborhood is defined by the Oakland convention center, which spans the former Washington Street right-of-way between 10th and 11th Streets. Together, these “super-block” developments altered the Old Oakland street grid, lengthening walking distances, disrupting the historic and contextual pattern with the surrounding blocks, and creating barriers between Old Oakland and the rest of downtown.

**Future Vision:** Old Oakland remains a charming neighborhood retail and dining destination. The continuous street trees, bulb-outs, urban furniture, and brick sidewalks, characteristics of the historic core around 9th Street, extend throughout the neighborhood, helping to spur additional mixed-use infill consistent with the historic character and scale of surrounding buildings. A Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program also encourages the rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings and context-sensitive infill development. The re-location of City and county functions from the blocks along I-880 transform this part of the neighborhood into a high-intensity mixed-use area, enabling Old Oakland to accommodate more of downtown’s overall growth. A reconfigured Convention Center creates opportunities to re-establish elements of Washington Street, and better connect Old Oakland with the rest of downtown. While the Broadway frontage and historic neighborhood core have the greatest mix of uses, the area becomes increasingly residential moving west.

One-way to two-way street conversions improve circulation and connectivity to Chinatown. Additionally, the I-880 underpass at Martin Luther King Way and Jefferson Square is improved as part of the Green Loop’s integrated trail and green-street system.

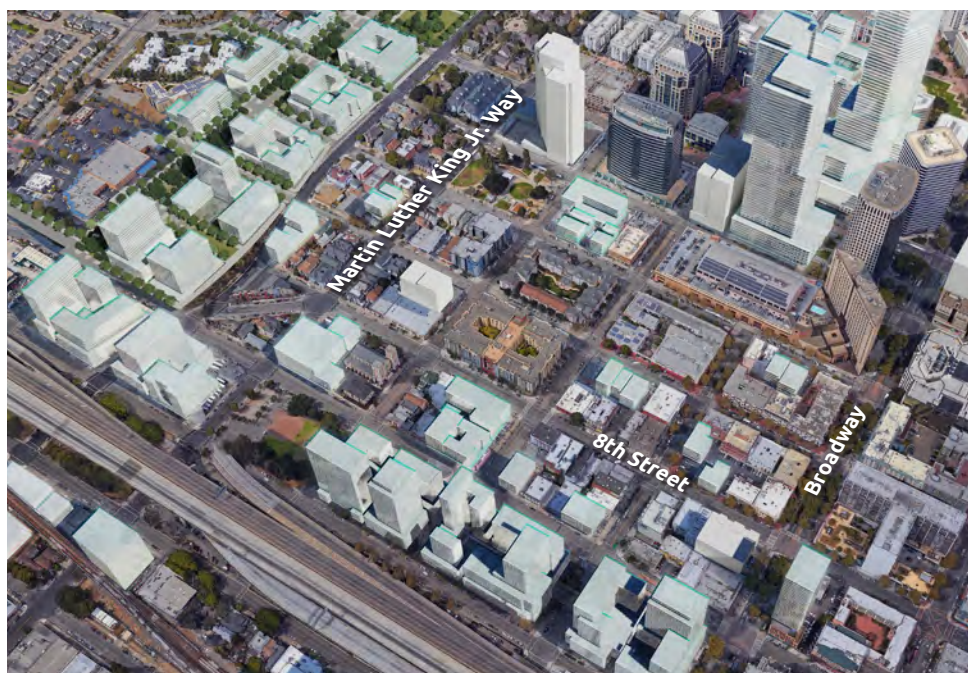
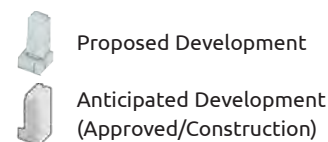
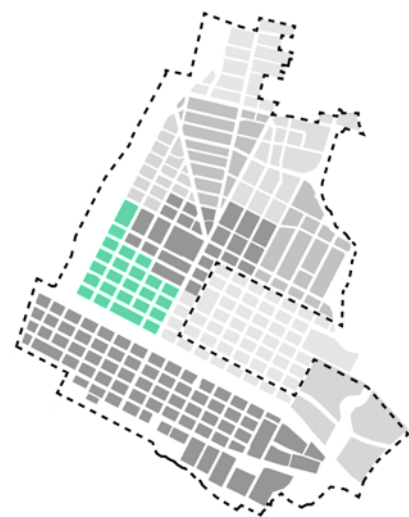


Figure VG-17: Aerial View of Old Oakland Looking North

## VISION & GOALS

### NEIGHBORHOOD VISION



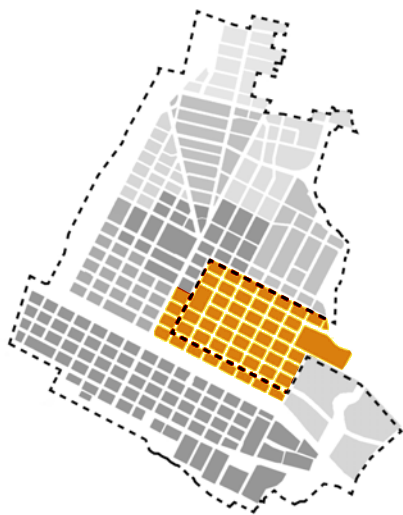
Figure VG-18: Existing conditions along 9th Street, looking west toward Broadway.

#### 9th Street Chinatown

The images on this page illustrate improvements that could occur along 9th Street to establish a gateway into Chinatown that will help define it as a cultural heritage destination and improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians. Improvements include protected bike lanes in each direction. Instead of using NACTO's and MUTCD's standard green paint on the bikeway, colorful floor murals could be created by local Chinese and Korean artists. New wayfinding, street lights, and benches help create a unique identity for this district, while continuous street trees provide shade and improve air quality.

Figure VG-19: Proposed Bike Facilities and Cultural Heritage District Street Design Elements





## Chinatown

**Existing Condition:** As one of the most vibrant neighborhood retail districts, Chinatown contains several historic areas and contains a distinct Asian-influenced character that attracts locals and visitors, including the many regular patrons of the district's religious, social, and health resources, and Asian residents from throughout the East Bay seeking businesses catered to Asian customers.<sup>3</sup> The area is bustling every day of the week with activity and is consistently a significant tax revenue generator for the city. There is a significant immigrant and senior population in Chinatown that is particularly vulnerable to displacement, with 50-60% of residents being renters. In the Chinatown neighborhood between 14th Street and I-880 from Broadway to Alice Street, the median income is a mere \$17,609, with only 22% of people who speak English, and approximately 46% who are over the age of 75 years.<sup>4</sup> These tenants are vital to the cultural character and economic diversity of the Chinatown and Eastlake neighborhoods.

**Future Vision:** With its array of unique cultures, Chinatown continues to be an essential asset for the City of Oakland. Culturally specific street design and gateway elements help identify Chinatown, with some residents wanting to see the neighborhood recognized as an official cultural heritage district. Vibrant streets with better loading/unloading zones, wider sidewalks, and safer crosswalks make the neighborhood cleaner and safer. Furthermore, the redirection of Alameda freeway traffic away from Chinatown's streets, reconstruction of 6th Street between Broadway and Oak, and the removal of the Broadway off-ramp implemented as part of the Oakland Alameda Access Project improve access to the I-880 freeway and move traffic off local streets in Chinatown, making them safer. Public space improvements, particularly in Lincoln Square and Madison Park, are identified as community priorities. These improvements serve Chinatown's many families and multi-generational residents.

*Note: The Downtown Plan will not be evaluating changes to character and intensity for the areas of Chinatown defined by 7th Street to the south, 13th Street to the north, Franklin Street to the west, and Fallon Street to the east. These areas of Chinatown were instead addressed by the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan, which was adopted in 2014. However, the mobility recommendations adopted for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan will apply to Chinatown, and build on recommendations included in the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan to improve pedestrian safety and traffic circulation for Franklin, Webster, Harrison, Madison, and Oak Streets, as well as 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Streets.*



3 Lake Merritt Station Area Plan Market Opportunity Analysis. Conley Consulting Group, 2010.

4 Revive Chinatown. CHS Consulting Group. September, 2004, pp. 11.

## VISION & GOALS

### NEIGHBORHOOD VISION



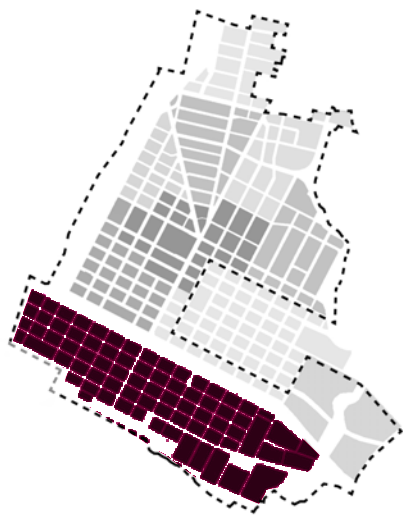
Figure VG-20: Existing conditions along Martin Luther King Jr Way at I-880, looking south toward Jack London.

### I-880 Underpass at MLK and Jefferson Square

The images on this page illustrate a new Underpass Park that would be a key component in the proposed downtown Green Loop. Located along Martin Luther King Way at Jefferson Square on Caltrans lots that are currently used for bus storage, the Underpass Park would create a safer and more inviting connection between downtown and Jack London. Key features include parking-protected bike lanes, landscaping, public gathering spaces, outdoor market space, a skate park, and new opportunities for public art beneath the I-880 freeway.

Figure VG-21: Proposed Green Loop Underpass Park





## Jack London District

**Existing Condition:** The Jack London District is situated on the downtown estuary waterfront and has a distinct early industrial and maritime character. Most of the land is in private ownership; however, two key redevelopment sites located at the gateway to the district along Broadway near I-880 are owned by the County of Alameda. Jack London has experienced tremendous change recently from historic industrial and distribution uses to housing, retail, dining, entertainment, office and maker uses. The area contains several important cultural and historic resources, including several festivals and events in Jack London Square, the historic waterfront warehouse district, the historic Produce Market, rated as an “Area of Primary Importance” (API), as well as several landmarks and some of Oakland’s earliest buildings.

Increasing public access to the waterfront and retaining Jack London’s industrial character are priorities here. Lack of affordable housing is an issue here in downtown’s wealthiest neighborhood, and there are conflicting desires between: 1) the retention of existing industrial uses, character, and jobs; and 2) the promotion of more mixed-use, residential development that include affordable units.

**Future Vision, West of Broadway:** The heart of Jack London’s industrial core, centered on 3rd Street, includes several historic warehouse buildings that have been preserved and reused through an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. Other strategies for the retention and creation of new manufacturing spaces with “innovation” zones, including an Arts & Manufacturing Overlay Zone, help preserve the character of this corridor, with surrounding blocks transitioning to mixed-use flex areas. Underutilized sites along I-880 (owned by BART) become potential development sites if the elevated rail structure is redesigned. As part of the downtown Green Loop, a large underpass park under I-880 at Jefferson Square, replaces previously underutilized parcels (owned by Caltrans), and provides spaces for public art, recreation, and gatherings that help connect Jack London to Old Oakland and the rest of downtown.

**Future Vision, Broadway and Waterfront:** Upgraded streetscape, trails, lighting, and signage, as well as new public spaces and mixed-use waterfront/entertainment destinations improve access to and activity around the waterfront. The public waterfront area stretches to include the western end of Howard Terminal with the extension of Water Street. Broadway remains the historic center of this district, though Washington Street has also blossomed into a popular shopping and dining destination; pedestrian-oriented mixed-use buildings (new and historic) line both corridors, and together with improvements to the I-880 underpasses, link the Jack London District to the rest of downtown. Increased height on key sites near I-880 and near the waterfront and more interactive design and uses at the street level bring



## VISION & GOALS

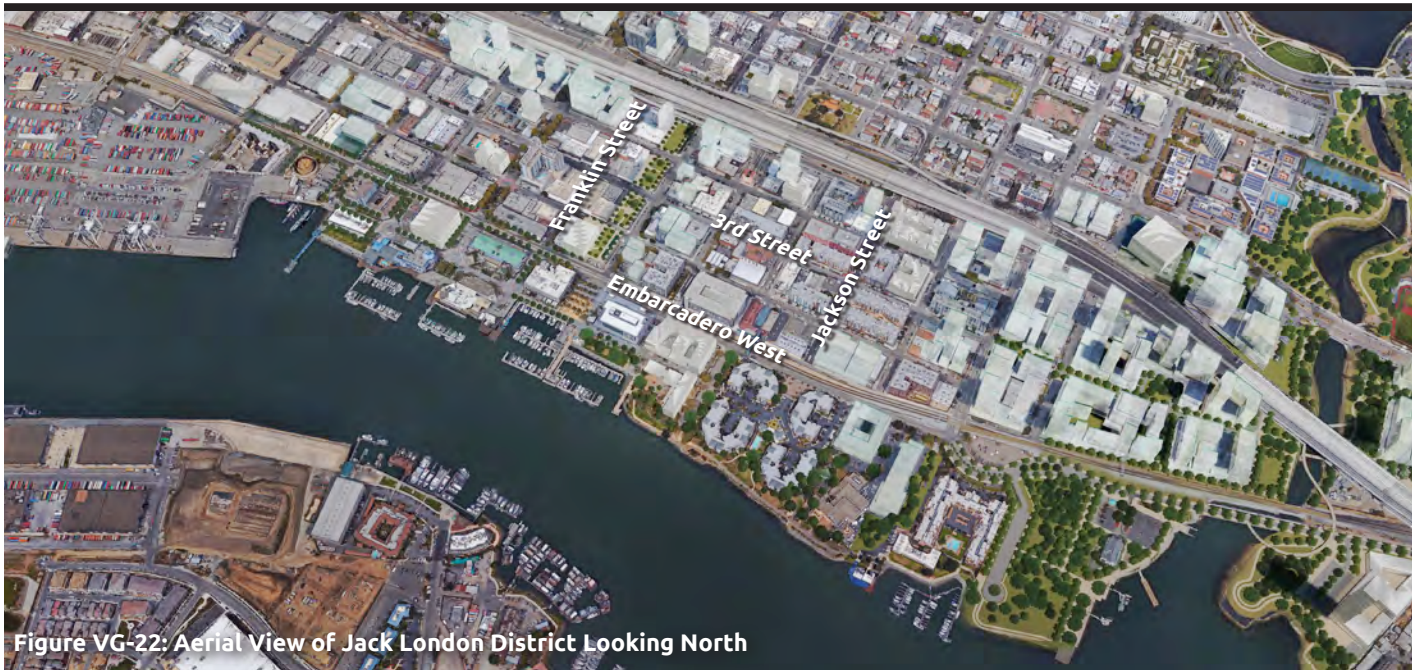


Figure VG-22: Aerial View of Jack London District Looking North



Proposed Development

Anticipated Development  
(Approved/Construction)

more residents, patrons, and foot traffic to Broadway and Washington Street. Historic buildings, including the city's earliest buildings, are preserved, reused, and integrated into the active street scene.

**Future Vision, East of Broadway:** Increased intensity along Oak Street has transformed it into a bustling corridor, connecting the Lake Merritt BART station and Jack London; pedestrian activity is prioritized here with mixed-use buildings that have shopfronts or other active ground floor facing the sidewalk. New streets and development are extended into the "Victory Court" area near the Lake Merritt Channel, accommodating the largest share of mixed-use and mixed-income housing in the district. Proximity to Brooklyn Basin and BART makes the Oak Street and Victory Court area appropriate for increased intensity. Developments in this area actively engage the Lake Merritt Channel and are well-connected to Lake Merritt, Estuary Park, Peralta-Laney, and Brooklyn Basin with a memorable waterfront linear park.

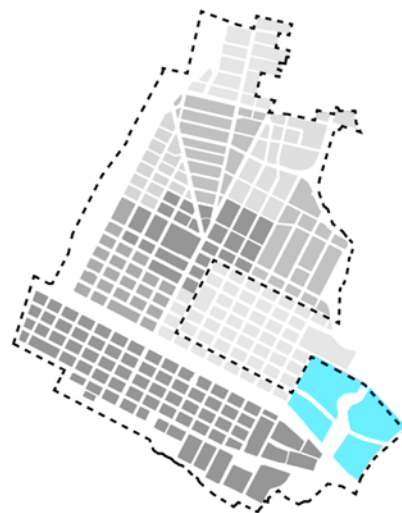
The historic Produce Market retains the area's historic character and associated blue-collar industrial jobs. Infill buildings in this area have flexible ground floors that contain commercial uses, maker space, studios, or other light industrial uses, with offices or residences above. The "Webster Green", a linear greenway between I-880 and the estuary waterfront built over the alignment of the Webster Tube, provides needed greenspace, and a more inviting connection between Jack London and Chinatown. Design and safety interventions along Embarcadero reduce conflicts between the active rail line and pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

## Laney College

**Existing Condition:** Laney College is one of the four colleges of the Peralta Community College District, located near the Lake Merritt BART Station. The Lake Merritt Channel separates the Laney College Main Campus, located on Fallon Street, from the Athletics Campus. The Main Campus also includes a large parking lot along 7th Street adjacent to I-880. In March 2018, Laney College approved a Facilities & Technology Master Plan to guide future improvements on campus, which includes a marketplace and incubator with parking garage and campus pedestrian bridge on the 7th Street Laney Parking lot.<sup>5</sup>

**Future Vision:** In addition to the improvements completed as part of the Laney College Facilities & Technology Master Plan, new mixed-use development on the Laney College surface parking lot adjacent to I-880 and the Peralta Community College Site between 5th Avenue and the Lake Merritt Channel provides new student and teacher housing, flexible ground floor spaces, and new institutional and educational facilities. New incubator spaces in these developments also provide demonstration sites for curriculum application that align with and complement the employment sectors growing in downtown, including technology and information.

These new mid- to high-intensity developments on the Laney College Main Campus add jobs, training, and services close to BART, Amtrak, and the downtown Green Loop. Laney's campus improvements add new streets and open spaces for pedestrian, bike, and vehicle circulation, and actively engage the Lake Merritt Channel. Improvements to Estuary Park, including new trails, walkways, and a pedestrian/bike bridge, help strengthen connections between Laney College and the rest of downtown.



Proposed Development

Anticipated Development  
(Approved/Construction)



Figure VG-23: Aerial View of Laney College Looking Southwest

<sup>5</sup> Peralta Community College District 2017 Facilities and Technology Master Plan Update. Steinberg. March, 2018



# 01: Economic Opportunity





Photo: Greg Linhares, City of Oakland

# ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

## 01

Downtown Oakland is an economic and employment engine for the City of Oakland and the Bay Area, serving as a regional employment center, transit hub, civic and cultural center, arts and entertainment destination, visitor destination, and residential neighborhood.

Downtown Oakland is currently experiencing significant growth in population and economic activity. However, this growth has been accompanied by rising concerns that the benefits of new jobs, services and revenues are not reaching all Oakland residents adequately or equally. Rising commercial and industrial rents in Downtown Oakland have also led to concerns about the displacement of small local businesses that contribute to Oakland's culture, vibrancy and economic security.

"Equitable economic development" seeks to leverage economic development strategies to create more equitable access that allows Oakland residents and businesses to participate in, and benefit from development, employment growth, and other new economic activity in downtown.<sup>1</sup> "Equitable access" means that identity – such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or expression – has no detrimental effect on the distribution of resources, opportunities and outcomes for Oakland's residents.<sup>2</sup>

The Economic Opportunity chapter outlines strategies and policies geared toward ensuring that the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan supports continued job and business growth, maintains downtown's artistic and cultural identity, and ensures that downtown offers a range of employment, training, and business opportunities for Oakland's diverse population.

1 The City of Oakland previously used a similar definition of equitable economic development in the West Oakland Specific Plan.

2 This definition was originally used in the City of Oakland's "Oakland Equity Indicators Report" in 2018

## CHAPTER 01: EQUITABLE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

### SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES



# CHAPTER 01:

## Equitable Economic Opportunity

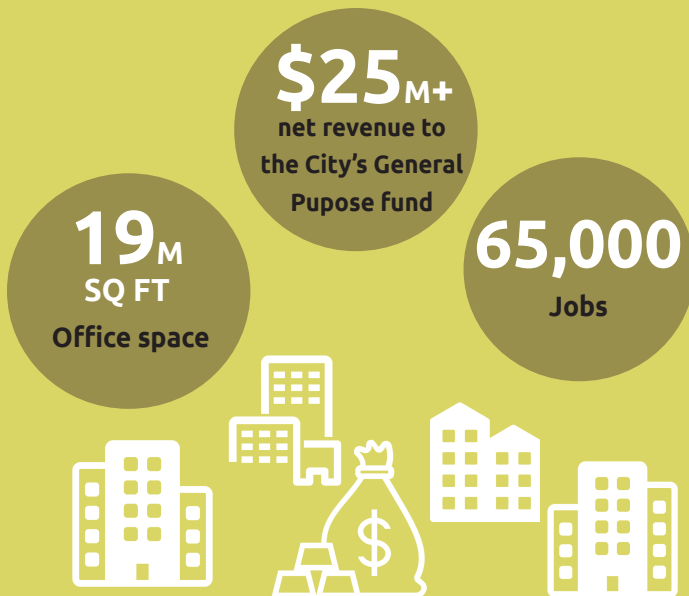
**Goal 01** *Create opportunities for economic growth and security for all Oaklanders.*

**Outcome E-1** *Economic activity builds community wealth and fuels the ongoing improvement of local conditions.*

**Outcome E-2** *Downtown commercial space meets current and future employment needs in projected key industries (such as professional, scientific and technical services; finance, insurance, and real estate; information; and arts), sustains a broad array of job skills, and is affordable to community-serving nonprofits and other community-desired businesses.*

**Outcome E-3** *Access to services, jobs, education and training gives all Oaklanders an opportunity to find local employment and economic security.*

### COMMUNITY WEALTH OF DOWNTOWN



### JOBS

**Downtown Oakland is the largest and most concentrated job center in the East Bay**

Downtown Oakland share of jobs, job growth, and office space in respect to Oakland

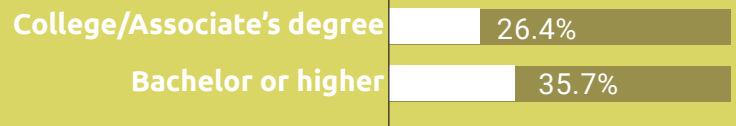


**5.3%**  
Vacancy rate

**Office space vacancy rate, lowest of all major Bay Area employment centers**

### CAREER DEVELOPMENT

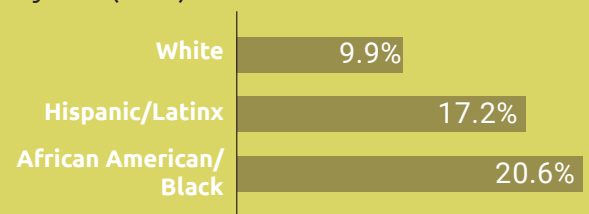
Downtown area job requirement



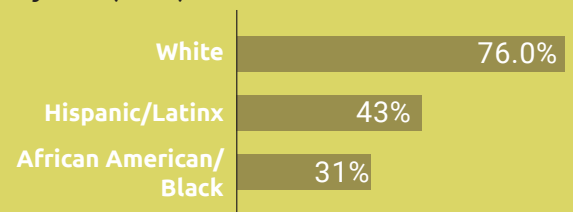
Downtown area tech cluster job requirement



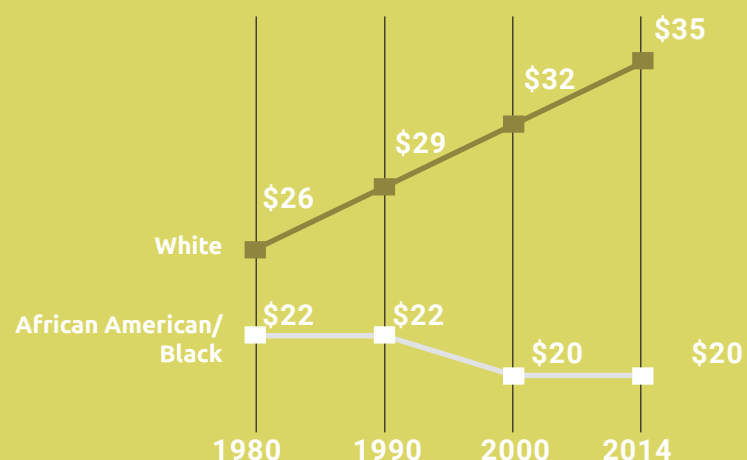
Percent of 16 to 24 year olds not working or in school by race (2014)



Percent of workers with an associate's degree or higher by race (2014)



Medium hourly wage by race/ethnicity (1980-2014)



# Summary of Existing Conditions

*The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan will recommend policies to make Oakland an easy, efficient, and prosperous place to do business, and to help all Oaklanders achieve economic security. The existing conditions in this chapter focus on downtown's role as a regional employment center and transit hub, and its critical role in generating revenue and contributing to the City's fiscal sustainability. The chapter also provides an analysis of the types of jobs generated downtown, and the skill level and opportunities for middle-wage jobs. Downtown's role in accommodating a network of community-supporting nonprofits is also evaluated, as well as its appeal as a visitor destination due to its rich cultural, nightlife and entertainment offerings.*

## Leveraging Assets

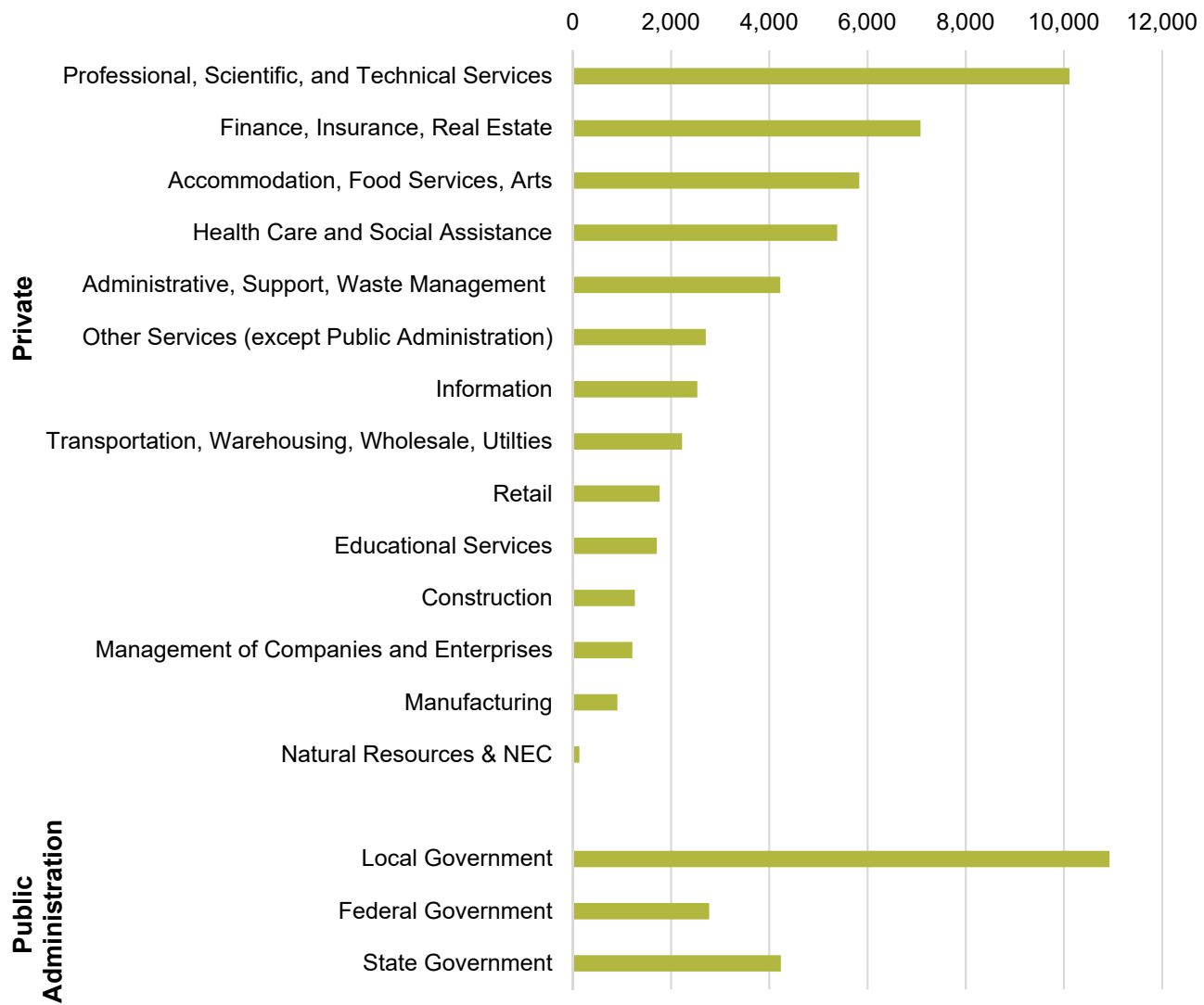
### FAST-GROWING REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER

Downtown Oakland contains the largest concentration of employment not only in Oakland, but also in the East Bay (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties). With 65,000 jobs as of 2016 and nearly 19 million square feet of office space, Downtown Oakland accounts for one-third of all of jobs in Oakland and two-thirds of the city's office space. Downtown Oakland also accounted for over 40% of all new jobs created in the city between 2011 and 2016.<sup>3</sup> More than two-thirds of Oakland's jobs in office-based sectors (including professional, scientific and technical services; finance, insurance, and real estate; and information) are located downtown.

Public sector jobs account for nearly one-third of all downtown employment. Professional, scientific, and technical-services jobs have been the largest and fastest-growing private-industry sector in recent years, represented by jobs in fields such as architecture, engineering, law, consulting, computer systems

<sup>3</sup> Additional details and background data are available in the study "Downtown Oakland's Economic Role in the City and the Region," prepared by Strategic Economics for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan.

**Figure E-1: Jobs in Downtown Oakland by Sector, Second Quarter 2016**



Source: California Employment Development Department, 2017; Strategic Economics, 2017.

programming, design, and other professional services. Accommodation (including jobs at hotels), food services, and the arts also provide significant employment, and in recent years added the greatest number of new jobs after professional services.

### **REGIONAL TRANSIT HUB**

As a regional employment center with excellent access by train, ferry, and bus, Downtown Oakland draws workers from across the Bay Area. This transit connectivity makes downtown an excellent location for future employment and residential growth. Locating jobs within walking distance of transit is particularly important for the Bay Area's low- and middle-income workers, who are more likely to take transit to work. Increasing the number of jobs in transit-accessible Downtown Oakland also enhances opportunities for workers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by taking transit rather than needing to drive to their jobs. Employment growth in Downtown Oakland can also make BART and AC Transit's transbay routes more sustainable by taking advantage of unused transit capacity in what is currently the "reverse commute" direction.

### **CONTRIBUTOR TO THE CITY'S FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY**

As a center of commerce and investment activity, Downtown Oakland generates property tax, business license tax, transient occupancy (hotel) tax, sales tax, and other revenues that support municipal services for all Oakland residents. A study completed for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan found that the existing mix of land uses and economic activity generates a net positive contribution to the City's General Purpose Fund, which is Oakland's primary, unrestricted operating fund. Downtown Oakland accounted for 17% of citywide revenues, yet only consumed 13% of spending on services.<sup>4</sup>

### **A CENTER FOR HIGH-SKILL, HIGH-WAGE JOBS—ALTHOUGH THESE SKILL REQUIREMENTS PLACE JOBS OUT OF REACH OF MANY RESIDENTS**

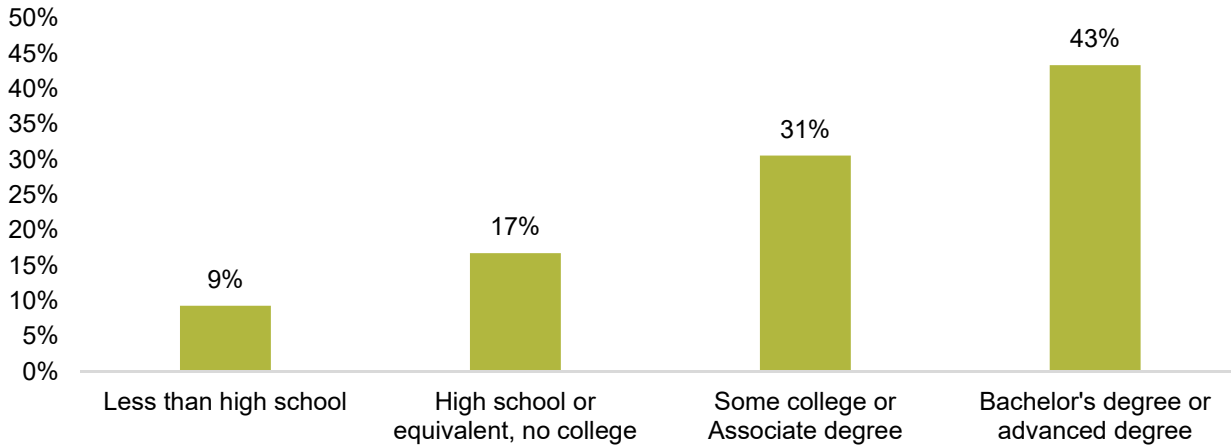
Analysis completed for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan found that 43% of Downtown Oakland's jobs require a bachelor's degree or higher, and 30% require some college or an associate's degree. This reflects the high education requirements of many jobs in professional services, finance and insurance, information, management, and other knowledge-based industries that are concentrated downtown. On average, jobs in Downtown Oakland pay higher wages than jobs located elsewhere in the city and county, reflecting this concentration of professional, office-based jobs. As of 2016, workers employed in downtown earned average wages that were 27% higher than wages for all workers in Oakland.

A mismatch currently exists between the types of jobs in Downtown Oakland (which attracts workers from throughout the region) and the educational attainment of the city's population—especially people of color. Seventy-six

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<sup>4</sup> This fiscal analysis was completed by Strategic Economics for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan, September 8, 2017

**Figure E-2: Educational Attainment Requirement for Jobs in Downtown Oakland**

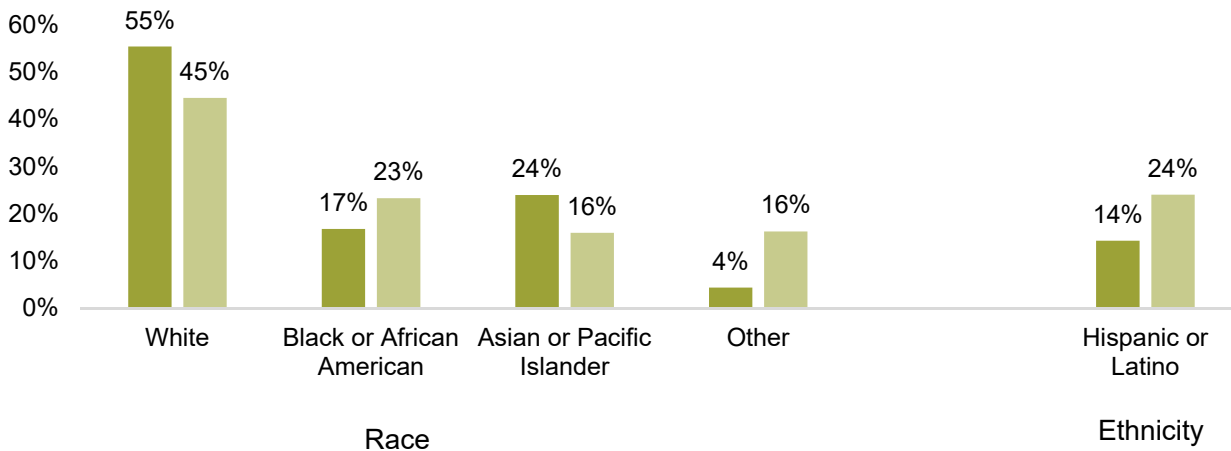


Based on education levels of Downtown workers (2014).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, 2014; Strategic Economics, 2017.

**Figure E-3: Race and Ethnicity: Downtown Oakland Workforce Compared to Oakland Labor Force Aged 16 and Over**

■ Workers Employed in Greater Downtown Oakland ■ City of Oakland Labor Force Aged 16 and Over\*



\*The labor force is defined as the civilian population 16 years and over who are either employed, or unemployed but actively looking for work.

Note that for the purposes of these data, Latino identity is considered an ethnicity; Latinos may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Social Explorer, ACS 2015 (5-Year Estimates); U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, 2014; Strategic Economics, 2017.

percent of Oakland’s White, U.S.-born workers hold an associate’s degree or higher, while only 31% and 43% of Black and Latinx U.S.-born Oakland workers hold these credentials, respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Although wage data by race and ethnicity are not available for downtown specifically, people of color experience significant disparities in earnings compared to Whites in Oakland overall. As of 2014, the median hourly wage in Oakland was \$35 for White workers, compared to \$20 for people of color. Only 67% of workers of color earned \$15 or more an hour, compared to 89% of White Oakland workers. These inequities reflect longstanding institutional disparities and policies in education, training, economic opportunity and occupation, as well as bias among employers in hiring, promotions, and wages.

These racial disparities in education and wages are further evidenced by Downtown Oakland’s smaller share of workers of color compared to the city’s overall population. In 2014, 55% of downtown workers were White, 24% were Asian or Pacific Islander, 17% were Black, and 14% were Latinx. In comparison, Oakland’s labor force—defined as civilian residents 16 years and over who were either employed, or unemployed but actively looking for work—included higher proportions of Black and Latinx workers. This mismatch is partly driven by downtown’s role in attracting workers from throughout the region, resulting in a whiter and wealthier workforce compared to the demographic composition of Oakland’s residents.

### **MIDDLE-WAGE JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

Despite the high educational requirements overall for jobs in Downtown Oakland, the area’s industry mix and sheer number of jobs offer a high concentration of middle-wage job opportunities with relatively low barriers to access. Several of Downtown Oakland’s largest employment sectors — including professional services, public administration, and healthcare and social assistance — do offer significant middle-wage job opportunities. The middle-wage jobs in these sectors generally do not require a four-year degree, though many require an associate’s degree or technical training. Table E-1 identifies industry sectors with significant middle-wage job opportunities, and which of these have a significant presence in Downtown Oakland. Sectors such as health care and professional, scientific and technical services present important opportunities to link Oakland workers to local jobs. The table also notes how these industry sectors align with existing priorities expressed through the content and policy emphases of the City’s Economic Development Strategy (regarding “key sectors”) and Workforce Development Strategic Plan.

### **HUB OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

Downtown Oakland presents important opportunities to coordinate with area employers and link Oakland residents to jobs in downtown. The City of Oakland, Alameda County, the Oakland Workforce Development Board,

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census estimates for the 2010-2014 period, gathered by the PolicyLink National Equity Atlas.

## CHAPTER 01: EQUITABLE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

### SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

**Table E-1: Summary of Employment Sectors by Size and Rate of Growth in Downtown Oakland, Opportunities for Middle-Wage Employment, and Relationship to Oakland's Target Industry Clusters**

Employment Sector	Large Downtown Presence <sup>1</sup>	Fast Growing in Downtown <sup>2</sup>	Significant Middle-Wage Employment Opportunities <sup>3</sup>	Corresponding Target Industry Clusters <sup>4</sup>	
				Economic Development	Workforce Development
Accommodation, Food Services, Arts	X	X		Culture and Arts	Hospitality and Leisure
Administration, Support, Waste Management		X			
Construction			X		Construction
Educational Services		X	X		
Fire, Insurance, Real Estate	X				
Health Care and Social Assistance	X		X	Health and Wellness	Healthcare
Information		X		Tech <sup>5</sup>	Information Communications Technology <sup>5</sup>
Management of Companies and Enterprises					
Manufacturing				Manufacturing and Food Production, Tech <sup>5</sup> , Clean and Green <sup>6</sup>	Advanced Manufacturing, Information Communications Technology <sup>5</sup>
Other Services					
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	X	X	X	Tech <sup>5</sup> , Clean and Green <sup>6</sup>	Information Communications Technology <sup>5</sup>
Public Administration	X		X		Government
Retail				Retail	Retail
Transportation, Warehousing, Wholesale, Utilities				Transportation and Logistics, Clean and Green <sup>6</sup>	Transportation and Logistics

<sup>1</sup> Five largest Downtown employment sectors.

<sup>2</sup> Five fastest growing Downtown employment sectors.

<sup>3</sup> Five sectors that account for the most middle-wage jobs (jobs earning \$18-\$30 an hour) in the Bay Area.

<sup>4</sup> As identified in Oakland's Economic Development Strategy and the Workforce Development Strategic Plan.

<sup>5</sup> Downtown Oakland's tech industry cluster includes businesses in the professional, technical, and scientific services and information sectors, with little if any computer manufacturing located in the Downtown.

<sup>6</sup> The clean and green cluster includes businesses in multiple sectors, including in utilities, manufacturing, and professional, technical, and scientific services.

Sources: California Employment Development Department, 2017; SPUR, *Economic Prosperity Strategy: Improving Economic Opportunity for the Bay Area's Low- and Moderate-Wage Workers* (October 2014); City of Oakland, "Sharing Prosperity in Oakland: An Economic Development Strategy for 2017," *Oakland Economic Development Plan Draft* (April 2017); City of Oakland Workforce Development Board, *Workforce Development Strategic Plan: Program Years 2017-2020* (2017); Strategic Economics, 2017.

**Table E-2: Workforce Organizations in  
Downtown Oakland**

<b>Workforce Organization</b>
Alameda County Social Services
Bridges from School to Work
Building Opportunity for Self-Sufficiency
Center for Employment Opportunities
City of Oakland Assets Program
Civicorps
CodeWalker Insititute
Covenant House of California
CSU East Bay
Department of Rehabilitation
Diversity in Health Training Institute
First Place for Youth
Hack the Hood
Hidden Genius
Kapor Center
Laney Community College
Love for Margot Foundation
Next Step Learning Center
Rubicon
Stride Center
Swords to Plowshares
West Oakland Job Resource Center
Yes We Code
Youth Impact Hub
Youth Radio

and their partners offer several workforce development services, many located in Downtown Oakland. Several important workforce development service providers, including Laney College, are also located in Downtown Oakland, where they benefit from a central location and excellent transit access. For example, downtown is home to Oakland's "TechHire" program, which coordinates partnerships with companies to develop mentorship programs, internships, and training referrals to guide underrepresented East Bay residents of color to careers in tech. Table E-2 shows examples of workforce development partners and services in downtown today.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER

Many of the social and civic service providers serving the city and county are located downtown, including business assistance, health services, youth services, homeless services, and many other service providers. Because of the downtown's central location and transit access, people across Oakland and throughout the region can access critical services located downtown. Maintaining affordable space for these services as office rents increase is critically important for city residents. Nonprofit organizations and other service providers also play a key role in supporting downtown's continued economic development, providing technical assistance to entrepreneurs and small businesses, connecting youth and other workers to downtown jobs, and convening business owners and workers around issues affecting specific industries.

#### CULTURAL CENTER

Downtown Oakland is also where Oakland gathers as a community at events ranging from the monthly First Friday Art Festival to annual festivals, such as Art and Soul and Oakland Chinatown StreetFest, to formal and informal protests to family barbeques and charity walks and races at Lake Merritt. Downtown is also home to many areas with concentrations of arts and cultural uses, including Jack London Square, Chinatown, the Art + Garage District, Koreatown/Northgate, and the Black Arts Movement & Business District. Community events and cultural arts help shape Oakland's identity, create cohesion among the community's diverse cultural groups, generate entrepreneurship and employment in the creative industries, and reinforce Oakland's appeal as a destination for visitors. The City's Economic Development Strategy identifies Culture and Arts as one of the city's key industry clusters, and notes that preserving access to affordable studios, maker space, performance space, and housing for artists is key to supporting the continued success of this cluster.

#### DINING, RETAIL, AND ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

Over the past five to ten years, Downtown Oakland has become a local and regional destination for dining, nightlife, and entertainment businesses. The

emergence of new dining and entertainment options complements the wide variety of existing independent retailers, which include everything from Asian-oriented retail in KONO and Chinatown to galleries in Uptown to boutiques in Old Oakland. Uptown and KONO have emerged as major dining, drinking, and entertainment districts, building on the reopening of the Fox Theater and popularity of the Art Murmur and First Friday events. Other retail districts — including Old Oakland and the Jack London District — have also attracted new restaurants and entertainment destinations, while Chinatown remains a long-standing destination for dining as well as for shopping and services. The renaissance in dining, nightlife, and entertainment has helped draw increased activity to Downtown Oakland, especially in the evenings.

Downtown Oakland also has a distinctive retail cluster of shops owned by younger entrepreneurs of color that gives downtown a unique, multicultural identity. In contrast to restaurants — which are expanding across the country — the retail industry is struggling nationally. However, Downtown Oakland's retail cluster has expanded. New, small, Black-owned businesses are adding to long-established Black-owned clothing shops, barber shops, galleries, beauty parlors, and other businesses. The City has also used its retail real estate to lease space at below-market rents to a number of businesses owned by people of color. Maintaining opportunities for entrepreneurship and business ownership by people of color is critical for sustaining Downtown Oakland's success as a retail and dining destination, and sustaining Oakland's identity, cultural heritage and leadership by these business owners.

As the residential population has increased in recent years, the demand for local-serving retail has increased as well. However, in most parts of Downtown Oakland, the demand for neighborhood-serving goods and services remains largely unmet. Rising commercial rents also threaten the ability of long-standing, neighborhood-serving businesses to remain.

## **VISITOR DESTINATION**

Downtown Oakland is attracting an increasing number of overnight visitors, generating additional economic activity. While estimates for downtown itself are not available, visitor spending is estimated to support nearly 5,800 jobs in Oakland with most of the jobs concentrated in the lodging, recreation, food and beverage, and retail sectors.<sup>6</sup> Most of the city's higher-end hotels are located downtown, and the arts, cultural, sporting, other events and activities in downtown make it an increasingly attractive tourist destination.

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<sup>6</sup> Visitors are defined as travelers who stayed in overnight accommodations, or day travelers whose trip deviated from their normal routine. Tourism Economics, The Oakland Visitor Economy: 2016 Analysis, prepared for Visit Oakland (April 2017).

## Addressing Barriers & Disparities

The community engagement and outreach processes conducted as part of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan revealed several consistent themes related to equitable economic development.

### **PRESERVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE EMPLOYMENT GROWTH**

The extent to which downtown employment continues its growth depends on many factors, including ensuring that adequate and affordable spaces are available for entrepreneurs to start businesses and for established firms to add new jobs. While short-term employment growth will vary depending on economic and market cycles, increasing interest from large private employers, rapid employment growth, and historically low vacancy rates indicate that Downtown Oakland is becoming an increasingly desirable jobs location for many employment sectors. Downtown Oakland's strength in professional services – a sector that is projected to account for more than one-third of regional employment growth through 2040<sup>7</sup> – and growing information technology cluster suggest that downtown is well-positioned to continue to attract jobs in the coming decades.

### **ACCOMMODATING GROWING DEMAND FOR OFFICE SPACE—ESPECIALLY IN TRANSIT-ORIENTED LOCATIONS NEAR BART**

Given Downtown Oakland's competitive advantages for employment in office-based sectors, maintaining the availability of office space will be critical while also balancing office development with housing, arts, civic, and other uses. While downtown has a significant amount of developable land, there are a limited number of prime sites for office development, which must be appropriately-sized to accommodate a large enough floorplate, and preferably be located near BART stations and proximate to existing office concentrations at City Center and the Lake Merritt Office District. Estimates of Downtown Oakland's potential capture of additional office space demand over the next 25 years vary from 6 million to 10.5 million square feet of space.<sup>8</sup> Despite this demand, prime office sites could potentially be lost in the near future to development for residential uses, which is currently more lucrative. Accommodating demand for additional office development could also potentially moderate price increases at relatively affordable Class B and Class C office buildings for businesses and nonprofit organizations that cannot afford higher rents.

### **GENERATING REVENUE TO SUPPORT CITY SERVICES**

Downtown already plays a key role in generating tax revenue that funds services throughout the city. Encouraging economic activity downtown can help to improve the City's overall fiscal health, and fund improved services for residents and businesses citywide. Retail and other businesses in downtown

<sup>7</sup> ABAG and MTC, Plan Bay Area 2040 Draft Supplemental Report (March 2017)

<sup>8</sup> Estimates of potential office space demand ranges come from a nearly 6 million square foot estimate produced by Strategic Economics for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission in 2015, and a range of 7.5 million to 10.5 million square feet produced by Hausrath Economics Group for the Oakland Chamber of Commerce in 2018.

benefit from the creation of a thriving, walkable Downtown Oakland, and will play a critical role in growing City revenues. However, without targeted policies to distribute revenues equitably, those revenues tend to be spent in the same communities over time, leaving some communities underserved.

### **PRESERVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAKERS, ARTISTS, AND CULTURAL USES**

Makers, artists, and cultural assets are core to the identity of Downtown Oakland and Oakland as a whole and are some of the main drivers of downtown's success. These uses are at risk of displacement as rents and development pressures increase.

### **CONNECTING OAKLAND RESIDENTS TO LIVING-WAGE JOBS AND ADDRESSING RACIAL DISPARITIES IN ACCESS TO THESE JOBS**

Downtown's accessibility and high concentration of jobs generally—including middle wage jobs—create opportunities to enhance resident access to jobs that pay a living wage and offer opportunities for advancement. This is particularly true for jobs in the rapidly-growing technology sector in downtown. However broader racial disparities in educational and economic opportunity and hiring practices have resulted in relatively limited job opportunities and lower wages for people of color in Oakland, and especially Oakland's Black residents. Employers are seeking workers with education and training, but the disconnect between how Oakland's youth are prepared and the jobs that are available means that wealthier, whiter workers are likely to acquire these jobs, while rates of unemployment for Black, Asian and Hispanic Oaklanders remain two to three times the rate of non-Hispanic White Oaklanders.

### **PROVIDING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

While the City of Oakland, Alameda County, the Oakland Workforce Development Board, and their partners offer several workforce development services, these programs are over-subscribed and face declining funding. Additionally, comprehensive "wrap-around" services are also needed to ensure that youth and young adults arrive for training healthy and prepared to learn. Downtown Oakland should continue its role as a hub of workforce development services and training opportunities.

### **SUPPORT FOR SMALL, LOCAL BUSINESSES**

The City's 2018–2020 Economic Development Strategy notes that 92% of Oakland's businesses consist of 20 or fewer employees. Downtown Oakland offers many assets for small and new businesses, such as accessibility for employees and customers, an "ecosystem" of other business activity, and a variety of commercial spaces. The City of Oakland should continue to leverage these assets to support small, local businesses in the downtown, including worker-owned cooperatives. Broad-based local ownership helps drive shared community wealth.

#### **SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES OWNED BY PEOPLE OF COLOR**

The City's Economic Development Strategy also found that more than half of Oakland's businesses are owned by people of color. The creation of a thriving, walkable, inviting Downtown Oakland depends on the success of these businesses and these businesses will in turn support the success of the city through their owners' leadership and by generating additional sales and business tax revenues.

#### **RETAINING AND EXPANDING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

Rising rents and low vacancies in Downtown Oakland have created significant challenges for long-established community-serving nonprofit and community-based organizations, particularly those established by and serving people of color. These changes are threatening the ability of longtime tenants to stay in Oakland and diminishing client accessibility for community service providers displaced from downtown.

#### **IMPROVING DOWNTOWN OAKLAND AS A YOUTH-FRIENDLY DESTINATION**

Downtown Oakland plays a significant role in serving the city's youth with employment and training organizations, as well as youth activities. Rising commercial rents threaten to displace critical youth services and organizations that are centrally located in Downtown Oakland. Youth who provided input in the planning process stated that the high-end restaurants and other businesses that have more recently been established downtown are not affordable to them, and further, that they did not feel welcome at those businesses or in the public spaces near them. Downtown could potentially improve its offerings of youth-friendly affordable activities, dining options, and welcoming public spaces.

#### **ENSURING DOWNTOWN OAKLAND RETAIL, DINING, AND ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS WELCOME ALL RESIDENTS, REPRESENT OAKLAND'S DIVERSE POPULATION, AND ARE ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE OF ALL INCOMES**

As rents and operating costs increase for retail, dining, and entertainment businesses in Downtown Oakland, as many new residents and workers with higher incomes move in, and as downtown increasingly returns to its historic role as a regional destination, community members have expressed concern that Downtown Oakland's business mix is increasingly focused on higher-income customers. Community members are concerned that this will make downtown exclusive, without businesses and amenities that cater to families, young people, older adults, and people without socioeconomic privilege.

# Measures of Success

*The measures below will help gauge the effectiveness of the Downtown Specific Plan at achieving its intended outcomes for Goal 01.*

- Increases in property tax, business tax, and transient occupancy tax revenues generated in downtown (which increase revenue that funds services citywide)
- Increase in total jobs in downtown by at least 50,000 by 2040
- Increase revenue for businesses owned by women and groups historically impacted by disparities in life outcomes and women
- Increase in number of worker-owned cooperatives located in downtown
- Increase in number of nonprofit organizations led by people of color and serving at-risk youth and youth of color
- Reduction in racial disparities in median household income for existing Oakland residents
- Narrowing of the unemployment rate gap between Oakland's White residents and Black and Latinx residents over time
- Reductions in the percentage of Oakland's 16- to 24-year old Black residents and other residents of color who are neither working nor in school
- Racial and ethnic diversity of workers in downtown matches the historic ethnic and cultural composition of the city

## CHAPTER 01: EQUITABLE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

### EQUITABLE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FRAMEWORK



# Equitable Economic Opportunity Framework

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*The Equitable Economic Opportunity Framework recommended by the Preliminary Draft Plan builds on Downtown Oakland's strengths as a vibrant regional destination with high-density employment; rapid job growth; significant generation of revenue for citywide services; excellent transit access; a variety of middle-wage job opportunities; visitor attractors; and dining, retail, entertainment, and cultural amenities serving diverse interests. At the same time, the strategies seek to ensure that Downtown Oakland plays a significant role in correcting racial and economic disparities to build wealth for all.*

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The following strategies not only support the outcomes set forth in the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan, but also recognize downtown's role in accomplishing the City of Oakland's citywide economic development goals articulated in the 2018–2020 Economic Development Strategy: To make Oakland an easy, efficient, prosperous and resilient place to do business; to reduce racial disparities; and to help all Oaklanders achieve economic security so that everyone has an opportunity to thrive. Specific policies and actions are described in the pages that follow these more general strategies.

#### **STRATEGY 1: Expand and maintain the inventory of office and other commercial space in downtown—particularly in transit-oriented locations near BART stations with excellent regional transit access.**

Given the strong market for residential development downtown, there is a need to preserve key sites that are most suitable for office development to ensure future opportunities for job growth. This strategy offers several advantages. Development of new office buildings will contribute ongoing tax revenues to support public services citywide, as well as additional funding for affordable housing, transportation and capital improvements through the City's Impact Fee program. Ensuring that there are adequate and accessible areas to expand and maintain the inventory of office and other commercial space in downtown will help to meet the future employment needs of Oakland residents, as well as providing jobs that take advantage of BART's excess capacity in the "reverse commute" direction. This type of development could also potentially contribute to additional community-desired benefits through incentive programs and other developer contributions.

#### **OAKLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

Given its strengths and assets described above, Downtown Oakland is especially well-positioned to contribute to the following focus areas of the citywide strategy:

- Supporting small businesses
- Supporting the incubation and expansion of businesses owned by people of color or women
- Assisting adults and youth in accessing training and job opportunities for living wage jobs
- Increasing employment of underrepresented groups in the tech sector
- Enhancing the efficiency and predictability of development permitting
- Providing workforce housing, transportation access, and transit-oriented development
- Enhancing tax revenues through economic and development activity
- Pursuing development at City-owned sites that meets community goals
- Supporting and attracting businesses, organizations, and activity within the industry sector focus areas of healthcare, manufacturing, high tech, retail, tourism and hospitality, culture/arts, innovation, and other nonprofit organizations

**STRATEGY 2: Incentivize retention and growth of commercial spaces affordable for community-serving organizations.**

Downtown has historically been home to many community-serving nonprofit organizations, but many have left or may need to leave due to rising rents. The nonprofit sector has a high percentage of agencies and other organizations serving people of color, including youth. Development incentives should be made available to encourage provision of space affordable to community-serving nonprofit organizations on-site in new developments or renovations.

**STRATEGY 3: Incentivize retention and growth of commercial and industrial spaces suitable and affordable for makers, artisans, artists and the arts.**

Maker and arts/artist activities are typically concentrated in subareas of downtown such as KONO, the Art + Garage District, and the Jack London area. Development incentives shall be made available to encourage provision and leasing of space serving the needs of these users on-site in new developments or renovations. When possible, zoning should permit flexible ground floor uses that allow light industrial/production and/or office use in addition to retail-related uses.

**STRATEGY 4: Generate additional public revenues and community-serving uses by encouraging growth of hotels and commercial spaces.**

The “Fiscal Analysis” memo prepared for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan found that hotels, office space, and retail space contribute significant net positive ongoing revenues to the City’s General Purpose Fund, exceeding those generated by comparable housing space. Enhancing the pace of development of hotels and commercial space in downtown will grow Oakland’s tax base and enhance the City’s ability to provide services and programming for its residents. At the same time, additional hotels can further strengthen Downtown Oakland as a visitor destination.

**STRATEGY 5: Encourage youth activities and opportunities downtown.**

Downtown Oakland already serves as a hub of youth programming, services, and training for residents from across the city’s neighborhoods. This strategy expands this role through ongoing efforts to retain and attract these organizations and connect them with downtown employers, as well as land use regulations that incentivize developers and property owners to accommodate these uses.

**STRATEGY 6: Decrease disparities in access to entrepreneurship resources by providing assistance to support small locally-owned businesses, and businesses owned by people most impacted by racial disparities (including establishment of cultural districts).**

This strategy supports citywide efforts to provide assistance to small, locally-owned businesses most impacted by racial disparities by deploying and

focusing available assistance in Downtown Oakland, supporting thriving commercial destinations, creating cultural districts, and supporting incubators and accelerators for social enterprise. These local businesses contribute to the economic vitality of Downtown Oakland and generate tax revenues. Retail, dining, and entertainment businesses together can in turn support downtown as a regional, multicultural entertainment, dining, and shopping destination.

#### **STRATEGY 7: Reinforce downtown as a growing retail, dining, and entertainment destination for all.**

Downtown is a gathering place for Oakland and the region. Uptown Oakland has emerged as a major dining, drinking, and entertainment destination, alongside multiple other destinations in downtown; people come to Chinatown from around the region for its cultural offerings, and both the lower downtown and Jack London Square areas are also known regionally for their entertainment options. Small, locally-owned retail businesses are also located throughout the downtown area, as well as businesses owned by people of color. Downtown can build on recent successes through requirements that support areas with existing and emerging concentrations of retail, dining, and entertainment uses (including areas otherwise focused on daytime commercial uses in order to minimize conflicts with residential uses), the creation of nightlife and/or cultural districts that focus on growing businesses welcoming all Oakland residents, fostering businesses that are owned by populations that have been impacted by racial disparities, encouraging youth- and family-friendly businesses, and continuing to encourage temporary pop-up retail uses in underused spaces.

#### **STRATEGY 8: Partner with large downtown businesses and industries to enhance employment opportunities and training for Oakland residents.**

The existence of large businesses and concentrated industries within Downtown Oakland—including professional service and health care—allows for a more precise targeting of efforts to encourage these employers to provide job opportunities for all Oakland residents. As growth and development continue to flourish downtown, the City can partner with the construction industry to enhance job training and apprenticeship opportunities for Oakland residents. The growing technology industry also creates opportunities to match Oakland residents with well-paid jobs through partnerships with schools, employers, nonprofits, and community groups, although this potential exists in other industries as well. Capitalizing on these opportunities will require continuation and expansion of ongoing partnerships with major institutions and employers to increase diversity in hiring practices and procurement policies, and invest in expanded hiring and training programs.

## TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR DOWNTOWN OAKLAND

The strategies and policies identified in this chapter contribute to a proactive transit-oriented development (TOD) strategy for the downtown area. This strategy supports the ridership and policy goals of BART. Each chapter of the plan contributes toward the strategy in a different way, such as local transportation improvements that enhance access to BART, land use policies that support higher intensity development near BART stations, and arts and culture policies that support regional and cultural destinations near BART.

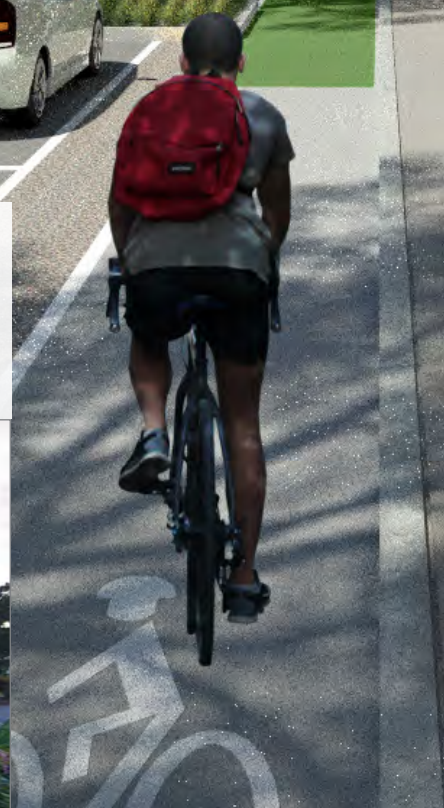
The Equitable Economic Development strategies contribute to the TOD strategy in the following ways:

- **Concentration of employment near downtown's BART stations, supporting transit ridership and a commute destination outside of capacity-constrained Downtown San Francisco:** The strategies focus on supporting employment growth in downtown and preserving prime office sites, generally located near the 19th Street and 12th Street City Center BART Stations (see the land use chapter for other details). Jobs at these locations will be easily accessible by BART and promote ridership to stations with greater capacity than stations such as Embarcadero and Montgomery in San Francisco.
- **Support for growth in a regional multimodal transportation hub that allows easy transfers to/from BART:** Downtown Oakland is also a major transfer point and destination for AC Transit buses; planned employment growth will therefore also enhance access to and from Downtown Oakland's BART stations.
- **Support for retail, arts, entertainment, and restaurants near BART stations, supporting off-peak transit ridership:** The Equitable Economic Development strategies focus on supporting and growing diverse arts, entertainment, retail and dining uses in Downtown Oakland, with many of these uses located within easy walking distance of the 19th Street and 12th Street City Center BART Stations. The planned growth of these uses will provide additional potential BART riders outside of commute hours.



### Lake Merritt Office District (Franklin and 20th Street)

The Lake Merritt Office district has been identified as an opportunity for additional office development with increased building intensity, due to its location near the downtown core and access to BART. New buildings will reinforce the pedestrian realm with active facades and awnings; bike lanes and wide sidewalks increase mobility options.





**Figure E-4: Lake Merritt Office District (Franklin and 20th Street)**

Existing Conditions (left)

Potential Future Conditions (above)

# Supportive Plan Policies

*The following policies implement the strategies in the Economic Opportunity Framework in order to achieve the three equitable economic development outcomes for Downtown Oakland.*

## Recommended Regulatory / Policy Action

### OUTCOME E-1

*Economic activity builds community wealth and fuels the ongoing improvement of local conditions.*

- E-1.1** Ensure that new development provides community desired benefits through impact fees, desired uses, tenant requirements, and other direct and indirect contributions, and enhances Oakland’s ongoing fiscal sustainability to better fund City services and community investment. New funds generated by development should be prioritized to serve underserved communities, per future direction by the City Council. (See Policy LU-1.3)
- E-2.1** Identify sites well-located for office use and prioritize future office development at these sites. Primary sites are located near BART and existing office concentrations at City Center and the Lake Merritt office district.
- E-2.2** Activate vacant storefronts and empty lots with retail and arts uses by supporting “pop-up” uses that temporarily occupy these spaces. Explore establishment of a formal program to identify vacant spaces and coordinate pop-ups through a City registry and referral process; explore development of a temporary use classification in the zoning code; evaluate and revise City requirements as needed.
- E-2.3** Maintain sufficient industrial space downtown to accommodate user needs—especially maintaining its unique existing strengths in space for small-scale “maker” uses such as custom manufacturing, production, arts and distribution.

- E-2.4** Develop and continually update requirements or incentive options for new development to provide affordable space for arts, community service/nonprofit organizations, and small, local, culturally-specific businesses.
- E-2.5** Pursue creation of a nightlife district and strategy in downtown locations with concentrations of bars, restaurants, nightclub, and entertainment venues, such as Uptown; design the strategy to accommodate these uses and destinations at a variety of price points, and support attraction of diverse populations.
- E-2.6** Provide affordable space for entrepreneurs and small, local retailers, artists, and artisans by expanding Oakland's master leasing efforts, in which the City of Oakland leases (or owns) spaces and then sub-leases that space to tenants meeting appropriate criteria. Consider offering long-term leases to allow tenants to make capital investments to build out the spaces to meet their needs. (See Policy C-3.6)
- E-2.7** Review and revise zoning and other City requirements to allow custom manufacturing uses in ground-floor retail spaces so that tenants can make and sell products in the same space.
- E-2.8** Pursue establishment of additional arts and culture districts in downtown, similar to the Black Arts Movement Business District; potential districts could include a Chinatown Cultural Heritage District, KONO Art + Garage District, and Jack London Maker District. Districts should only be established if local support exists.
- E-2.9** Restructure the façade tenant improvement program to focus on assisting businesses and nonprofit organizations that meet criteria for income and location in established cultural districts.
- E-3.1** Promote density and a mix of transit-supportive uses at regional transportation hubs, such as BART stations and major AC Transit multi-route stops.
- E-3.2** Develop incentives for contractors/builders to hire local workers, with a focus on increasing equitable representation of groups most impacted by racial disparities (including businesses owned by members of these groups) and other priority populations, including justice-involved individuals.

## OUTCOME E-2

*Downtown commercial space meets current employment needs in projected key industries (such as professional, scientific and technical services; finance, insurance, and real estate; information; and arts), adapts to future employment opportunities, sustains quality jobs, and is affordable to community-serving nonprofits and other community-desired businesses.*

#### OUTCOME E-3

*Access to services, jobs education/training, and other supportive services gives all Oaklanders an opportunity to find local employment and economic security.*

- E-3.3** Continue and expand local hire initiatives, training and partnerships with employers and Laney College to develop a job pipeline in the technology sector, “clean and green” sector, and other major industry sectors in downtown. Efforts should include expansion of the TechHire training/mentoring/placement model, and and diversity training for major employers in order to develop a more inclusive downtown workforce that better reflects Oakland’s demographic composition.
- E-3.4** Continue City efforts to work internally and with major downtown institutions and large employers to develop procurement and contracting policies that support small local businesses and businesses owned by people from groups most impacted by racial disparities.
- E-3.5** Partner with local nonprofit organizations to enhance outreach, training, and capacity-building activities for small, local suppliers/vendors, and to match these businesses with large employers in Downtown Oakland.
- E-3.6** Pursue establishment of a youth empowerment zone program in Downtown Oakland, integrated with local nonprofit organizations and focused on career training opportunities, particularly in STEAM, entrepreneurship, startups, and innovation, and focusing on youth of color underrepresented in these career paths. Consider partnering with the cultural districts to target the youth representing those cultures.
- E-3.7** Partner with local businesses to enhance the physical accessibility of public-serving retail and other spaces through application of “universal design” principles.

## **02: Housing & Affordability**





# 02 DOWNTOWN OAKLAND AFFORDABILITY

## 02

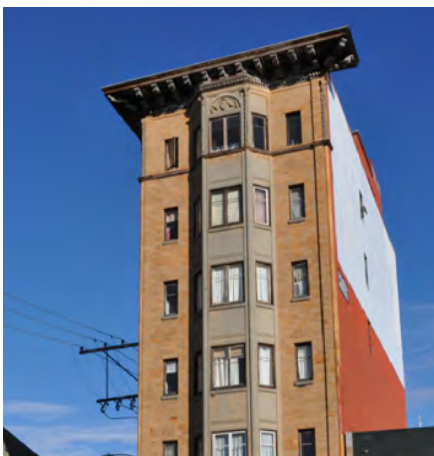
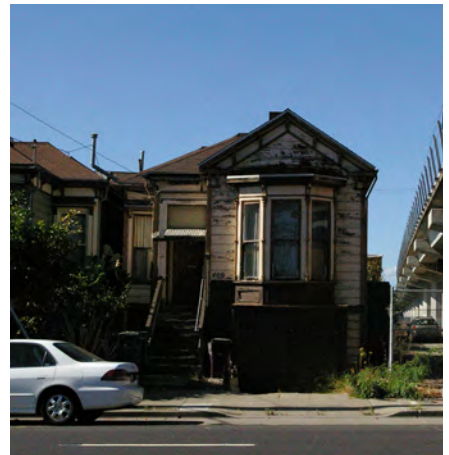
Participants in the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan's community input and engagement processes consistently raised housing affordability as a top concern. Addressing the housing needs of existing and future residents will be critical for ensuring that a racially and economically diverse community benefits from Downtown Oakland's access to amenities, jobs, and regional transportation options.

In the past, challenges in attracting housing development activity contributed to a public policy focus on encouraging market-rate residential development in Downtown Oakland. Efforts to develop both market-rate and income-restricted housing were successful in bringing significant investment to the downtown, and contributed to its emergence as an entertainment and dining destination, as well as an increasingly desirable location for both residential and office tenants.

Market conditions have changed dramatically in the past decade, necessitating a major shift in policy focus. Since 2011, the Bay Area has created 531,400 new jobs, but only permitted 123,801 new housing units: This adds up to a ratio of 4.3 jobs per housing unit, a rate well in excess of a healthy balance of 1.5 jobs per housing unit. The resulting housing demand and price pressures are pushing many long-time residents out of Downtown Oakland and the rest of the city. These include artists, culture-makers, and people of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, all of whom have given Oakland the vibrancy, creativity, and diversity that we value today.

## CHAPTER 02: HOUSING & AFFORDABILITY

### SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES



## CHAPTER 02:

### Housing & Affordability

#### Goal 02

*Ensure sufficient housing is built and retained to meet the varied needs of current and future residents.*

#### Outcome H-1

*Sufficient housing is built and retained that leverages all of Downtown Oakland's existing advantages and investments in transit, employment, services, and culture to support the full range of income levels, household types, mobility levels, and lifestyle choices that are essential to Oaklanders.*

#### Outcome H-2

*The ongoing threat of displacement is addressed to maintain downtown's historic racial, ethnic, and income diversity so that current and long-time Oaklanders remain an important part of the community fabric.*

#### Outcome H-3

*Oakland's artists and creative community are able to find housing and live-work opportunities in downtown that they can access and afford.*

#### HOUSING STOCK

##### NEW HOUSING UNITS

481

##### LOW-INCOME UNITS

11

##### MODERATE-INCOME UNITS

From 2015 through 2017, 7,176 new housing units were produced citywide, but only 481 were low-income restricted affordable housing units, and 11 were moderate-income restricted affordable units.

#### RENTERS BURDENED WITH HOUSING COST OVER 30% OF THEIR HOUSEHOLD INCOME (CITYWIDE)



#### HOURLY WAGE REQUIRED TO RENT

\$48.71/HR

Renters have to earn \$48.71/hr (or nearly 4 times the minimum wage) to be able to afford the median monthly asking rental rate of \$2,553

#### SHARE OF THE CITY'S INCOME-RESTRICTED AFFORDABLE HOUSING STOCK

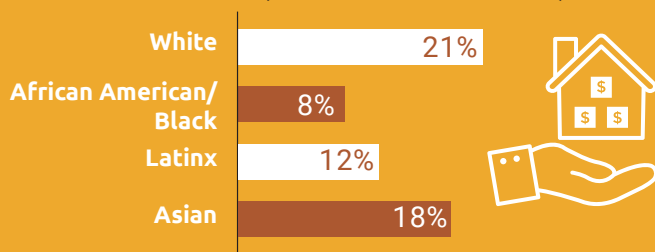
25%

OF ALL AFFORDABLE

Downtown Oakland has historically provided a significant share of the City's income-restricted affordable housing stock, accounting for roughly 25% of all citywide income-restricted housing.

#### DISPLACEMENT RISK

##### HOME OWNERSHIP (2011-2015 U.S. CENSUS)



Downtown Oakland's high share of income-restricted housing creates a relatively stable base of affordable units whose residents are less subject to housing cost pressures. The area also features Oakland's highest concentration of single-room occupancy (SRO) housing units, which serve as a naturally occurring affordable housing option.

#### DECREASE OF BLACK RESIDENTS DOWNTOWN

7%

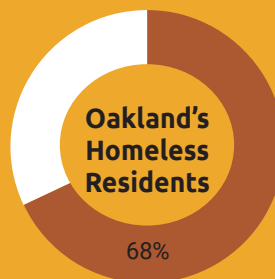
DECREASE IN NUMBER

The total number of Black residents living downtown declined 7% from 2000 to 2015.

9%

DECREASE IN SHARE

Black residents' share of downtown's population declined from 29% to 20% from 2000 to 2015.



An estimated 68% of Oakland's homeless residents were Black or African American as of the 2017 Oakland Homeless Count, despite Black residents only composing 26% of the overall City population

■ Black or African American

# Summary of Existing Conditions

*Downtown Oakland provides a unique set of benefits for its residents, including excellent low-cost regional transportation options, convenient access to a concentration of government and nonprofit services, and proximity to the East Bay's largest concentration of jobs — although rising commercial and residential costs are impacting retention of many residents and commercial uses. A summary of the existing conditions in this chapter identifies the assets, challenges, and measures of success related to housing and affordability and the supportive policies that follow.*

## Leveraging Assets: Existing City Policies and Funding Sources

At the citywide level, Oakland is pursuing policy and regulatory changes that balance the need for housing growth with ensuring that this growth contributes to preserving and expanding housing affordable to households of all incomes. The housing strategies in the Specific Plan will seek to leverage and complement those efforts. This approach recognizes that Downtown Oakland is impacted by the same market forces and policy environment as the rest of the city, although the specific circumstances in downtown—such as a strong development market, high housing densities, and a concentration of affordable housing—create unique opportunities and challenges.

The Oakland General Plan's Housing Element—mandated by the State of California—is the primary housing policy document of the City. The Housing Element assesses citywide housing needs, identifies sites with capacity to accommodate housing development, identifies constraints and opportunities to grow housing and prevent resident displacement, and sets forth policies and actions to achieve the Housing Element's goals.

While the Housing Element provides long-term guidance, the City of Oakland has also undertaken a major initiative to identify short-term housing affordability and anti-displacement goals, and to implement new tools to achieve these goals. Current goals and efforts are documented in the report *Oakland at Home: Recommendations for Implementing A Roadmap Toward Equity*, released in 2016 and developed by the Oakland Housing Cabinet. The City is currently implementing the report's recommendations and regularly tracking progress toward achieving identified goals, including overall goals of protecting 17,000 households from displacement and constructing 17,000 housing units by 2024.

A comprehensive summary of local and county existing policies, programs, and tools was prepared as part of the Specific Plan development process, and can be found in the memo "Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement Background and Strategies." Policy, program, and tool examples relevant to downtown include the following (all examples are managed by the City of Oakland unless otherwise noted):

#### ENCOURAGING PRODUCTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

- **State density bonus program:** Allows increased intensity of development and/or development incentives (in the form of concessions or waivers of planning standards) in exchange for provision of affordable housing.
- **Construction funding for affordable housing:** Provides funding and loans to cover predevelopment costs or to cover the financing "gap" between development costs and supportable project debt service for new affordable housing projects.
- **Site acquisition program:** Provides short-term loans to acquire properties for affordable housing development projects.
- **Vacant property tax:** Passed by voters in November 2018, this tax is designed to discourage vacant properties, motivate landowners to sell or develop their downtown properties, and thereby lower land prices.

#### REDUCING DISPLACEMENT:

- **Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance:** Restricts the conditions under which tenants can be evicted from specific types of housing units.
- **Rent stabilization:** Regulates the frequency and amount of rent increases in the City of Oakland for specific types of housing units.
- **Housing services and counseling:** Provides links to local services that help renters find affordable housing.
- **Tenant protection ordinance:** Provides tenants recourse if they are harassed by their landlord.

- **Acquisition and rehabilitation loans:** Includes loan programs to prevent or correct health and safety issues at subsidized housing projects, and loans for private entities to acquire housing or vacant land in exchange for creating and maintaining income-restricted affordable housing.
- **Conversion of SRO hotels to income-restricted affordable housing:** In 2016, City voters passed Measure KK, which provides bond funds to support the preservation of residential units as affordable housing. The Oakland City Council included a \$14 million allocation in the first bond issuance in 2017 for the purchase and preservation of SRO properties as low income housing, of which approximately \$7 million is being used to acquire 641 West Grand.
- **Protection of SRO hotels:** The City of Oakland recently adopted changes to the Planning Code intended to prevent the loss of residential hotels as a naturally-occurring affordable housing resource due to conversion, demolition, and rehabilitation.
- **Condominium Conversion Ordinance:** Provides strict requirements that a landlord must fulfill in order to convert an existing multi-family rental building into condominiums. The City's "conversion impact area," which is defined in the Oakland Subdivision Code as an area of the city whose rental housing supply has been negatively impacted by previous conversions, currently only covers portions of the Lakeside neighborhood. For areas inside the conversion impact area, any number of proposed condominium conversions trigger a requirement for replacement rental units or "conversion rights" ("conversion rights" are generated by projects that add housing units to the city's rental supply, and one conversion right is equivalent to one housing unit within such a project). For areas outside the "conversion impact area," only the conversion of five or more units into condominiums trigger a requirement for an equal number of replacement rental units or "conversion rights."
- **Anti-displacement program:** The City of Oakland is implementing a new anti-displacement program focused on providing legal services and emergency financial assistance to renters and homeowners.
- **Federal public housing and voucher programs:** Operated by the Oakland Housing Authority, these programs include administration of public housing units and Federal housing voucher programs.
- **Oakland Promise:** Although not technically a housing program, Oakland Promise is focused on providing a long-term approach to addressing inequities, which could help to prevent displacement of Oakland's economically disadvantaged youth. Oakland Promise consists of a variety of initiatives designed to prepare Oakland's youth for success in their careers as adults, with a pipeline of initiatives targeted from a residents'

birth through high school and college. The program is funded by the City of Oakland and numerous private partners, and is implemented through a variety of nonprofit partners.

- **Access improvement grant program:** Provides grants to low, very low and extremely low income homeowners and tenants for accessibility modifications to accommodate persons with disabilities, thus reducing risk of displacement due to inaccessible dwelling units.

#### ASSISTING HOMELESS RESIDENTS:

- **Homeless program:** Provides homeless prevention programs, emergency housing, transitional housing, and other services through contracts with third-party service providers.
- **Shelter Plus Care:** Administered by the Oakland Housing Authority and Alameda County, this program offers affordable housing and support services to especially vulnerable categories of unsheltered homeless residents.
- **Additional services:** Through the administration of contracts, the City partners with nonprofit organizations on other homeless prevention programs, emergency and transitional housing, special needs housing and outreach.

#### MULTIPLE LOCAL AND COUNTY FUNDING SOURCES ALSO EXIST FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN OAKLAND. THESE INCLUDE:

- **Jobs-housing impact fee:** This fee seeks to ensure office and warehouse development projects compensate and mitigate the demand for affordable housing created by the low-wage jobs that accompany overall employment growth. Fees are paid into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and may be waived if the developer also builds income-restricted affordable housing.
- **Affordable housing impact fee:** Applies a per-unit fee to new housing built in Oakland, varying by area of the city (with the highest fees charged in Zone 1, which includes downtown). Fees are paid into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, or can be waived if the developer constructs a minimum percentage of income-restricted affordable housing.
- **Redevelopment agency “boomerang” funds:** Following the dissolution of Redevelopment Agencies, a portion of former property tax increment revenues referred to as “boomerang” funds now return to local jurisdictions. As of July 2015, Oakland diverts 25% of its boomerang funds to housing or homeless services.
- **City infrastructure bond:** In November 2016, Oakland voters approved Measure KK, or the “infrastructure bond,” via a ballot measure. This infrastructure bond includes \$100 million for affordable housing and anti-displacement actions.

- **County affordable housing bond:** In November 2016, Alameda County voters passed Measure A-1, a \$580 million general obligation bond to fund homeowner programs, rental housing programs, and funding allocations throughout Alameda County. Almost \$54 million of the total bond is designated for Oakland specifically.

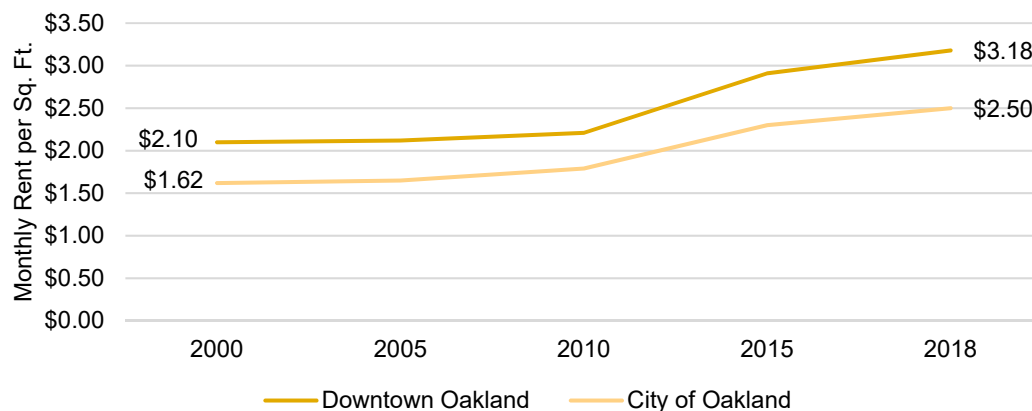
## Addressing Barriers & Disparities: Housing Affordability Issues and Trends

### RIISING HOUSING COSTS AND GROWING DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Downtown Oakland provides a unique set of benefits for its residents, including excellent low-cost regional transportation options via AC Transit and BART, convenient access to a concentration of government and nonprofit services, and proximity to the East Bay's largest concentration of jobs. Downtown also offers a concentration of education, health care options, entertainment, dining, and arts and culture organizations and venues (although rising commercial costs are impacting retention of many uses, as described in the arts and culture and economic development chapters).

Downtown Oakland is now a highly desirable residential community based on these assets, as well as its relatively low cost compared to competing locations in San Francisco and other parts of the Bay Area. As a result, home prices, rents, and housing development activity have increased significantly in recent years. Rents increased by approximately 50% in both the city and downtown from 2000 to 2018, while home values also grew over the same period. Downtown

**Figure H-1: Monthly Rent per Square Foot in Multifamily Buildings, Downtown and Oakland, 2000 to June 2018 (in Nominal Dollars)**



Source: CoStar, June 2018; Strategic Economics, 2018.

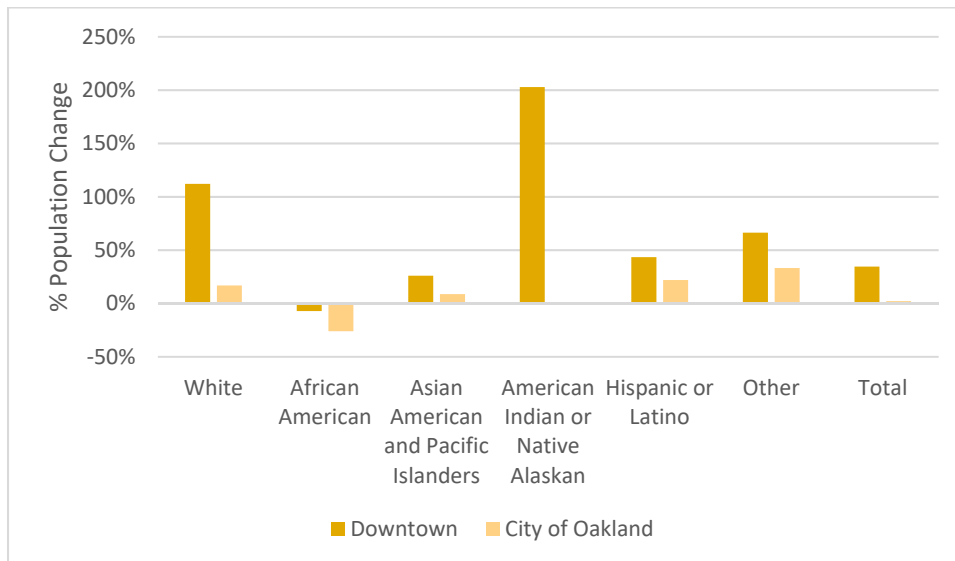
Oakland is now a major growth area in the city, with permit data showing downtown accounting for one-third of recently-built, under construction, and planned/proposed housing units in the city.

Commercial development activity and demand is also on an upward trend in Downtown Oakland, which could potentially increase competition for development opportunity sites. While little commercial space was added to downtown over the past two decades, multiple office development projects are now under construction or planned and proposed.

#### CHANGING RACIAL COMPOSITION

While Downtown Oakland remains economically and racially diverse, its rapid growth has been accompanied by a declining share of residents of color. Although the area is just 5% of the citywide population, Downtown Oakland accounted for over two thirds of the city's population growth between 2000 and 2015. As of 2015, Downtown Oakland's residential population was 39% Asian American and Pacific Islander, 26% White, 20% African American, 9% Hispanic or Latinx, 4% Other race/ethnicity, and less than 1% American Indian or Native Alaskan. Since 2000, the African American population has declined

**Figure H-2: Percent Population Change, Downtown and Oakland, By Race and Ethnicity, 2000 to 2015**



Note: Due to the small size of the American Indian or Native Alaskan population in Downtown Oakland (estimated at 70 residents in 2000 and 212 residents as of the 2011-2015 period), small changes in population count result in a significant percent change in population, as shown.

Sources: US Decennial Census, 2000, 2010; American Community Survey, 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates; Strategic Economics, 2017.

by 7% in the downtown Census Area, and 26% in the city overall, with the difference made up by increases in all other racial and ethnic groups. As a result, the share of African American residents in Downtown Oakland declined from 29% of the population to 20% over this period, with the total African American population declining over this period as well. The share of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders declined from 42% of downtown's population to 39% of the population over the same period, as this group's numerical growth did not keep pace with overall population growth.

### **RIISING HOUSEHOLD INCOMES**

Median household incomes in Downtown Oakland are rising rapidly as growth occurs, yet still remain relatively low throughout much of downtown compared to the city as a whole. 41% of downtown's households earn less than \$25,000 annually, compared to 26% citywide. This high concentration of relatively low income households in part reflects the presence of income-restricted affordable housing and a relatively high share of residents over age 65. However, incomes per person in downtown are similar to the city as a whole, suggesting that the area's relatively small household sizes also influence the low median household incomes. Rapid household income growth is occurring in downtown, however; inflation-adjusted household incomes in downtown grew 33% from 2000 to 2015, even as citywide incomes fell slightly over the same period.

### **INCREASING HOUSING COST BURDENS**

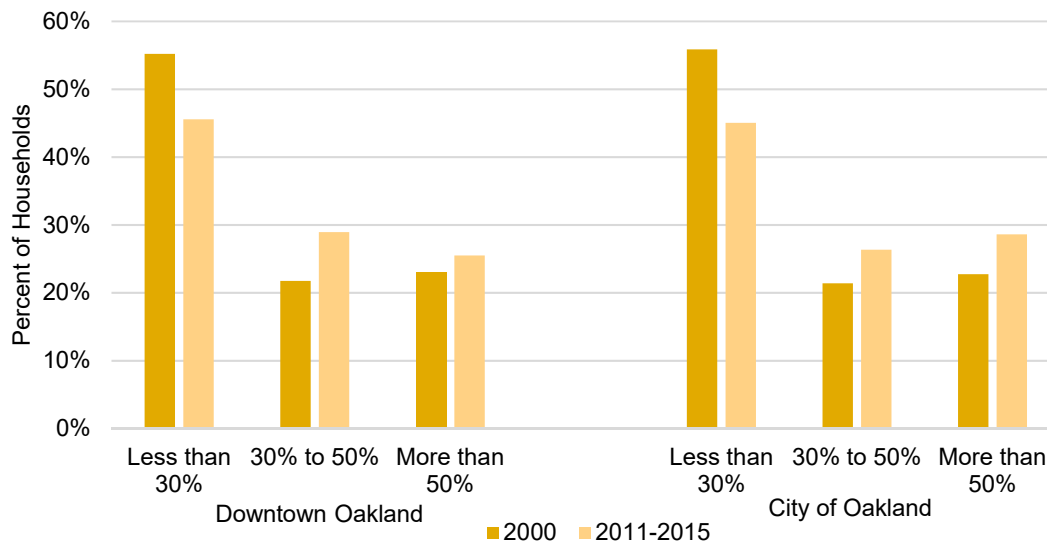
Rising costs in Downtown Oakland are worsening the housing "cost burdens" experienced by residents and increasing the likelihood of displacement. Government agencies and lenders typically consider a household to be "rent-burdened" if housing and related expenses exceed 30% of that household's income. Housing is usually the single largest expense for households, so when they need to pay more than 30% of their income for housing, particularly low-income families and households of color, it leaves little left for food, health care, education and other needs. Rent-burdened households also often put up with deteriorating housing conditions and substandard housing, risking their health to continue to afford their housing.<sup>1</sup> As of 2015, 54% of Downtown Oakland renters pay over 30% of their income on housing, and 25% of households spend more than half their income on housing. This compares to 45% and 23%, respectively, in 2000. Over a third of all homeowners in Downtown Oakland are also paying over 30% of their annual income on homeownership.

Housing cost burdens are particularly severe for lower income households and households of color. A 2018 study showed that renters in Alameda County need to earn \$48.71 per hour—nearly 4 times local minimum wage—to afford the median monthly asking rent of \$2,553.<sup>2</sup> In 2015, Oakland's White owner

1 Housing Habitability and Health: Oakland's Hidden Crisis, Alameda County Department of Public Health (April 2018)

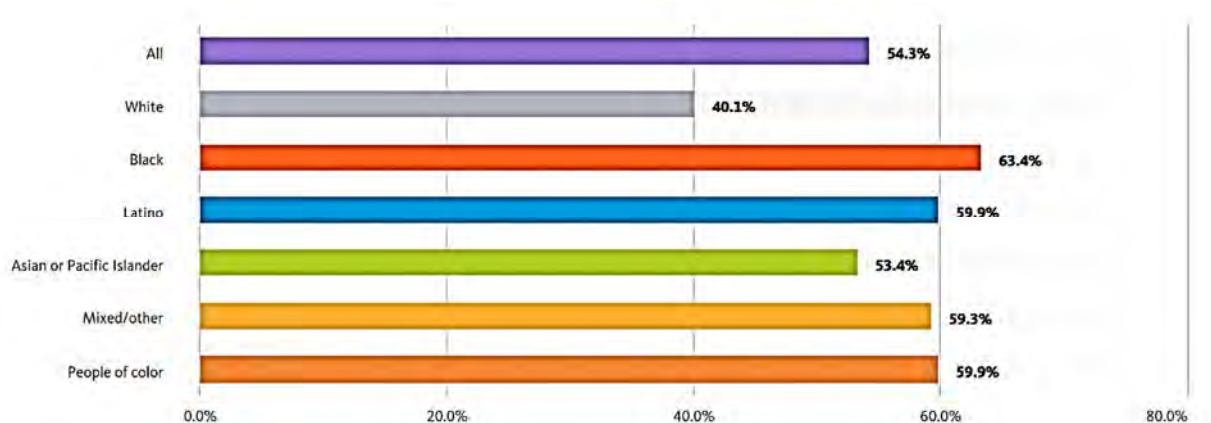
2 California Housing Partnership Corporation, Alameda County Housing Need Report 2018 (April 2018)

**Figure H-3: Gross Rent Spending as a Percentage of Household Income, by Percent of Households, Downtown and Oakland, 2000 and 2015**



Sources: US Decennial Census 2000 and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2011-2015; Strategic Economics, 2015.

**Figure H-4: Percent of Households Paying 30 Percent or More of Income for Housing Expenses, by Race, Renter Households, City of Oakland, 2015**



Sources: PolicyLink/PERE National Equity Atlas ([www.nationalequityatlas.org](http://www.nationalequityatlas.org)), based on analysis of US Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates via IPUMS.

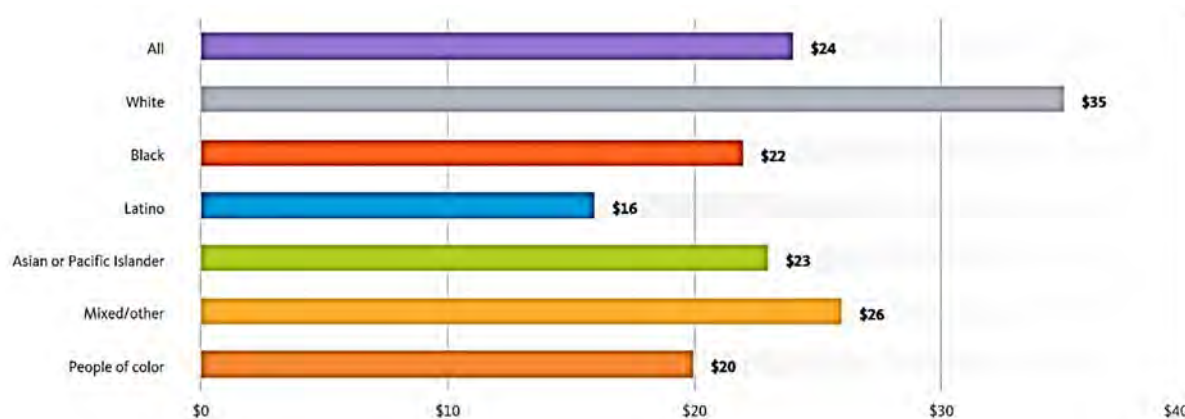
households had the lowest housing cost burden at 29%, and Black owner households had the highest housing burden at nearly 45%. A larger disparity exists between White and Black renter households, for whom the burden is 40% and 63%, respectively.

### DISPLACEMENT RISKS

A high share of Downtown Oakland's residents are renters, with homeownership rates varying significantly by race. As of 2015, 84% of downtown's occupied housing units were renter-occupied, compared to 60% in Oakland overall. Eight percent of downtown's Black households owned their homes, compared to 12% of Hispanic households, 18% of Asian households, and 21% of White households. These disparities have longstanding historical roots, including the "redlining" discriminatory mortgage lending practices through 1968, and subsequent predatory and de facto discriminatory lending practices through the present day.

The UC Berkeley Center for Community Innovation's Urban Displacement Project also identified the majority of Downtown Oakland as an area consisting of lower income census tracts that are undergoing gentrification

**Figure H-5: Median Hourly Wage by Race/Ethnicity, City of Oakland, 2011-2015 Period**



Sources: PolicyLink/PERE National Equity Atlas ([www.nationalequityatlas.org](http://www.nationalequityatlas.org)), based on analysis of US Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates via IPUMS.

and displacement.<sup>3</sup> The rapid rise in housing prices and rents in Downtown Oakland—and elsewhere in the city—creates affordability challenges that are experienced most strongly by residents who are vulnerable to displacement due to lower incomes, high housing cost burdens, lack of housing ownership, and other factors. Displacement pressures are more likely to affect people of color, and Black households in particular. These results are partly driven by significant income disparities; the U.S. Census estimates that, as of 2014, the median income of Oakland’s Black households was 43% of White households, and Asian and Latinx households earned just over half the median income of White households.

#### HOMELESSNESS

As of the 2017 Alameda County Homeless Count, Oakland’s homeless population grew by 25% between 2015 and 2017, to a total of 2,761 residents, 69% of whom lack shelter (i.e., are living “on the streets, in vehicles, in makeshift shelters, in encampments, and in other places not meant for human habitation”).<sup>4</sup> Oakland’s homeless residents made up 49% of Alameda County’s total homeless population. Homelessness disproportionately impacts Oakland’s Black and African American residents. Among Oakland’s homeless residents, an estimated 68% were Black or African American as of the 2017 Alameda County Homeless Count, despite Black residents only representing 26% of the overall city population.

While an exact count of homeless encampments and residents in and near downtown is not available, multiple encampments exist in the area—particularly under or near I-880 and I-980 overpasses. Several City efforts have targeted areas in or near downtown, such as the establishment of Tuff Shed Community Cabins sites, providing temporary sanitation services at sites, and supporting and establishing shelters or transitional housing facilities such as the Henry Robinson Multi-Service Center.

#### ACCESSIBILITY

According to a survey of older adults and people with disabilities conducted for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan, 57% of respondents noted they have faced physical barriers to accessing housing, and 61% experienced financial barriers. These barriers affect a large percentage of Oakland’s population. For example, the City’s most recent adopted Housing Element—for the 2015-2023 period—notes that over 12% of the population age five and older and nearly 32% of the population 65 and older in Oakland reported a physical disability to the US Census in 2000. Surveys conducted for the Housing Element found that one in five structures in Oakland “was accessible via curbs, sidewalks, or driveways that were in poor condition” and over 80% of surveyed structures were only accessible from the street via steps.<sup>5</sup>

3 Detailed description of the typology criteria are available at [www.urbandisplacement.org](http://www.urbandisplacement.org). Original analysis and mapping by Zuk, M., and Chapple, K., *Urban Displacement Project* (2015).

4 Applied Survey Research, *Alameda County 2017 Homeless Census & Survey: Comprehensive Report* (Alameda County, 2017).

5 City of Oakland, *Housing Element: 2015-2023* (adopted December 9, 2014) p 172, 281, 360.

Many seniors and people with disabilities are on fixed incomes, and finding housing that is both affordable and physically accessible is a challenge. Recognizing the great need to assist older adults and people with disabilities to access housing, the City operates an “Access Improvement” grant program that provides funding to low and extremely low income homeowners and tenants for accessibility modifications. Oakland has not adopted a “universal design ordinance” that would require new or modified housing to use design principles that allow individuals to remain in these homes as their occupants age.

### **INCOME-RESTRICTED AFFORDABLE HOUSING INVENTORY AND PRODUCTION**

Downtown Oakland has historically provided a significant share of the city’s income-restricted affordable housing stock, accounting for roughly 21% of all citywide income-restricted housing. However, housing growth in Downtown Oakland and the city as a whole is falling behind in meeting need for housing affordable at or below 120% of area median income. The City of Oakland’s 2018 Housing Element Progress Report found that production of “above moderate income” housing units (those affordable to households earning 120% of more of area median income) met 85% of the City’s 2023 target. However, production of more affordable housing units only met 7% of the total target.

This situation is improving at the citywide level: development project data compiled by the City of Oakland in June of 2018 showed that over 15% of approved and proposed housing units citywide are income-restricted affordable housing.

### **SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY HOTELS**

Downtown Oakland also features a high number of “single room occupancy hotels” (“SROs”), which provide a relatively accessible and sometimes lower-cost housing option. Also, known as “residential hotels,” the City of Oakland’s Housing and Community Development Department defines SROs as buildings consisting of single rooms for residents, typically without a private bathroom or kitchen. Market-rate SROs are often—but not always—a less expensive form of housing compared to rental apartments. The primary benefit of SROs is that they provide a flexible and more accessible option for renters, since they generally do not require a security deposit, references, proof of income, or a long-term lease. As of a 2015 City study, there were 1,311 total SRO housing units within the 18 SROs located in or near downtown. Five of the 18 SROs were income-restricted affordable housing, while the others were not. City data as of 2015 shows that downtown’s SROs represent 85% of income-restricted SRO units citywide.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> City of Oakland, *Downtown Oakland’s Residential Hotels*, (Housing and Community Development Department, September 2015).

SROs in downtown are under threat of being lost as a result of rehabilitation and conversion to boutique hotels, high-income rental housing, or condominiums. As a result, the City of Oakland has adopted Planning Code changes that would protect SROs by regulating rehabilitation and conversion. The Oakland City Council also recently directed use of Measure KK bond funds to purchase, rehabilitate, and preserve SRO properties as low income housing, including the recent acquisition of an SRO at 641 West Grand Avenue.

#### RENT STABILIZED HOUSING

Housing units whose rents are restricted by Oakland's Rent Adjustment Ordinance provide an additional means of maintaining affordability for long-term residents. With some exceptions, the ordinance limits allowable annual rent increases for ongoing tenancies in rental housing units in multifamily apartment buildings constructed prior to 1983 (although a landlord may 'reset' the base rent by charging prevailing market-rate rents for a new tenancy). Market-rate rents generally rise more rapidly than the allowable increases in the Rent Adjustment Ordinance; rent-stabilized units therefore provide greater stability and predictability for covered tenants, so long as the tenant remains in the unit. The number of Downtown Oakland housing units covered by rent stabilization is significant since 84% of occupied units are rented, 95% are in multifamily buildings, and over 60% of housing units were built prior to 1980. However, newly-constructed rental units are not subject to rent stabilization due to State of California legal restrictions. In 2016, residents voted to expand the rent adjustment program to require landlords to petition for any rent increase not based on the allowable consumer price index (CPI) increase or banked increases from previous years.

Housing units subject to rent stabilization can be lost over time due to conversion to ownership housing—such as condominiums or tenancy-in-common arrangements, substantial rehabilitation, or demolition. Natural turnover of units also reduces the gap between rent-adjusted rates and current market rates. Landlords may also attempt to pressure longtime tenants into leaving so the next tenant will pay current prevailing market rents.

#### THREATS TO "NATURALLY OCCURRING" AFFORDABLE HOUSING

"Naturally occurring" affordable housing units are those that, although they do not include any restrictions on prices or rents, serve the lower end of the housing market due to age, condition, size, lack of amenities, location or other factors. Naturally occurring affordable housing can be lost due to evictions, upgrades, and general rent or price increases over time. In the context of a regional housing shortage, these market-rate units need to be acquired, improved, and converted into income-restricted housing to maintain long-term affordability, requiring partnerships between tenants, public agencies, and affordable housing nonprofit organizations.

## MEETING NEEDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Downtown Oakland is uniquely positioned to accommodate growth of mixed-income housing and to serve its low-income residents' needs efficiently. Downtown includes major regional transportation assets at its BART stations and AC Transit hubs, serves as a regional employment destination, hosts many community serving agencies, and attracts significant housing and other development activity. These assets allow downtown to provide access to jobs and services for its residents. Additionally, residents have expressed through the planning process that maintaining downtown as a neighborhood that is affordable to all is one of the community's values and fits the City's equity goals.

At the same time, however, Downtown Oakland's high development costs—driven by high land prices and the added costs of higher-density development—create unique challenges and may mean that affordable housing funding delivers fewer affordable housing units in downtown than it would in other, less expensive parts of the city. The costs of subsidizing the development of affordable housing are generally substantial; for example, as part of a 2017 study for the Great Communities Collaborative, Strategic Economics found that a funding gap of between \$121,000 and \$139,000 per affordable housing unit in Alameda County needed to be met by local sources after accounting for other available existing sources and subsidies. Since the need for affordable housing operates at the City level and is generally addressed by citywide policies, delivery of income-restricted affordable housing always requires careful consideration of tradeoffs in location, cost, units delivered, and opportunities.

As of late 2018, income-restricted affordable housing constituted approximately 25 percent of all housing units in Downtown Oakland (including Chinatown). Based on the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan's maximum projected housing production of 29,077 housing units, maintaining a similar share of income-restricted units would require an additional 7,250 affordable units—potentially requiring at least \$800 million to \$930 million in additional funding given the Alameda County estimates cited above. The scale of this challenge requires a major alignment of policies and new funding sources at the local, county, state, and federal levels.

# Measures of Success

*The measures below will help gauge the effectiveness of the Downtown Specific Plan at achieving its intended outcomes for Goal 02.*

- 16,000 to 29,000 new housing units are created in downtown by 2040.
- As part of the overall projected housing production shown above, a certain number of income-restricted housing units are constructed or converted from market-rate to income-restricted in downtown by 2040.<sup>1</sup> Of these, half should be new construction and the other half preservation.<sup>2</sup>
  - **Option 1:** 4,350 income-restricted units (15% of maximum projected housing production)
  - **Option 2:** 5,800 income-restricted units (20% of maximum projected housing production)
  - **Option 3:** 7,250 income-restricted units (25% of maximum projected housing production)
- Reduction in overall housing cost burden in downtown for renters and owners, including reduction in racial and income disparities in this metric
- Reduction in total number of homeless and unsheltered residents, including reduction in racial disparities in this metric
- Reduction in, or slowing of, displacement

<sup>1</sup> Count of conversions should not include already-income-restricted units that are protected from expiring

<sup>2</sup> This division of construction and protection is consistent with the 2016 Mayor's Housing Cabinet Report, *Oakland At Home*

# Housing and Affordability Framework

*Meeting the needs of all current and future residents of Downtown Oakland requires ongoing retention and production of housing that is affordable across all income levels, and accessible to all people regardless of race and physical ability. The following strategies focus on generating and deploying public funding resources to retain and expand affordable housing downtown, providing additional services and shelter for residents experiencing homelessness, strengthening protections to retain downtown's rental housing stock, and serving artists' needs for affordable housing.*

Because Downtown Oakland is one of the city's strongest market areas and undergoing significant development activity, it generates a significant proportion of the jobs/housing impact fee and affordable housing impact fee revenues. These revenues are contributed to the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Downtown's high development densities, high property values, and concentrated business activity also generate significant ongoing property, sales, and transient occupancy tax revenues for the City.

These revenues create opportunities to reinvest in affordable housing development and retention, as well as anti-displacement programs. However, there are tradeoffs in spending these housing revenues in downtown versus

other areas of the city. Downtown's high property values mean that it may be more expensive to build or acquire affordable housing in the downtown area compared to other parts of the city. On the other hand, failure to build or acquire enough affordable housing in downtown will make it more challenging for Oakland residents of a range of incomes and races to benefit from the area's amenities, jobs, and access, and to maintain downtown's economic, racial and cultural diversity.

The following framework complements the citywide approach of creating policies to **build** additional housing and **protect** affordability for current residents.

#### **STRATEGY 1: Direct public policies and funding sources and resources to assist in the creation of new affordable and accessible housing in downtown.**

The City can target a variety of public funding sources and resources to promote development of income restricted and accessible affordable housing in the downtown area. Examples of existing resources include publicly owned land, impact fees, the commercial "linkage" fee, property transfer taxes, property taxes, and other revenues to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. As a highly-desirable and relatively high-density center of residential and business district, Downtown Oakland generates significant revenues that could be dedicated to resolving the housing challenges that come with the area's high housing costs. Prioritization of affordable housing growth in Downtown Oakland can be achieved through tools such as modifications to the structure for awarding points to applicants responding to notices of funding availability issued by the City, modifications to existing impact fees, or implementing "inclusionary" housing requirements.

#### **STRATEGY 2: Encourage the production of diverse housing unit types—especially larger family-friendly units and units accessible to older adults and people with disabilities.**

As a relatively dense, urban area, Downtown Oakland's housing units largely consist of higher-density multifamily housing buildings, often with relatively small units. As of the 2011 to 2015 time period, the U.S. Census estimated that 57% of downtown's housing units were in buildings with 50 or more units. Unsurprisingly, a high percentage of downtown households are small, with 87% consisting of 1 or 2 people (versus 64% citywide), and only 9% of households including children. Concerns have been raised by community members that this is not a healthy mix for promoting long-term community involvement. This strategy seeks to provide incentives and policy changes that will enhance the financial feasibility of housing generally and encourage the production of larger, family-friendly housing units and accessible units. (Note: to encourage more families, the downtown also needs more playgrounds).

**STRATEGY 3: Provide additional shelters and services for homeless residents.**

Recent efforts to address homelessness in and around downtown have included “Community Cabin” encampment sites with security, sanitation and case management services, as well as more substantial Tuff Sheds. Recent efforts also include the purchase and preservation of the 641 West Grand Avenue SRO as low income housing and a residential service center. This strategy continues short-term implementation of safe and secure encampment sites, including determining potential locations in downtown where sites will be compatible with nearby uses. The strategy also includes longer-term efforts to acquire, retain, and rehabilitate SRO properties as income-restricted affordable housing.

**STRATEGY 4: Strengthen protections for retaining downtown’s rental housing stock.**

Preserving rental housing is a priority to protect racial and economic diversity downtown. As part of this strategy, the City can amend the condominium conversion ordinance so that a third Condominium Conversion Impact Area applies to areas of downtown not already in an Impact Area, recommend an impact fee for conversions, and consider limiting the size of a building that can convert to a condominium.

**STRATEGY 5: Create an affordable housing policy that sets aside a certain number of units for artists who meet specific income and occupational requirements, and help meet the need for artist housing and workspaces through live-work spaces.**

The need for housing is one of the fundamental challenges facing the City of Oakland, downtown included. Artists are a critical element to downtown’s character and continued success. However, artists are facing displacement at alarming rates, as described in the Arts and Culture chapter of the Specific Plan. Policies achieving this strategy focus on providing housing and live-work spaces for artists.

**STRATEGY 6: Increase protections and assistance for low-income renter households and other residents at risk of displacement.**

This strategy deploys Oakland’s expanding renter services, advocacy efforts, and home preservation and rehabilitation programs within downtown. The City of Oakland is undertaking an ongoing process of enhancing citywide protections and assistance for low income renter households and other residents at risk of displacement. Examples include the 2016 voter approval of a ballot measure to expand just cause eviction protections to more properties, and recent amendments to the Tenant Protection Ordinance and increases to the Rental Assistance Program’s annual landlord fees. The City’s

Figure H-6: Victory Court & Laney College

Existing Conditions (right)

Potential Future Conditions (below)



### Victory Court & Laney College

With proximity to Brooklyn Basin and the Lake Merritt BART station, the Victory Court/Laney College area is an opportunity for new mixed-income housing, mixed-use development, and high quality open space including improved trails along the Estuary waterfront.



Housing Action Plan also calls for expanding housing services and counseling, changes to the code enforcement relocation ordinance, and numerous other adjustments to City policy.

**STRATEGY 7: Encourage home ownership in Downtown Oakland by allowing development of smaller housing units, and deploying current and new State and local first-time homebuyer programs and foreclosure assistance.**

Home ownership can insulate residents against rent increases that could potentially result in displacement. As described in this chapter, racial disparities in homeownership also exist, meaning that not only are people of color more likely to be displaced, but they are also less likely to be building equity and financial security. This strategy focuses on ensuring developers can provide smaller housing units that are relatively affordable to purchase, and providing assistance to first-time homebuyers and existing home owners at risk of displacement.

# Supportive Plan Policies

*The following policies implement the strategies in the Housing Framework in order to achieve the three housing outcomes for Downtown Oakland.*

## Recommended Regulatory / Policy Action

- H-1.1** Ensure that a mix of market-rate and income-restricted housing is constructed in downtown, including creation of deeply affordable housing targeted towards extremely low income people at less than 30% of area median income. Target creation of between 4,350 and 7,250 affordable housing units in downtown by 2040 out of a total housing production target of 29,077 new units.
- H-1.2** Explore and implement tools and policies to prioritize use of some portion of affordable housing funds in downtown by adapting scoring criteria for responses to City notices of funding availability, especially as downtown generates additional housing funds through accelerated development activity or increased impact fees. Examples of potential scoring criteria adjustments could include prioritization of the downtown specific plan area receiving additional points, or additional points for housing development projects in transit-oriented locations or locations meeting certain levels of employment access or workforce services.
- H-1.3** Use publicly-owned land in a manner that supports housing affordability for Oakland residents (based on goals and allowable uses set by the City's public lands policies).
- H-1.4** Study increases to the jobs/housing and/or affordable housing impact fee, with a goal of allocating new fees incrementally in accordance with revised notice of funding availability criteria (see Policy H-1.2); potentially dedicate a portion of the new revenues generated to affordable housing production in downtown.
- H-1.5** Explore the creation of a new long-term revenue stream from a downtown-specific value capture mechanism, with the bulk of revenues dedicated to affordable housing retention and production;

### OUTCOME H-1

*Sufficient housing is built and retained that leverages all of Downtown Oakland's existing advantages and investments in transit, employment, services, and culture to support the full range of income levels, household types, mobility levels, and lifestyle choices that are essential to Oaklanders.*

examples of mechanisms include an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD), which reinvests growth in property tax revenue above a baseline amount, or a property tax set-aside.

- H-1.6** Study an additional development density bonus option for projects that provide housing units suitable for families—particularly three-bedroom units.
- H-1.7** Study an inclusionary housing policy for downtown as part of re-assessing the impact fee's option for developers to provide affordable housing units on-site in-lieu of paying the impact fee.
- H-1.8** Investigate passage of policies requiring a high standard of accessibility retrofits during remodels of existing buildings/units, and/or adjust requirements for new residential development in order to strengthen accessibility. This change could potentially include creation of a citywide universal design ordinance or amendment of existing citywide zoning/building codes to strengthen accessibility requirements.
- H-1.9** Encourage the development of more commercial hotels downtown to relieve pressure to convert permanent housing units and SRO hotels to short-term tourist rentals.
- H-1.10** Explore expanded use of the community land trust model in downtown to establish "shared equity" home ownership (and wealth-building) opportunities for low- and moderate-income households.

### OUTCOME H-2

*The ongoing threat of displacement is addressed to maintain downtown's historic racial, ethnic, and income diversity so that current and long-time Oaklanders remain an important part of the community fabric.*

- H-2.1** Purchase and rehabilitate downtown's SROs as income-restricted affordable housing, as funding and purchase opportunities arise.
- H-2.2** Continue to partner with and fund nonprofit housing organizations to acquire and rehabilitate affordable housing and SROs in downtown; consider adapting notice of funding availability scoring criteria for funding applications to prioritize downtown sites for some funds.
- H-2.3** Pursue additional funding for expanded renter services and counseling.
- H-2.4** Maintain effective enforcement of rent adjustment and just cause laws.

- H-2.5** Target creation of supportive services in existing and new affordable housing and at SRO's rehabilitated as income-restricted housing in downtown.
- H-2.6** Continue implementation of services for encampment areas, including health and hygiene interventions, provision of Community Cabins facilities, and temporary shelters. Identify and deploy additional appropriate sites in downtown for hosting facilities and services for homeless residents, such as the creation of more Cabin Communities.
- H-2.7** Amend and strengthen the Condominium Conversion Ordinance, and consider adding a third Condominium Conversion Impact Area to include some areas of downtown not already in an Impact Area. Explore amending the Condominium Conversion Ordinance to include an impact fee for conversions, as well as limiting the size of a building that can convert to a condo; consider dedicating revenues to provide financial assistance to low-income home buyers and/or for building affordable housing.
- H-2.8** Continue applying State and local first-time homebuyer programs to housing in downtown to enhance stable ownership opportunities; explore new funding sources for these programs as opportunities arise.
- H-2.9** Per citywide efforts to secure homeowners in distress, implement programs to proactively identify homeowners at risk of foreclosure and direct these residents to available assistance and resources. Ensure that programs directed to homeowners are structured to assist owners of condominiums, given the high prevalence of this product type in downtown.
- H-2.10** Explore legally compliant ways of targeting homeownership resources to individuals or groups harmed by discriminatory housing policies such as redlining and predatory lending.
- H-2.11** Expand the definition of displacement in the City's standard regulatory agreements with affordable housing developers to prioritize affordable units for Oaklanders who have been displaced from Oakland for broader economic reasons, including communitywide impacts of past policy decisions such as redlining or freeway construction.
- H-2.12** To ensure habitability standards for residents, consider pro-active residential inspections for all residential rental properties, including residential hotels (SROs).

#### OUTCOME H-3

*Oakland's artists and creative community are able to find housing and live-work opportunities in downtown that they can access and afford.*

**H-2.13** Develop a process to expedite the review and approval of 100% affordable housing project permits in planning and building.

**H-3.1** Incorporate artist-serving housing into the City's affordable housing Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process scoring criteria.

**H-3.2** Establish live-work zoning designations in arts-focused districts such as KONO, Jack London, and the Black Arts Movement and Business District. Expand requirements for future live-work spaces to ensure they are not used solely as residences, beyond the existing requirement of having a business license.

# **03: Mobility & Accessibility**





# 03

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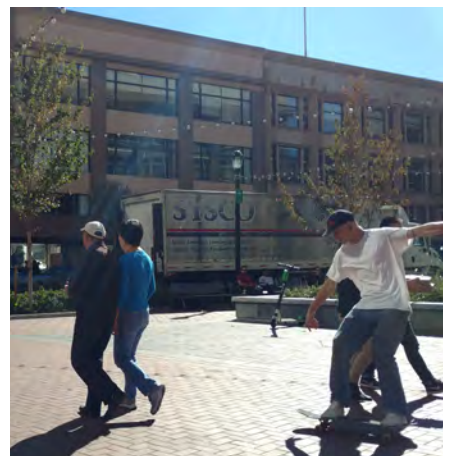
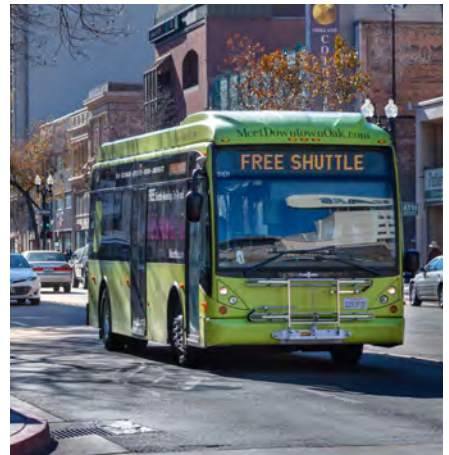
The Mobility and Accessibility Chapter addresses the many ways that people travel through, to and from Downtown Oakland. Whether riding the ferry, bus or BART; walking; wheeling; riding a bike or scooter; or driving, Oaklanders expect a full range of transportation options. But many people's transportation choices are limited for various reasons. Safety concerns, a lack of predictable and efficient transit, aging infrastructure, financial constraints, and public amenities that are difficult for people with disabilities to navigate are real challenges to accessing mobility options.

In response, the recommended mobility projects and policies of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan are aimed at addressing the needs and priorities for everyone in Oakland, but particularly for people currently with limited travel options. While the strategies largely focus on improvements within downtown, a key goal is to build connections across neighborhoods, focusing on improving areas where demand is underserved, such as West and East Oakland. The proposed strategies will provide residents throughout the city with efficient, affordable, and healthy transportation options that connect to desired destinations downtown. Although this chapter addresses downtown's streets, the focus is on the role of those streets as a connector, while the role of those streets as an element of the public realm is addressed in the Community Health chapter.

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## CHAPTER 03: MOBILITY & ACCESSIBILITY

### SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES



## CHAPTER 03:

### Mobility & Accessibility

**Goal 03** *Make downtown's streets comfortable, safe, and inviting and improve connections to the city as a whole so that everyone has efficient and reliable access to downtown's jobs and services.*

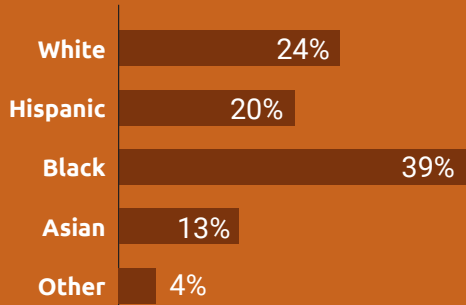
**Outcome M-1**  
BIKE/PEDESTRIAN NETWORK *Downtown is well-connected across its internal and adjacent neighborhoods with bicycle and pedestrian networks that are accessible and safe for people of all ages and abilities.*

**Outcome M-2**  
TRANSIT *Communities that are more transit-dependent are well-served to travel to and from downtown with frequent, reliable, and safe transit service.*

**Outcome M-3**  
STREET INFRASTRUCTURE *Oaklanders connect to downtown's resources with intermodal and multiple transportation options that accommodate people of all ages and abilities from their front door to their destination and back.*

### TRANSIT IN DOWNTOWN OAKLAND

#### RACE/ETHNICITY OF AC TRANSIT RIDERS



Source: AC Transit On Board Survey 2012

#### AC TRANSIT AND BART

SERVICES PROVIDE A PRIMARY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO:



Low Income Residents  
Youths  
Seniors  
People with Disabilities

### WALKING IN DOWNTOWN OAKLAND

**21%**  
RESIDENTS  
WALK TO WORK



Downtown Oakland has the **highest** concentration of pedestrian activity: **5x higher** than the city average.

Downtown Oakland has the **highest** rate of pedestrian injuries of any city neighborhood

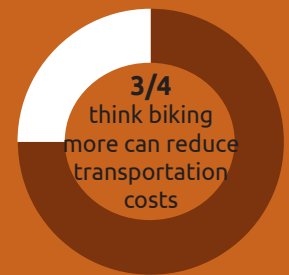
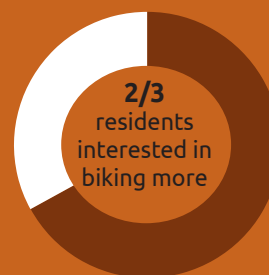
Black, Latinx, and Asian pedestrians are **twice** as likely to die from a collision compared to White pedestrians



Downtown Oakland has the oldest population of any neighborhood in Oakland, and the highest rates of disability

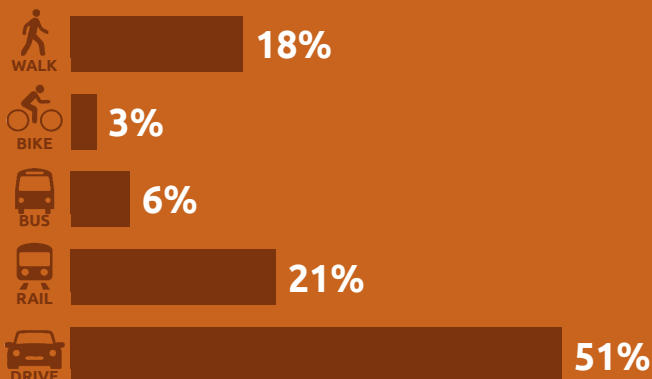
Source: American Community Survey 2015

### BIKING IN OAKLAND



### HOW PEOPLE MOVE TODAY

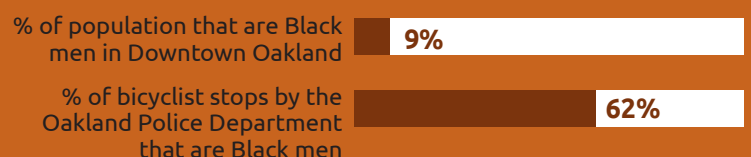
#### ALL TRIPS TO AND FROM DOWNTOWN



#### BIKING RACIAL DISPARITIES

**50%**

Nearly half of bicycle crash victims younger than 18 years old are Black youth.



# Summary of Existing Conditions

*Downtown Oakland's network of streets provides vital access to jobs, services, and community destinations. Improvements to walking, biking, vehicular and transit systems can improve safety, increase connections, and create an accessible, inviting, and comfortable public realm to be enjoyed by all. In addition, Oakland is a port city, and downtown is directly connected to the San Francisco Bay via Jack London Square and the Oakland Inner Harbor. Ferry service and waterfront connections are also an important component of the overall transportation network in downtown. The following summary identifies assets, barriers, disparities, and measures of success that were considered in the Plan's mobility projects, programs, and policies.*

## Leveraging Assets

### BIKE/PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Pedestrian Network: Most trips begin and end with pedestrian movement. With a compact network of wide, continuous sidewalks linking important destinations, Downtown Oakland has the "bones" for great pedestrian connections. Sidewalks are typically filled with people on weekdays; and with activities such as Chinatown's markets and shops, City Hall's civic events, and Uptown's bustling nightlife, Downtown Oakland is the one of the most popular places in the city to see and be seen. Twenty-one percent of downtown residents walk to work, five times higher than the city average<sup>1</sup>; and the area's bus and rail transit systems generates many walking trips.

Bicycle Network: Downtown has the potential to be a great place to bike. It has flat terrain; with many destinations that are short distances apart, and wide streets that can accommodate new, high-quality biking infrastructure. Oakland has a growing bicycling culture, and many Oaklanders would like to bike more

<sup>1</sup> Department of Transportation, City of Oakland, Oakland Walks! 2017 Pedestrian Plan Update, 2017.

for various activities, including for commuting, fun, and running errands. Bicycling (and micro-mobility devices such as e-scooters) provide a low-cost option for people to travel short distances. They are a great complement to downtown's expanding transit network, as people can ride or scoot to their final destination after travelling partially to their destinations with transit. Building a high-quality, family-friendly downtown bike network that connects across its internal neighborhoods and to the rest of the city has the potential to attract many more people to bike, shifting Oakland's mode share towards low-cost and healthy active transportation.

#### TRANSIT

Providing a world class transit system will be essential to support the projected growth in downtown Oakland, while also supporting the needs of people who are reliant on transit today.

Bus and BART: AC Transit and BART serve as the primary means of access to downtown for many people, especially those with lower incomes, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities. Downtown Oakland is the central transit hub for the East Bay, and also serves as a transfer point for those traveling along and across the Bay. On a typical weekday, AC Transit and the B-Shuttle serve approximately 18,000 trips in Downtown Oakland, and BART serves another 35,000 boardings across its three downtown stations: Lake Merritt, 12th Street/City Center and 19th Street. The East Bay Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project is a major step forward for Oakland's transit system. Currently under construction, it will provide fast and consistent transit service for communities between Downtown Oakland and San Leandro. The project includes dedicated transit lanes along much of the route, level boarding stations with off-board fare payment, and many other passenger amenities.

Ferry Service: Ferry service from Jack London Square provides regional access to and from Oakland. Ridership has risen dramatically over recent years due to job growth and worsened congestion on the bridges and freeways. Providing better connections between the ferry terminal and surrounding neighborhoods will allow more Oaklanders to access this high-quality transit amenity.

#### STREET INFRASTRUCTURE

Most of Downtown Oakland's streets reflect decades of design and investment heavily skewed towards driving and parking. For example, many streets were converted from two-way to one-way to move cars quickly and efficiently. While many urban centers suffer from crippling congestion, most of Downtown Oakland's streets are much wider than what is needed to serve the number of people that drive. This provides an opportunity to provide more and better options for travel downtown, particularly for people who do not drive due to their age, ability, or income.

**Curb Space:** Curb space, or the space between vehicular travel lanes and the sidewalk, is prime real estate in Downtown Oakland. Many different uses compete for curbside space such as parking, commercial deliveries, passenger loading/unloading and ridesharing, and bus stop zones. In the future, uses could expand to include automated vehicles. Business owners rely on curb space for customer parking and for the loading and unloading of goods, whereas visitors rely on curb space for parking and drop-off areas for ridesharing.

**Parking:** Even though Downtown Oakland has approximately 6,330 on-street spaces, more than 85% of which are dedicated to regular parking, some areas in Chinatown, along Broadway, and in the Jack London District see greater competing demands for curbside space, which results in double-parking. Excess space on these streets could be reallocated to better serve other purposes, such as enhanced public spaces, dedicated transit and bike lanes, serving local businesses, or providing additional American with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible on-street spaces and passenger loading zones.<sup>2</sup>

There is also an opportunity to rethink how parking spaces, parking lots, and garages are used. In areas with low utilization of on-street parking, these parking spaces could be reclaimed and converted into other programmed public space, such as parklets, wider sidewalks, or other streetscape amenities. In areas with low utilization of off-street parking, redevelopment of parking garages and lots could be considered.

## Addressing Barriers & Disparities

### BIKE/PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

**Pedestrian Network:** While most of downtown has a well-connected sidewalk network, some challenges exist. Many intersections lack appropriate pedestrian crossing treatments, and wide one-way streets can contribute to a stressful walking environment. Also, some sidewalks are blocked, such as in the Chinatown neighborhood and also throughout downtown, due to construction of new developments.

The peripheries of downtown, around the I-980 and I-880 freeways, are also challenging places to walk. I-980 especially is a major barrier between West Oakland and downtown. The ramps onto and off I-980 create unsafe and uncomfortable places for people to walk or bike, and effectively sever connections to downtown's jobs, services, and entertainment from residents in West Oakland. Originally, I-980 was designed to connect I-580 to a second crossing of the Bay Bridge that was never built. In its current configuration, I-980 is over-engineered for the number of vehicles it serves today, creating inefficiencies and adverse impacts to people living near the freeway. Overall, the many I-980 and I-880 freeway crossings present some of the most challenging pedestrian and bicycling conditions in Downtown Oakland,

<sup>2</sup> Additional ADA-accessible on-street parking spaces are needed to meet the City's requirement that 4% of all on-street spaces are ADA-accessible.

creating barriers between downtown, West Oakland, Jack London, and other adjacent neighborhoods.

Addressing these challenges through investments in the pedestrian network will yield positive outcomes for everyone who walks in and to downtown.

One measure of the existing challenge is that Downtown Oakland has the highest rate of pedestrian injuries compared to the rest of the city.<sup>3</sup> Vulnerable populations (children, seniors, and people with disabilities) and people of color bear disproportionate burdens from these traffic safety issues. Black, Latinx, and Asian pedestrians are twice as likely to die from a pedestrian collision as are White pedestrians.<sup>4</sup>

While traffic safety is a critical issue, personal security also affects people's experience, safety and willingness to walk. Based on discussion with the City's Downtown Specific Plan Youth Provider Focus Group, representatives who work with youth said that students and parents who live outside of downtown do not always feel safe traveling to or on the streets of Downtown Oakland, either in the downtown or to and from transit stops in their neighborhoods. Similarly, many older adults and people with disabilities shared concerns about crime and safety on downtown streets, limiting their comfort with visiting downtown or with taking transit, particularly at night.<sup>5</sup>

Bicycle Network: While Downtown Oakland has the potential to be a great place to bike, there are many barriers to bicycling there today. The bike network is disconnected in several areas, and the on-street bike lanes and routes run primarily along wide arterial streets with fast moving traffic that is uncomfortable for most people to bike alongside. Large intersections and freeway interchanges also pose a barrier to bicycling. Based on a survey of local residents, the most common reasons people do not bike include traffic and aggressive drivers, and safety and personal security concerns.<sup>6</sup> As bicycling steadily becomes more popular throughout the city, some communities experience it differently. For example, in the last two years, Black men represented 62% of bicyclists stopped by the Oakland Police Department, although they comprise only 9% of the population. Black youth represent over half of bicycle crash victims younger than 18 years old. Infrastructure improvements will help resolve safety issues, but must be supported by enforcement, education, and encouragement programs that address these disparities. Still, interest in biking exists: in a recent survey, two thirds of downtown residents said they would like to travel by bike more than they do now. More than three quarters of respondents said that if they were able to bike more, this would reduce the amount of money they spend on transportation.<sup>7</sup> A high-quality bike network has the potential to

3 Department of Transportation, City of Oakland, Oakland Walks! 2017 Pedestrian Plan Update, 2017.

4 Department of Transportation, City of Oakland, Oakland Walks! 2017 Pedestrian Plan Update, 2017.

5 City of Oakland Planning and Building Department. Downtown Oakland Specific Plan Accessibility Survey Results. 2018

6 Department of Transportation, City of Oakland, Let's Bike Oakland! Oakland's Bike Plan, 2018 (draft).

7 Department of Transportation, City of Oakland, Let's Bike Oakland! Oakland's Bike Plan, 2018 (draft).

make bicycling an inexpensive transportation option that can greatly benefit Oaklanders and visitors, especially those with lower incomes.

## TRANSIT

Downtown Oakland and the communities adjacent to it have some of the lowest rates of household vehicle ownership in the city, including relatively high percentages of households with no vehicles at all. In some cases this is by choice, as downtown is rich with transportation options, but the proportion of low-income households in downtown and the communities adjacent to it is also significant. Transportation costs and travel time can be a significant burden for low-income households and may limit people's ability to access jobs, education, health care and other services, and recreational opportunities. Improvements to bus frequency and reliability combined with reductions in transit fare for low-income households could improve the quality of life for many Oakland residents. Transit frequency and transit-priority infrastructure changes are needed to improve bus transit operations to, from and within Downtown Oakland. Currently, buses traveling along certain streets in downtown have some of the slowest operating speeds in the entire AC Transit system, which impacts the reliability and frequency of those lines throughout Oakland. It will be important to consider and address the particular needs of and impacts on low-income and price-vulnerable populations as the City moves forward with transit infrastructure improvements in downtown.

## STREET INFRASTRUCTURE

Historically, Downtown Oakland has been redesigned to prioritize private vehicle trips by converting many streets into one-way, multi-lane arterials and providing ample on- and off-street parking. While it is relatively easy for people throughout the region to drive downtown for work and other purposes, the current street design does not serve all who live in or adjacent to downtown. Residents in Downtown Oakland actually have the lowest rate of vehicle ownership per household compared to any other neighborhood in the city. Approximately 23% of Downtown Oakland households do not own a vehicle, compared with 8% of households citywide.

With the construction of the regional freeway system beginning in the 1960's, the need for local streets to accommodate regional traffic decreased significantly. Consequently, the majority of streets in Downtown Oakland have excess vehicle capacity, even during peak commute hours. Analyzing roadway demand with roadway supply shows that the great majority (more than 80%) of streets in Downtown Oakland have excess vehicle capacity. For these streets, space could be reassigned to other road users without compromising access and circulation for emergency vehicles, transit, and personal vehicles. However, there are several roadways where volume exceeds capacity, including 6th Street and the Webster and Posey Tubes, which connect Alameda with the regional freeways and Downtown Oakland. Personal vehicle travel from the

Posey and Webster Tubes contributes to vehicle congestion in downtown, primarily impacting Chinatown and Lake Merritt. The Oakland/Alameda Access Project is evaluating alternatives for improving vehicle circulation into the Posey/Webster tubes and onto I-880 in a manner that diverts regional traffic away from the Chinatown and Lake Merritt neighborhoods.

Parking: Much space throughout downtown, both on-street and off-street, is dedicated to parking. Downtown Oakland has approximately 30,000 on- and off-street parking spaces, and of these, approximately 360 (or 1.2%) are ADA-accessible/disabled parking spaces.<sup>8</sup> The City's goal for parking occupancy in downtown is 85% during peak times. Currently, downtown's parking occupancy never exceeds 85%. While some areas, such as Chinatown and the City Center, are especially impacted by parking shortages, other areas in Downtown Oakland have a surplus of parking and low parking utilization. This space could be reallocated to better serve other users in downtown – including those who arrive by foot, bike, or transit.

Another aspect of parking is the perception, especially by downtown business owners, of Disabled Person Parking Placard misuse in which vehicles with disabled placards park in many of the available on-street spaces, frequently for long periods of time, and appear to be used by people without significant disabilities. Per the California Vehicle Code Section 22511.5, vehicles with Disabled Person Parking Placards may park for unlimited periods in any parking zone.<sup>9</sup> The 2016 Downtown Oakland Parking Management Plan conducted a survey of the share of metered on-street parking that were occupied by vehicles displaying disabled placards and the duration of stay. The survey found that on many blocks, vehicles with disabled placards occupied most of the metered curb parking spaces most of the time. On some blocks, vehicles with disabled placards occupy more than 80% of metered curb parking spaces at peak hours of the day. This limits the available on-street parking spaces for both residents and visitors, including those who genuinely need the spaces due to a disability.<sup>10</sup> The cost of parking, in addition to availability of accessible spaces, is often a barrier for people with disabilities, who often have lower incomes and more transportation challenges than do people without disabilities.

### AIR QUALITY/GHG EMISSIONS

Emissions from single-occupancy vehicles are a major source of damage to local air quality, with resulting negative health outcomes, and release of greenhouse gases (GHGs). One of the City's primary sustainability goals to improve health outcomes and reduce contributions to climate change is to shift from single-occupancy fossil fuel vehicles to electric vehicles, transit, and other more efficient and less polluting forms of transportation and goods movement.

<sup>8</sup> City of Oakland and Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Downtown Oakland Parking Management Plan, 2016.

<sup>9</sup> City of Oakland and Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Downtown Oakland Parking Management Plan, 2016.

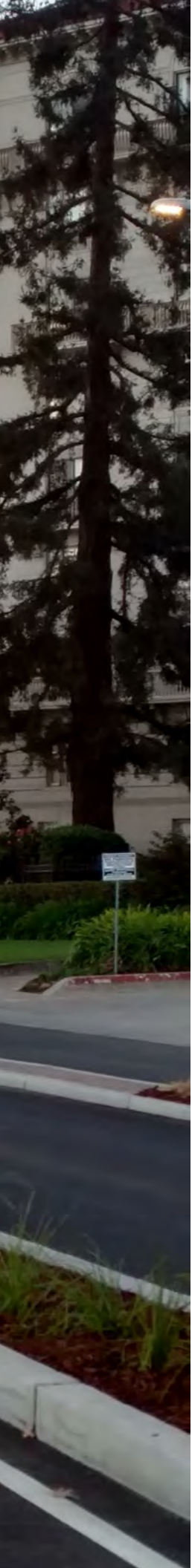
<sup>10</sup> City of Oakland and Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Downtown Oakland Parking Management Plan, 2016.

# Measures of Success

*The measures below will help gauge the effectiveness of the Downtown Specific Plan at achieving its intended outcomes for Goal 03.*

- Reduction in pedestrian and bicycle severe injuries and fatalities due to auto collisions, especially for people of color (who are disproportionately impacted now)
- Increase in walking and bicycling mode share for residents and employees
- Modern curb ramps are installed at all sidewalk intersections and accessible pedestrian signals (APS) at all intersections identified in the Project List (Appendix)
- Cost of roundtrip transit fare between downtown and Oakland neighborhoods/availability of low income fare reduction
- Transit service levels (frequency of service) increase between low-income areas of Oakland and downtown
- ADA-accessible on-street parking (blue zones) and passenger loading zones available, affordable and close to destinations





# Mobility Framework

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*Mobility policies will be put in place that make each street comfortable, safe, and inviting for travel. Connections to adjacent and outlying neighborhoods will be improved, so that residents throughout the city have efficient, reliable access to downtown's jobs, services and opportunities.*

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## Pedestrian Network

A well-connected pedestrian network is a vital component of healthy communities, which thrive on multimodal travel options for everyone. Well-designed streets accommodate pedestrians through a variety of treatments that enhance safety, convenience, and mobility. There are several key elements to enhance the pedestrian network in Downtown Oakland:

### SAFETY

Thirty-six percent of Oakland's pedestrian injuries and fatalities occur on just 2% of its streets.<sup>11</sup> Collectively these streets are referred to as Oakland's "High Injury Network" (HIN). Safety improvements along streets and at intersections include:

- Visible crossing treatments that minimize crossing distances at intersections and interchanges
- Street design and signal timing adjustments that support slower vehicle speeds and prioritize pedestrians
- Reallocating excess space from traffic lanes to other uses, and parking restrictions near crosswalks to improve sightlines

In addition to the high injury network improvements, a rail safety project is proposed for Embarcadero West that would install crossing treatments and fencing at each intersection and transform Embarcadero West into a "quiet zone" and an enhanced pedestrian corridor. While these treatments are focused on pedestrian safety, they also improve comfort and access – particularly for vulnerable groups (seniors, children, people with disabilities.)

### CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS

Freeway crossings present some of the most challenging pedestrian and bicycling conditions in Downtown Oakland and create barriers between downtown, West Oakland, Jack London, and other adjacent neighborhoods. Enhancing safety and providing more comfortable walking conditions is necessary to improve access from surrounding neighborhoods. Several projects are already underway to address this, including "Walk This Way," which addresses aesthetic and safety improvements to crossings under I-880, and the Oakland/Alameda Access Project, which will improve access between Interstate 880 and Interstate 980 (I-880/I-980), the Posey and Webster Tubes, Jack London, and Alameda. The strategies identified in the Plan complement these efforts. There are also opportunities to improve connectivity and access within downtown that will result in more seamless, attractive walking routes. Connectivity and access improvements include:

- Filling in gaps in sidewalk network and widening sidewalks
- Improvements at freeway interchanges, over- and under-crossings
- Opening new street connections or segments where the pedestrian

<sup>11</sup> Department of Transportation, City of Oakland, Oakland Walks! 2017 Pedestrian Plan Update, 2017.

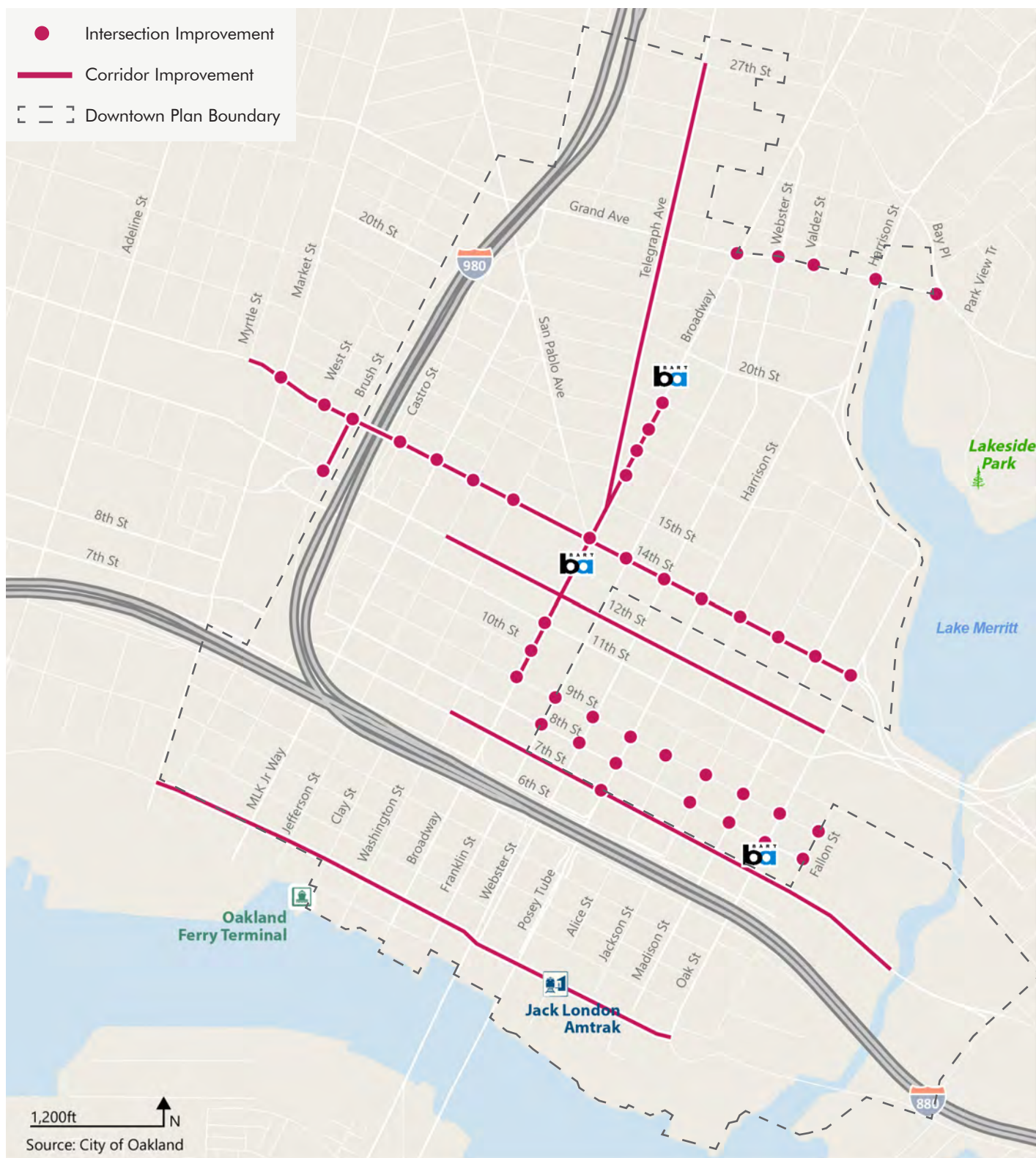
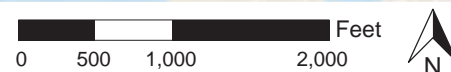


Figure M-1: Proposed Safety Improvements





**Figure M-2: Proposed Connectivity and Access Improvements**



network is incomplete or disconnected

- Streetscape amenities such as lighting and wayfinding signages
- Directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals (APS)
- Completing the “Green Loop” system of integrated walking and biking paths through downtown to link cultural districts, connect people seamlessly to all of the downtown waterfronts (Lake Merritt, Channel and Estuary), and improve access to adjacent neighborhoods and districts

Figures M-1 and M-2 locate proposed pedestrian improvements. The recommended pedestrian projects are listed in **Appendix A, Table M-1 through M-3**. Table M-1 presents safety improvements to the high injury corridors and intersections. Table M-2 outlines connectivity and access improvements throughout downtown, and Table M-3 includes infrastructure changes to provide safer pedestrian access at freeway crossings.

## Bicycle Network

Research shows that many people feel safer and more comfortable riding on slower-speed streets, with less traffic and fewer travel lanes; bicycling in more spacious facilities with greater separation from traffic; and using smaller intersections that have been designed with attention to bicycle safety. These elements are reflected in the proposed “low-stress” bicycle network for Downtown Oakland, which will be designed for people of all ages and abilities. The network must be well connected without gaps across low-stress facilities and have enough coverage to get people to their final destination.

The network is comprised of shared paths and physically separated bike lanes, supplemented by bike lanes or buffered bike lanes where the volumes and speeds of motor vehicles are low. The proposed network includes two tiers:

- The Core Network, which will provide at least three high-quality bikeways in the east-west and north-south directions that connect into the surrounding neighborhoods
- The Vision Network, which will provide additional low-stress connections throughout downtown

Completing a connected, continuous system of dedicated bike facilities offers many benefits. It provides a healthy, low-cost travel option that can connect with transit and provides a low-emission, small footprint travel option. The focus on a low-stress network will ensure that anyone who wants to ride a bike or e-scooter downtown can do so safely and comfortably. A connected, continuous low-stress network will also deter people from riding e-scooters on sidewalks.

Figures M-3 and M-4 locate the Core and Vision Bicycle Network. **Appendix A, Table M-4** includes a list of the recommended bikeway projects for Downtown Oakland.



**Figure M-3: Proposed Low-stress Core Bicycle Network**





**Figure M-4: Proposed Low-stress Vision Bicycle Network**

## Transit Network

Downtown Oakland has three BART stations that provide regional connectivity, supporting the greatest intensity of jobs, homes, and services in the downtown core area. The intercity rail station and ferry terminal in the Jack London District provide additional regional and statewide transit connectivity. Just as important as these regional transit facilities is local AC Transit bus and BRT service, which provides vital connections for people moving between downtown districts and to/from surrounding neighborhoods and adjoining communities. Improvements to the surface transit network and infrastructure in Downtown Oakland has the greatest potential to improve access and mobility for the community, especially low-income populations and people with limited mobility, who are often more reliant on transit. Consequently, proposed transit network improvements focus on infrastructure improvements that will enable AC Transit in partnership with the City of Oakland to:

- Reduce bus travel times
- Increase bus frequencies
- Ensure reliability, safety, and security for bus passengers
- Reduce transit costs, particularly for low-income members of the community

Proposed transit network improvements are targeted to improve bus travel times and frequencies, and improve convenience and reliability, to meet community needs. The transit network improvements are shown on Figure M-5 and listed in **Appendix A, Table M-5**.



Figure M-5: Proposed Bus Transit Network



## Vehicular Network

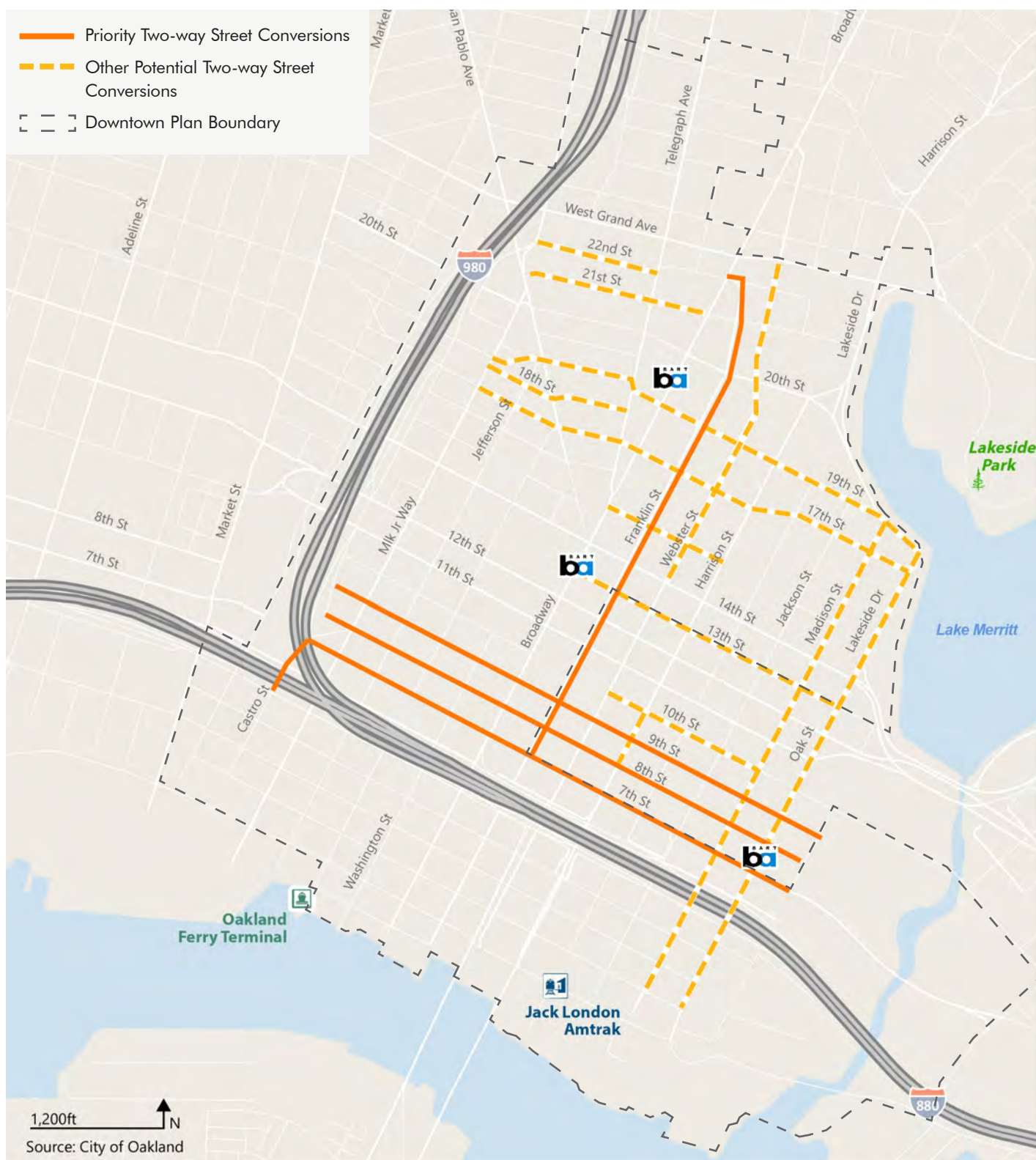
Given that Downtown Oakland's streets have excess capacity, there are many opportunities to shift underutilized space for other purposes. Downtown Oakland has many one-way streets that can be reconfigured to also provide spaces for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit, and commercial activity. Throughout the planning process, community members voiced their support for more two-way streets in their neighborhoods. Converting one-way streets to two-way where possible will help ensure that all modes of transportation have dedicated space downtown, and that they work together to provide a seamless mobility network to, from, and within downtown. Forward-thinking parking management strategies will also support a more balanced transportation system.

Strategies to rebalance street space for all users include:

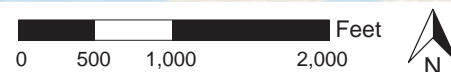
- Complete Streets projects that reflect transportation priorities for each street
- Converting one-way streets with excess capacity back to two-way
- Parking management strategies that incentivize people to drive less

In a few limited areas where the vehicular network is incomplete or disconnected, new street connections or segments will need to be opened. Congestion issues around the I-980 ramps and Webster and Posey tubes will be addressed through the Oakland/Alameda Access Project.

Streets that have been identified for one- to two-way conversions are shown on Figure M-6 and listed in **Appendix A, Table M-6**. Converting one-way streets to two-way where possible will help ensure that all modes of transportation have dedicated space downtown, and that they work together to provide a seamless mobility network to, from, and within downtown. Priority streets for one-way to two-way conversions include 7th, 8th, 9th and Franklin Street. These are streets that received broad community support for conversion in the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan, and will provide the most cost-effective benefits for Downtown Oakland. Other candidate streets may be converted based on available funding and other future opportunities. Table M-6 includes recommendations for converting these streets.



**Figure M-6: Proposed Street Conversions**



## Complete Streets Focus Corridors

For the most part, the multimodal network recommendations for transit, bikes, pedestrians and vehicles will not require trade-offs. There are, however, some key corridors with competing mobility needs where modal priorities were determined based on safety, access and community conversations:

- Broadway, Franklin and Webster Street
- 7th/8th/9th Street
- Madison and Oak Street

Several alternatives were identified and evaluated for these corridors, based on community input, as well as carrying forward ideas proposed in the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan. The objectives and plans for the future street design are described here.

### **ACCESSIBLE CHINATOWN STREETS CONCEPT (7TH, 8TH, 9TH STREETS)**

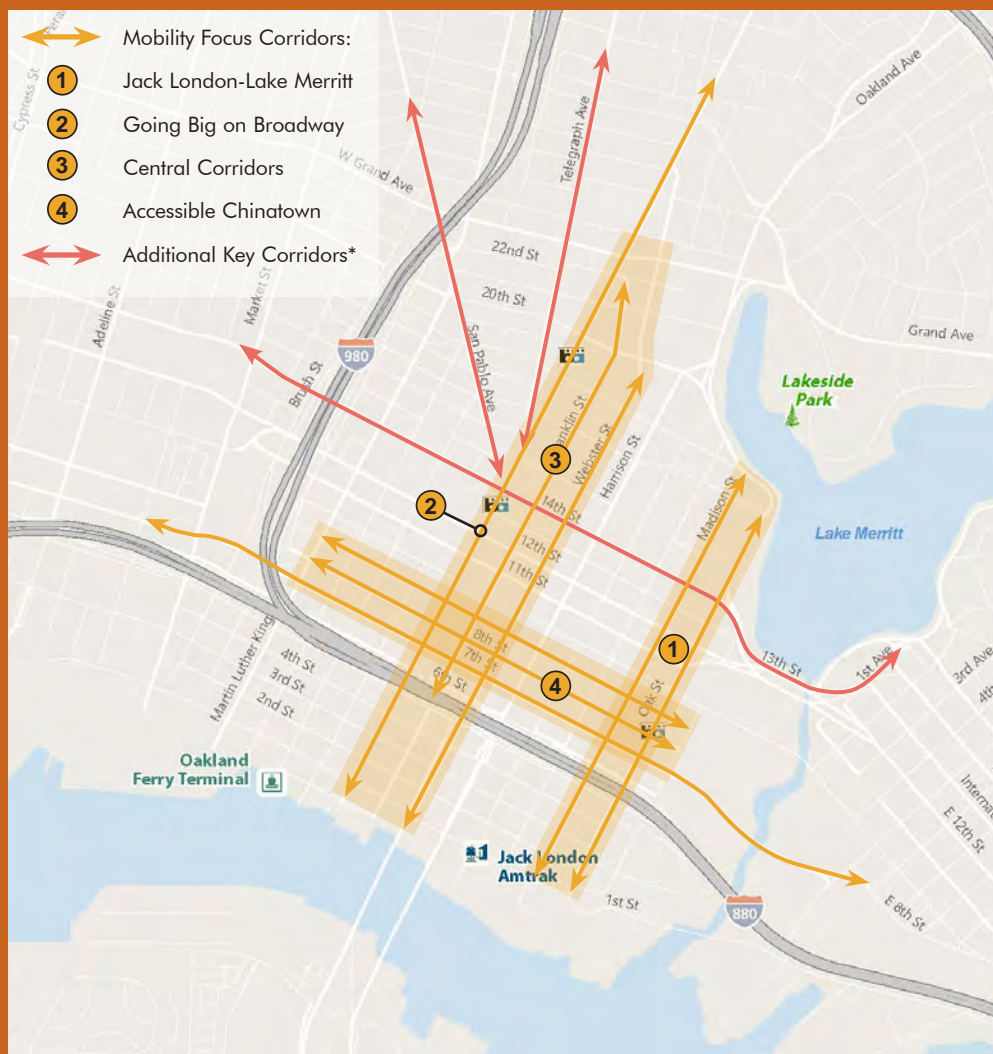
1. One-way to two-way street conversions on 7th, 8th, and 9th Streets discourage freeway spillover traffic and support local circulation within Chinatown and the adjacent neighborhoods.
2. Frequent, high-quality bus service in Chinatown reduces the need to drive to and park in the neighborhood, improve transit service for the rest of the city (particularly East Oakland) in accessing downtown, and increase service connecting to the Lake Merritt BART Station.
3. A high-quality, protected bikeway provides a connection from West Oakland to the planned East Bay Greenway and Lake Merritt BART Station.
4. The management of curbside space is improved to support businesses that rely on frequent loading, unloading and small deliveries.

### **CENTRAL CORRIDORS CONCEPT (BROADWAY, FRANKLIN, AND WEBSTER)**

1. The Broadway, Franklin, and Webster Street corridors become the primary north-south multimodal streets in Downtown Oakland.
2. A reimagined Broadway moves more people than any other street in Oakland, with dedicated transit lanes, BART below ground, curbside drop-off accessibility, and wide sidewalks.
3. Prioritized multimodal mobility on Broadway is supported by improvements to Franklin and Webster Streets, which provide separated bike lanes, on-street parking, curbside activity functions, and direct inter-neighborhood connections to Jack London Square, Alameda and north Oakland.
4. Two-way conversion of Franklin Street and portions of Webster Street increases multimodal accessibility, pedestrian safety, and commercial visibility in the core of downtown.

## JACK LONDON-LAKE MERRITT CORRIDORS (MADISON & OAK STREETS)

1. Madison and Oak Street corridors serve as key north-south connections to Lake Merritt, BART, Chinatown, Jack London Square, and the future Brooklyn Basin neighborhoods.
2. Two-way traffic patterns allow more people to conveniently access the neighborhoods by foot, bike, transit or car.
3. Transit service along Oak Street connects multiple transit lines along 2nd, 7th, 11th, 12th, and 14th street.
4. Access to the Lake Merritt BART Station is enhanced with two-way travel on Oak Street and curbside improvements at the entrance to the station for buses and other activities.
5. North-south separated bike lanes on Madison or Oak Street provides an improved connection between Lake Merritt, Jack London, and Brooklyn Basin.



**Figure M-7: Mobility Focus Corridors**

\*Designs for these corridors are already in development through other planning processes, such as the Alameda CTC Corridor Study for San Pablo Avenue, the 14th Street Caltrans ATP-funded redesign, and Phase 2 of the Telegraph Avenue Complete Streets Plan.

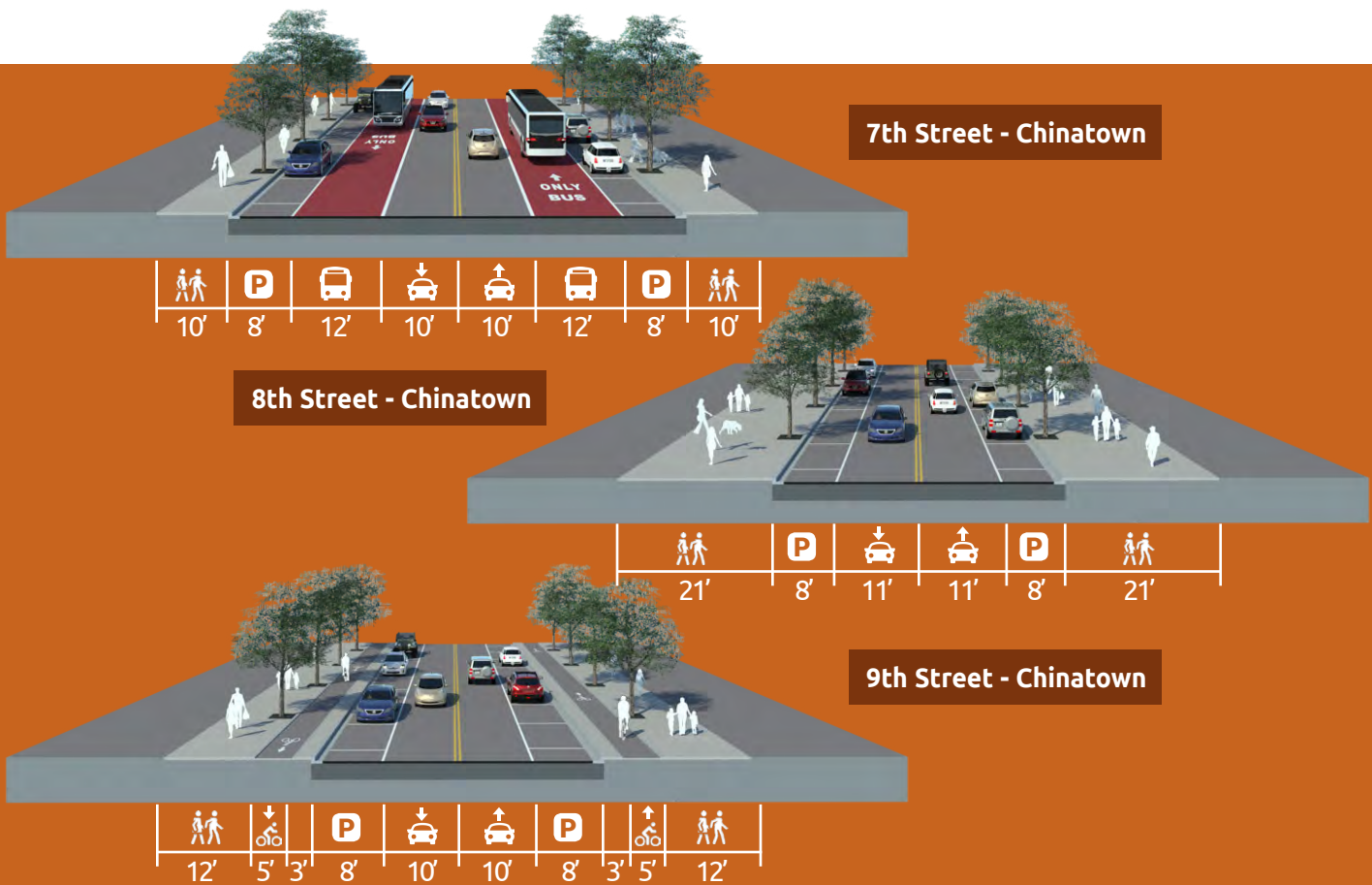


Figure M-8: Accessible Chinatown Streets Sections

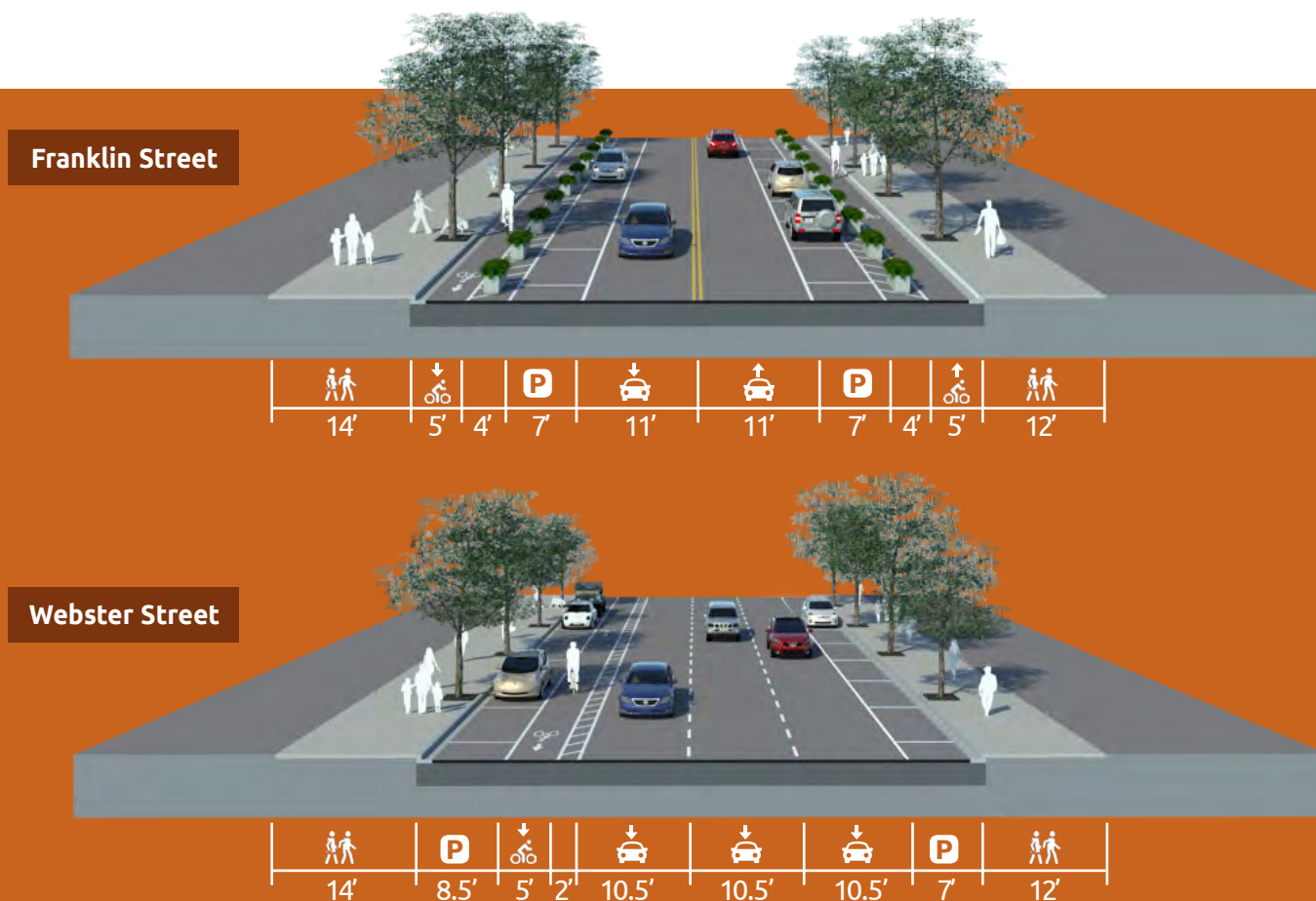
#### ACCESSIBLE CHINATOWN STREETS CONCEPT (7TH, 8TH, 9TH STREETS)

On 7th, 8th, and 9th Streets, design options were studied for keeping one-way or converting to two-way circulation, integrating transit and bicycle infrastructure, and widening sidewalks. The recommended future street design for Chinatown's east-west streets include:

- **7th Street:** Two-way street conversion with transit-only lanes.
- **8th Street:** Two-way street conversion with enhanced pedestrian environment and loading areas.
- **9th Street:** Two-way street conversion with separated bikeways.

Benefits:

- Consistency with the Revive Chinatown and Lake Merritt Station Area Plan to prioritize bikeway facilities on 9th Street.
- Transit services are consolidated to 7th Street creating an easily navigable, efficient transit corridor.
- Establishment of curbside management strategies and wider sidewalks.
- Enhancement of local vehicular circulation.
- Improvement of east-west bicycle access from outlying neighborhoods.



**Figure M-9: Central Corridors Street Sections**

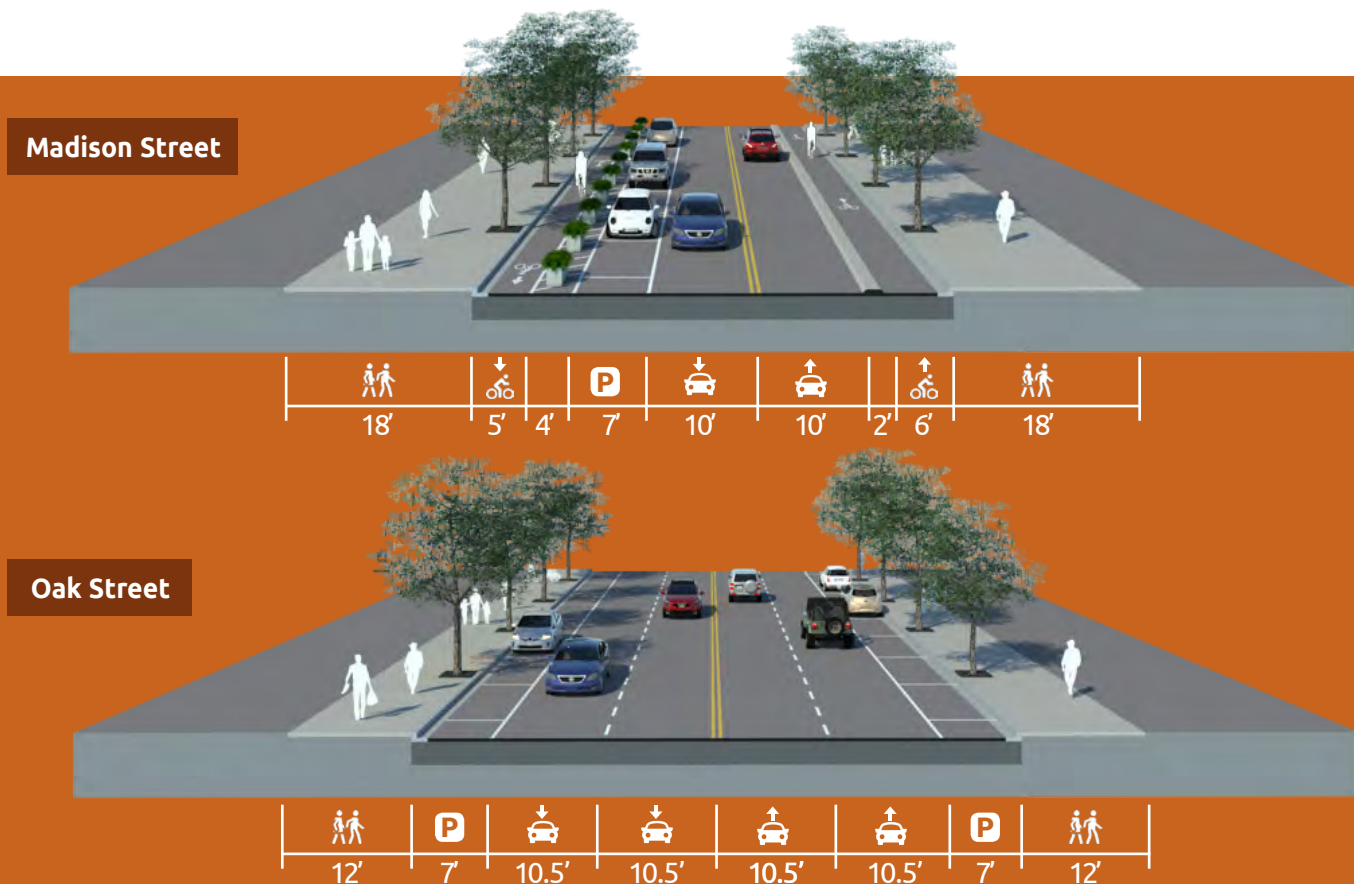
#### CENTRAL CORRIDORS CONCEPT (BROADWAY, FRANKLIN, AND WEBSTER)

Multiple alternatives were considered for one-way to two-way streets conversions, dedicated transit lanes, bike infrastructure and on-street parking. The recommended future street design for the Central Corridors includes:

- **Broadway:** Two-way transit-only lanes.
- **Franklin Street:** Two-way street conversion with protected bikeways on each side of the street. Note that in the near-term while the street is still one-way, the City is considering installation of a two-way protected bike lane.
- **Webster Street:** Convert from one-way to two-way north of 14th Street.

#### Benefits:

- High-quality, more frequent and reliable transit service through Downtown Oakland.
- A low-stress, north-south bikeway through the downtown core.
- Improved vehicular circulation within downtown core.
- Maintaining one-way travel lane capacity on Webster Street south of 14th Street to accommodate freeway- and Alameda-bound traffic.



**Figure M-10: Jack London-Lake Merritt Corridors Street Sections**

#### JACK LONDON-LAKE MERRITT CORRIDORS (MADISON & OAK STREETS)

On Madison and Oak Streets, design options studied alternatives for one-way or two-way streets, bike facilities and parking lanes. The recommended future street design for the Central Corridors includes:

- **Oak Street:** Two-way street conversion with either enhanced transit service or protected bike lanes.
- **Madison Street:** Two-way street conversion (with the potential for protected bike lanes if Oak Street is not determined the preferred option)

#### Benefits:

- Flexibility where Madison or Oak Street can be prioritized for enhanced two-way bikeway connectivity.
- Direct transit access to the Lake Merritt BART Station and consolidation of transit stops and a new bus transit connection on 10th Street to East Oakland.
- Bicycle connection between Jack London and Lake Merritt is separated from freeway ramps.



**Figure M-11: Broadway Long-Term Vision Street Section**

### GOING BIG ON BROADWAY ACTION PLAN (BROADWAY)

Multimodal improvements to Broadway will need to be phased in over time. Transit improvements are already underway for the corridor. The long-term vision could include dedicated transit lanes with floating bus islands, protected bike lanes and limited vehicle access through the downtown core.

Benefits:

- A dedicated bicycle facility along a highly desirable corridor.
- Transit stop and boarding enhancements.
- Reduced friction between private vehicles and other modes.

*Note: The long-term concepts for Broadway are preliminary, and anticipated to be refined after further review and input.*

**Figure M-12: Simulation of Broadway Bus Stops**



### IMPROVED BUS SHELTERS

This illustration, created for the City of Oakland's Broadway Transit Circulator Study (2014), shows new bus stations to serve transit users along proposed bus-only lanes.



**Figure M-13: Broadway and 14th Street**

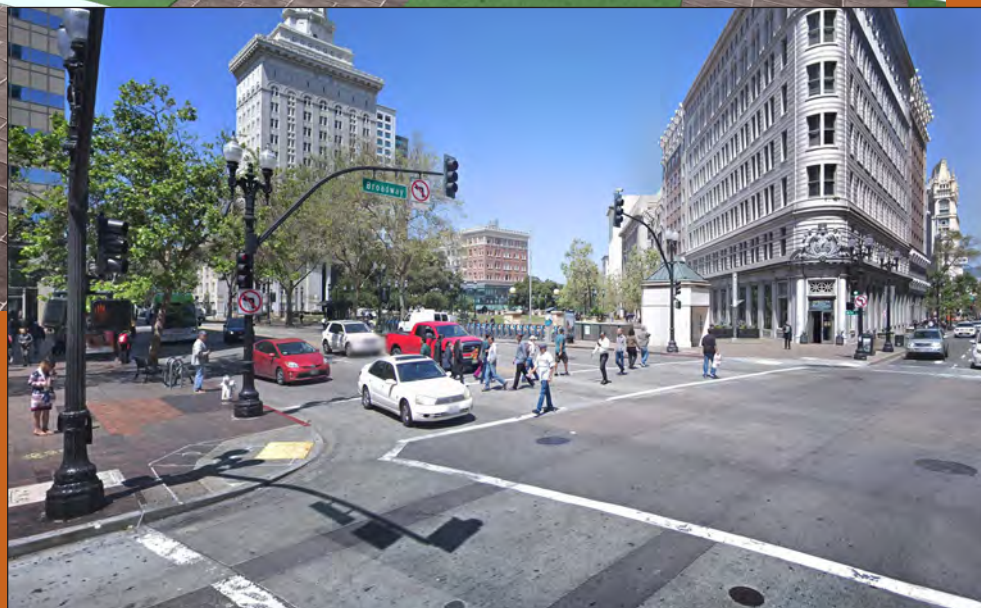
Existing Conditions (right)  
Potential Future Conditions (above)

## VISUALIZING IMPROVEMENTS TO DOWNTOWN'S CORE

The Mobility Framework describes a series of pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular improvement projects for downtown. These improvements will increase the ability of downtown residents, workers and visitors to move around and access jobs, services and other destinations; later chapters describe additional improvements to the public realm (Chapter 5) and urban form (Chapter 6). Taken comprehensively, implementation of Plan recommendations will produce a built environment that better serves the needs of the Oakland community.

Illustrated in this image:

- Enhanced intersection, with high visibility crosswalks
- Dedicated bus transit lanes on Broadway. With this improvement, the bus stop pull-out in the foreground is no longer needed, allowing for a curb extension/shortened pedestrian crossing and larger plaza area.
- Bike lane on 14th Street
- Improvements to Frank Ogawa Plaza include a more visible entry to the BART station, and increased usability for community gathering



# Supportive Plan Policies

*Objectives for downtown's pedestrian and bicycle networks include improving safety, connectivity, and access between neighborhoods and destinations, and making the public realm more inviting and comfortable. These improvements will benefit everyone, but particularly our most vulnerable populations that bear disproportionate impacts from traffic collisions. In addition, improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle network may translate into fewer vehicle trips which improves air quality and health outcomes. The following policies reflect these aspirations.*

## OUTCOME M-1

*Downtown is well-connected across its internal and adjacent neighborhoods with bicycle and pedestrian networks that are accessible and safe for people of all ages and abilities.*

### M-1.1 Design and construct connectivity and access improvements throughout downtown.

Improve pedestrian safety, create a more connected pedestrian network, and improve streetscape and public space throughout downtown by implementing the connectivity and access projects as identified in Figure M-1 and M-2 and described in Appendix Table M-1 through M-3.

### M-1.2 Design and construct safety measures along the high-injury pedestrian network, including ADA measures that support access for people with disabilities.

Improve pedestrian safety on high-injury corridors and at high-injury intersections in downtown by implementing the safety projects as identified in Figure M-1 and described in Appendix Table M-1. Address public safety and security concerns that discourage people from walking.

### M-1.3 Design and construct a low-stress bicycle network throughout downtown.

Design a network of continuous low-stress bikeways as identified in Figure M-3 and M-4 and described in Appendix Table M-4, that facilitates easy navigation between corridors at intersections with wayfinding and turning movement treatments such as protected intersections, bike boxes, or two-stage turn boxes.

**M-1.4 Continue to expand bike parking supply including short-term and long-term facilities for both commercial and residential land uses.**

Review and update the City's bike parking requirements for Downtown Oakland on a regular basis.

Currently, the Planning Code does not require any long-term bicycle parking for multi-family dwellings with private garages for each unit. For multi-family dwellings without private garages for each unit, one long-term bicycle parking space is required for each four dwelling units, and the minimum citywide requirement is two spaces. This Plan recommends revising City codes to require one long-term bicycle parking space per unit to provide adequate numbers of bicycle parking spaces for new residences.

**M-1.5 Update signal timing and upgrade signals throughout downtown to reduce the delay and support access for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit.**

Develop a program that upgrades the signals to improve access and safety and reduce delay for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders by:

- Installing leading pedestrian intervals
- Installing Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS)
- Including pedestrian signal heads with countdowns at all intersections in all directions
- Providing a "green wave" for bicycle traffic, which times signals so that bicyclists arrive at each intersection during a green phase; also serves as a form of traffic calming
- Ensuring that signal all-red phases provide adequate clearance time to enable bicyclists who enter the intersection at the end of the yellow indication to pass through and exit before opposing traffic receives a green indication
- Implementing transit signal priority strategies by placing transponders on transit vehicles and at signals that communicate with each other, i.e. a "green extension"

**M-1.6 All future intersection upgrades should install signals that accommodate two-way circulation as standard practice.**

One-way to two-way street conversions help to reduce vehicle speeds and to make the street network more permeable for bicyclists. In order to accommodate these conversions, signals at intersections with one or more one-way streets require additional signal heads and/or adjustments to existing signal heads to control the new traffic pattern. Funding for signal upgrades may be leveraged from private development to allow for future adaptability of the roadway network.



Figure M-14: Scooter parking pads in Long Beach, CA. These pads are removable and can easily be relocated based on demand.

#### **M-1.7 Plan and design for micro-mobility devices and users in transportation improvements.**

Serve micro-mobility users and vulnerable pedestrians by providing dedicated space, such as protected bike lanes, for people to ride in. Create dedicated parking pads on-street or in pedestrian amenity zones for e-scooters and other micro-mobility devices.

#### **M-1.8 Implement the pedestrian programs/policies for Downtown Oakland detailed in the 2017 Oakland Pedestrian Plan.**

These programs and policies include, but are not limited to:

- Partnership with the Department of Race and Equity and the Police Department to enforce traffic safety that does not further impact racial disparities or racial profiling.
- Providing resources to support low-income property owners in repairing sidewalks through the City's Façade Improvement Program.
- Development of a temporary traffic control protocol for new developments that affect the pedestrian environment.
- Creation of a program to update and maintain the City's sidewalk inventory in downtown.
- Coordinate between the Department of Transportation and ADA Programs to improve accessibility and implement the ADA Transition Plan.

#### **M-1.9 Link neighborhoods with the waterfront.**

All recreational activity sites along Lake Merritt, Lake Merritt Channel, and the Estuary should be connected to each other to create continuous waterfront access. Safe and direct pedestrian and bicycle access between the waterfront and adjacent neighborhoods should be created and strengthened. The "Green Loop" is a circulation concept linking the Lake Merritt, Lake Merritt Channel and Estuary waterfronts to street improvements along Martin Luther King Jr. Way and 20th Street to form a continuous walking & biking loop surrounding downtown. The "Green Loop" concept could also be expanded to include a second loop to directly connect West Oakland to downtown and the waterfront along Market Street and 14th Street (overlapping with the "West Oakland Walk" concept of connecting the parks, schools, historical sites, and community places along 14th Street and 18th/19th Street from Lakeside Drive to Wood Street in West Oakland).

In addition, the waterfront should be connected to the rest of the city with emphasis on direct links to adjacent neighborhoods and downtown that reduce physical barriers and the perception of isolation from the water's edge and improve public access to and along the waterfront.

*Downtown is a transit hub and a regional center for employment, services, and cultural activity. Downtown's residential communities have some of the lowest rates of vehicle ownership in the city. Transit frequency and reliability improvements, coupled with targeted infrastructure changes, can improve access to, from and within Downtown Oakland.*

## OUTCOME M-2

*Communities that are more transit-dependent are well-served to travel to and from downtown with frequent, reliable, and safe transit service.*

### **M-2.1 Implement transit priority treatments on key downtown corridors and decrease bus headways to improve overall transit travel times, and access to, from and within downtown.**

Transit priority treatments include a range of street infrastructure improvements that are designed to improve bus travel times and frequencies. These include dedicated bus-only lanes, transit priority signals at intersections, queue jump lanes, and boarding islands or transit bulbs. Setting specific targets for service frequency and span improvements will enable the City to work more effectively with AC Transit to target resources to the highest priority transit services.

Figure M-5 shows the locations for improvements, which are described in Appendix Table M-6. The transit improvements for 7th Street between Broadway and Oak Street anticipate that 7th Street would be converted from one-way to two-way operation.

### **M-2.2 Reconfigure transit service in Jack London and Chinatown to better connect with regional transit (ferry terminal, Amtrak, and Lake Merritt BART) and improve bus transit connections between downtown and East Oakland.**

To better serve the Lake Merritt BART Station and improve bus transit connections to East Oakland and locations of future development, including Brooklyn Basin, the bus transit network in Chinatown and the Jack London District should be reconfigured in conjunction with one-way to two-way street conversions on 7th Street and Oak Street, as shown in Figure M-4. This enables the creation of a transit center at the Lake Merritt BART station on Oak Street between 8th and 9th Streets and provides more direct connections between Brooklyn Basin, Chinatown, and the Jack London District.

### **M-2.3 Improve passenger amenities (including wayfinding) and security at bus stops on all transit streets throughout downtown.**

Providing a safe, comfortable space to wait for buses that includes wayfinding and other transit information facilitates the use of public

*Enhanced transit systems described in this plan could bring direct benefit to the general population of downtown users and to low-income residents but could also increase displacement pressures to low-income and price-vulnerable populations. Implementation will be accompanied by other plan strategies for increased affordable housing and commerce spaces, and anti-displacement measures targeted to the needs of downtown residents and businesses. See policies under Economic Opportunity Outcome E-2 and Housing Outcome H-2.*

transit, particularly for more vulnerable populations such as youth, seniors, and people with disabilities. Bus stop improvements can include lighting, new shelters, benches, wayfinding information in multiple languages, and other amenities. Multilingual wayfinding signage at transit stops and stations should be coordinated and consistent with other wayfinding in downtown in terms of design and content, including design features that are used to identify specific cultural districts (see Policy CH-1.4). Current standard bus shelter design will be modernized to take up less space on the sidewalk while providing shelter for more people. A plugged-in shelter could also provide interactive way-finding and real-time bus arrival updates.

**M-2.4 Preserve sufficient bus layover capacity around Lafayette Square, Lake Merritt BART, and Jack London District to serve existing and future transit service needs to and from downtown.**

A number of AC Transit bus lines terminate in Downtown Oakland. At the terminus of a line, buses may need to park at a designated stop or area for a longer period of time (typically 15 to 30 minutes) before starting the next run. This layover or recovery time allows bus drivers to take required breaks and provides a time cushion in the event that the preceding trip is delayed. Allowing for bus layovers in downtown enables AC Transit to provide more service to downtown and facilitates on-time bus operations.

**M-2.5 Maintain reliable, ADA-accessible access to transit stations (i.e. BART elevators and escalators) and find opportunities to increase the number of elevators.**

Three BART stations are located within Downtown Oakland (12th Street, 19th Street, and Lake Merritt stations), and currently, each station has only one elevator for vertical access. Often, these elevators are out of service or in need of maintenance, which limits access to the stations for seniors, people with disabilities, and others with mobility issues. The City of Oakland and BART should partner to provide additional access to the stations and ensure that that facilities, such as elevators and escalators, are routinely maintained and cleaned.

**M-2.6 Capitalize on potential regional transit expansion opportunities for BART, Capitol Corridor, and ferry service.**

A second transbay crossing for BART is under consideration, as are improvements in Capitol Corridor rail service and ferry service. The City of Oakland should take an active role in partnering with regional transit agencies in planning for and implementing these improvements so that they further the City's goals and objectives for transportation, economic development, and land use.

### **M-2.7 Work with transit agencies to develop a low-income transit pass to reduce the cost of transit fare.**

Reduced fares create improved access for a wide range of populations to participate in the economic activity of Downtown Oakland. As an example, there was a regional effort to develop a means-based fare program: <https://mtc.ca.gov/our-work/plans-projects/other-plans/means-based-fare-study>

For example, a low-income transit pass can reduce racial disparities and benefit all stakeholder populations by making public transit more affordable and removing or lowering barriers to transit service for relevant populations. This policy would improve transit service within downtown by reducing the cost of bus transit for downtown residents and anyone using transit within downtown. Further study would be required to determine the potential revenue source, as well as the costs of either increasing bus transit service or subsidizing fares.

### **M-2.9 Name transportation facilities to reflect the location or character of the place that they serve.**

The City and transportation agencies should name transportation facilities in culturally-relevant, appropriate ways. The Lake Merritt BART Station should be renamed to better identify its location in Oakland Chinatown, as recommended in the adopted Lake Merritt Station Area Plan, Section 8.2. In order to implement this policy in a way that centers equity, additional participation by the Chinatown neighborhood and other affected communities is essential.

*The design of downtown's streets should facilitate different modes of transportation and work together to provide a seamless mobility network to, from, and within downtown. Wherever there is excess vehicular capacity, space on the streets should be reallocated to wider sidewalks, bike facilities, transit lanes, and loading/unloading areas to better serve community needs.*

### OUTCOME M-3

*Oaklanders connect to Downtown's resources with intermodal and multimodal options that accommodate people of all ages and abilities from their front door to their destination and back.*

#### **M-3.1 Implement the City's adopted Complete Streets Policies and focus on reconfiguring road space on public streets with excess capacity to other modes, such as bicycles, pedestrians, and transit.**

Since many of downtown's streets have excess capacity, the opportunity exists to reconfigure the right-of-way to include spaces for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit, and loading/unloading. Pedestrian improvements are proposed under Policies M-1.1- M-1.3; bicycle improvements are proposed under Policy M-1.4; and transit improvements are proposed under policies in Outcome M-2. Concepts for street design on key focus corridors downtown are presented in the Mobility Framework section of this Plan.

A map of proposed one-way to two-way conversions to achieve these multimodal strategies is illustrated in Figure M-6 and described in Appendix Table M-6.

#### **M-3.2 Decrease freeway traffic on local streets through improvements proposed as part of the Oakland/Alameda Access Project.**

Located within the cities of Oakland and Alameda, the Oakland/Alameda Access Project proposes to improve access among Interstate 880 and Interstate 980 (I-880/I-980), the Posey and Webster Tubes, Downtown Oakland, and Alameda. Within the approximately one-mile-long project study area, I-880, I-980, and State Route 260 (SR 260, the Posey and Webster Tubes) are major transportation corridors that experience heavy congestion during peak travel periods. Moreover, the I-880 freeway viaduct is a physical barrier, limiting connectivity between Downtown Oakland and Chinatown to the north and the Jack London District and the Oakland Estuary to the south. Local street patterns near I-880 are intertwined with freeway entrance and exit ramps as well as the Webster and Posey Tubes to and from Alameda, affecting the cross-freeway circulation of motorists, as well as bicyclists and pedestrians.

Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) is preparing several technical studies to evaluate community, circulation, and environmental impacts. Currently, the Oakland/Alameda Access Project is conducting an extensive stakeholder coordination and public outreach process to build consensus on the proposed project. A stakeholder working group has been established by ACTC for the project and meets quarterly to discuss the project elements.

**M-3.3 Manage public parking to balance the diverse needs of Downtown Oakland's visitors, merchants, commuters and residents.**

To ensure parking availability, increase ADA-accessible parking and passenger loading with the objectives of serving the needs of people with disabilities, seniors, and downtown businesses; reducing the number of motorists circulating to find parking; balancing the needs placed on curb space; and better managing parking resources and demand by:

- Implementing performance-based pricing by using appropriate pricing rather than time limits to manage parking demand block-by-block, garage-by-garage throughout the day
- Implementing real-time parking signage to display parking availability and/or pricing
- Adopting the Sensor Independent Rate Adjustment (SIRA) methodology developed for San Francisco's SFpark to monitor parking occupancy in real time
- Establishing parking benefit districts in which a portion of parking revenues are used for local improvements in the neighborhoods where the funds are collected
- Establishing and funding Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs to increase the number of people who use transit, walking, bicycling, and carpooling to access downtown.

One mechanism for managing underpriced parking supply is to increase prices for parking in high-demand areas and to maintain or reduce prices in low-demand areas. However, this parking management strategy may have equity impacts since those who cannot afford the higher prices may be forced to take other modes that increase their travel time or create undue burdens or inconveniences.

#### **M-3.4 Establish parking maximums, include requirements for electric vehicle charging and consider a means by which developers can build parking up to 1.25 in exchange for providing community benefits.**

As part of the implementation phase, the City will consider establishing parking maximums, with allowances for additional parking in return for community benefits and requirements for providing electric vehicle charging stations.

#### **M-3.5 Actively manage curbside space to serve diverse needs of Oakland's residents, merchants, and visitors.**

A more proactive approach to assessing and managing curbside uses will help ensure that the competing demands on curb space are better balanced to serve Oaklanders' needs. Programs to pursue include:

- Implementing the Color Curb Program in Chinatown, or a combined commercial loading/metered parking zones on select streets; this zone would allow 30-minute time-limited commercial parking from 7:00-10:00AM and metered parking at all other times. Locations could include the north and south sides of 9th Street from Broadway to Webster Street; the north and south sides of 8th Street from Franklin Street to Harrison Street; and the north and south sides of 10th Street from Webster to Harrison Street.
- Developing a Curbside Management Study to analyze the existing uses of curbside space, both auto and non-auto, and develop a clear methodology to guide decision-making on how to manage and prioritize the use of scarce curb space.

This study could build upon the 2016 Downtown Oakland Parking Study that identified the following ranked priorities:

1. Bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit (including designated paratransit zones);
2. Active freight and passenger loading (including ADA-accessible passenger loading zones);
3. Places to linger, such as parklets and sidewalk dining;
4. Short- and long-term parking.

In addition to recommendations for existing uses, the study should also include recommendations for possible future uses, such as automated vehicles. The introduction of automated vehicles may accelerate the need for curbside management planning since their presence may increase pressures on curbside space and reduce the demand for on-street parking.

**M-3.6 Study the long-term feasibility of replacing I-980 with a multi-way boulevard to better connect West Oakland and downtown, creating opportunities for new housing and other uses, and support walking, biking, and transit.**

In the long term, this Plan recommends additional studies to assess the possibility of replacing the I-980 freeway with a street-level boulevard that has a highly walkable and bikeable design, including intersections and crosswalks that better connect downtown to West Oakland along with low-stress bicycle and recreational facilities. The excess right-of-way could be repurposed to serve the needs of the West Oakland and downtown communities with new housing, commercial spaces, and public green space. Additional information is provided in the Neighborhood Vision section.

**M-3.7 Prioritize the movement of emergency service vehicles throughout downtown by: 1) Allowing emergency service vehicles to use proposed dedicated transit lanes; and 2) Upgrading signal technology to provide emergency pre-emption throughout Downtown Oakland.**

The roadways in Downtown Oakland serve a variety of users such as motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders. Another important roadway user is emergency service vehicles such as police cars, fire apparatus, ambulances, and in some cases tow trucks and public utility trucks. Allowing these vehicles to reach their destinations quickly and safely is a critical element of a strong transportation system.



# 04: Culture Keeping





# DOWNTOWN OAKLAND

## 04

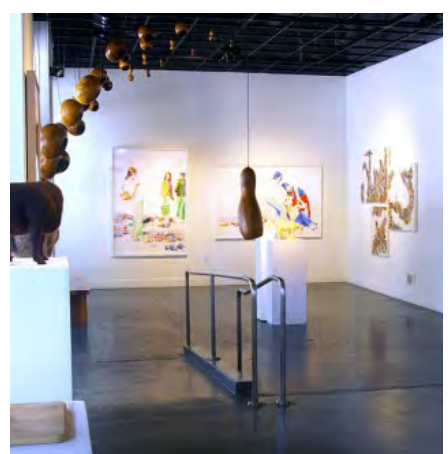
Downtown Oakland is a hub for art, events, political expression, businesses and festivals, all embracing Oakland's ethnic diversity. Arts and culture not only reflect the spirit and soul of a place, facilitating a sense of belonging, but they are also an essential economic asset. Accommodation, food service and arts were the second-fastest growing employment sector between 2011 and 2016, and third largest employment sector overall in Downtown Oakland (including Chinatown) as of 2016.<sup>1</sup> Downtown also plays an important role in Oakland's arts scene in terms of the volume of arts space it contains.

Oakland's diverse cultures are a colorful mosaic across the city, and a "downtown for all" should highlight and celebrate all of those cultures as well. Preserving the diverse voices and forms of art is one of the main goals of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan. In the context of this cultural bounty, Downtown Oakland is also the focus of unprecedented economic investment, which has introduced a new dynamic in the cultural landscape. Policies should be explored and adopted to prevent cultural displacement and protect Oakland's vulnerable cultural resources and people from the disproportionate effects of pressure on the cost of housing and commercial space.

<sup>1</sup> Report Prepared by Strategic Economics for The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan: Downtown Oakland's Economic Role in the City and the Region Report. 2017, pp. 15-16.

## CHAPTER 04: CULTURE KEEPING

### SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES



## CHAPTER 04:

### Culture Keeping

**Goal 04** *Allow diverse voices and forms of expression to flourish.*

**Outcome C-1** *Downtown is a place where all of Oakland's residents can see and express themselves and their culture.*

**Outcome C-2** *Festivals, outdoor art installations, and cultural events are integral elements in downtown's public sphere and spaces.*

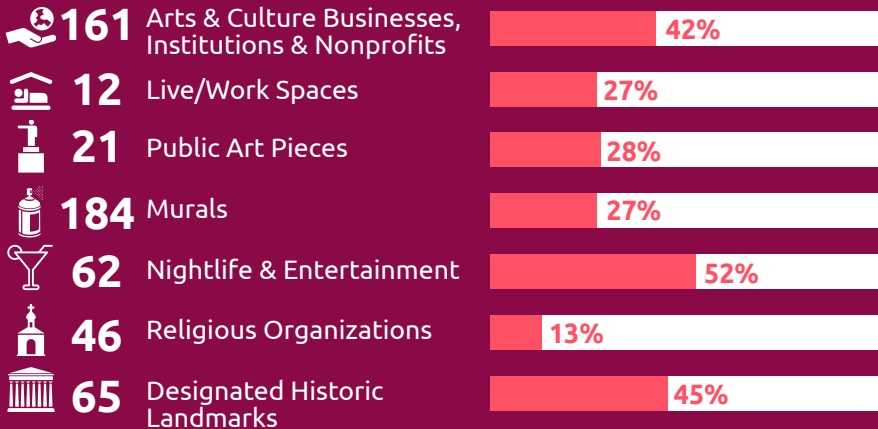
**Outcome C-3** *Oakland's artists and creative community are able to find workspaces, performance spaces, and galleries in downtown that they can access and afford and see their work integrated into the built environment and public domain.*

### CULTURAL ASSETS

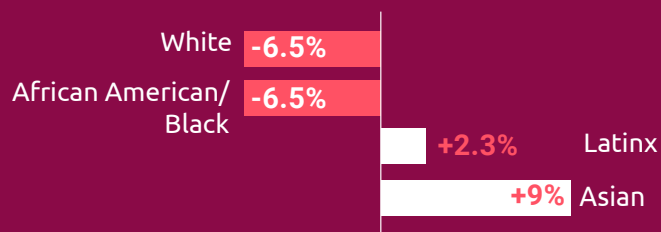
Downtown accommodation, food service, & art:



Percentage of cultural asset downtown versus citywide:

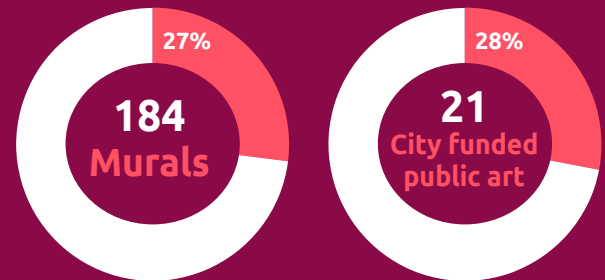


Population trends in downtown (1990 - 2015)



### ART & FESTIVALS

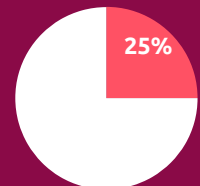
Percentage of public art in downtown versus the City of Oakland as a whole:



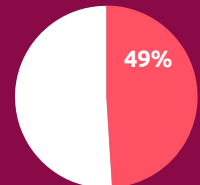
### ART HOUSING & WORKSPACE

Results from the Artist Housing and Workspace Task Force survey (2015):

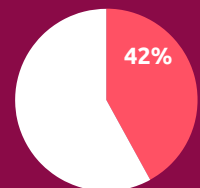
% artists that have been displaced within the last year or face imminent displacement



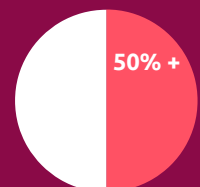
% artists that have been displaced from both housing and workspaces



% artists that reported rent increase as the primary reason for displacement



Over half of respondents made or practiced their art at home.



# Summary of Existing Conditions

*Oakland is one of the most diverse cities in the nation, regarded internationally as a hub of artistic and creative innovation. Strong market pressures for housing and commercial space resulting in rising costs have increased the displacement of downtown's artists and creative community.<sup>2</sup> This chapter focuses on protecting, celebrating, and enhancing Oakland's unique history, businesses, institutions, and artists.*

## Leveraging Assets

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Downtown is home to a large concentration of valuable cultural and entertainment resources that bring both direct and indirect economic<sup>3</sup> returns to the city. Over the past decade, Downtown Oakland has become a local and regional destination for dining, nightlife and entertainment. With an estimated 52% share of Oakland's total nightlife and music venues, downtown serves as the mainstage for a diverse range of local and international artists.<sup>4</sup> Oakland's Economic Development Strategy identifies 'Culture and Arts' as one of the city's key industry clusters and notes that preserving access to affordable studios, makerspace, performance space, and housing for artists is key to supporting the continued success of this industry. Accommodation, food service and arts constituted the third largest employment sector and the second fastest growing sector in downtown (including Chinatown), adding 1,500 new jobs between 2011 and 2016. These resources also constitute the character of Oakland, and they include businesses that are owned by and serve Oaklanders across diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, facilitating the sense of cultural belonging that is so vital to downtown and to the city as a whole.

2 White Paper Prepared for the Mayor's Artist Housing and Workspace Task Force: Strategies for Protecting and Creating Arts & Culture Space in Oakland. 2016, pp. 1.

3 Indirect economic returns from non-arts spending patterns including such things as eating out, paying baby-sitters, booking hotels, etc.

4 Back-End Data for Oakland's Cultural Asset Map. City of Oakland Cultural Affairs Division. 2018, <http://oakgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=d03eea33b23c4e679466c52bf3b6844b>

Community-based organizations form the contours of Oakland's cultural landscape. In downtown, the longest operating example of such an organization is the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, whose namesake, an artistic pioneer, cultural ambassador and visionary leader, dedicated his life to the preservation and growth of African culture. Originally designed as a Women's Club in the 1920s, the building transitioned in the 1980s to a City-owned theater and arts center. Since the 1990s the artistic organizations at the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts have provided multi-ethnic instruction from world class companies including premier African American modern dance, traditional African dance and dance of the African Diaspora, ballet and dance for people with disabilities. The city's strong bonds of social capital are a significant part of its asset base. Downtown's cultural ecosystem also includes traditional nonprofit anchors such as the Oakland Museum of California, the Paramount Theatre, Oakland Fox Theater, and the Oakland Symphony.

The growth and vibrancy of local entrepreneurship is a signature of Oakland's downtown. The combination of features such as Oakland Art Murmur and a burgeoning restaurant and artisanal food and beverage scene have helped propel renewed interest in the area. Socially-conscious arts galleries with strong community organizing components and independent boutique retailers populate the shops throughout downtown, many owned by younger people of color, giving downtown a multi-cultural identity.

### CULTURAL DISTRICTS

One of the distinguishing features of downtown is the diverse mix of ethnic enclaves, arts organizations, performance venues, legacy businesses, historic sites, art galleries, artists, and makers. Recognizing these unique yet vulnerable assets, the City formally designated the 14th Street corridor from Oak Street to Frontage Street in West Oakland as the "Black Arts Movement and Business District". Chinatown is a cultural district continuing a tradition within Oakland's urban core across generations where there is currently a proposal to create a formal cultural heritage district. Other arts and culture districts have been proposed by stakeholders, including the Art+ Garage District and the Jack London Maker District.

### THE CIVIC CULTURAL COMMONS

Borrowing from the City's Cultural Plan, the "civic cultural commons" is where people can intentionally build a sense of community and belonging. It is where a sense of identity is created through what is promoted in the shared environment. The City's Cultural Affairs Office financially supports a wide range of cultural expression including cultural funding grants, municipal and private development public art requirements, underwriting of the annual two-day Art + Soul festival, fee offsets and logistical support for a variety of annual festivals, parades and runs, the largest of which happen downtown,

and logistical support for film crews using Oakland as a backdrop, as well as weekly walking tours.<sup>5</sup>

The City of Oakland and various arts and culture organizations have successfully promoted public art and public festivals in the downtown area. Oakland's Public Art ordinances require the allocation of between 0.5 and 1.5% of eligible public and private construction costs for public art. Other Cultural Affairs programs, including: the Cultural Funding and Street Festivals programs; City initiatives including the City Council Anti-Graffiti Mural Grant Program; and the Department of Transportation's Paint the Town programs; and Visit Oakland's Public Mural Grant Program, have supported permanent and temporary public art, performances and festivals in the downtown area and in public spaces. Additionally, local arts organizations and initiatives including the Oakland Super Heroes Mural Project, Dragon School and Community Rejuvenation Project (to name a few) have championed and realized successful community-engaged mural programs.

Downtown has a rich and vibrant festival culture. The City, through Cultural Affairs, currently plays a supportive role in facilitating the ability of diverse communities to express themselves in the civic commons. Festivals, street fairs, and parades are important to both validating the variety of cultures in the city as well as providing inviting opportunities for community connection and bridge building. Downtown hosts a wide array of festivals and events, including Eat Real Festival, Art+Soul, the Oakland Book Festival, the Oakland Pride Parade, the Chinatown Street Festival, and many more. Downtown is also home to First Fridays, Art Murmur, and Saturday strolls in KONO and Second Saturdays in Jack London: both monthly gatherings that celebrate art and culture. One reason downtown can accommodate such a wide array of events is the wealth of natural and built assets located here, including Lake Merritt, Jack London Square, Frank Ogawa Plaza, and several local theaters, museums and cultural institutions that attract residents of Oakland, as well as regional populations.

## ARTS & CULTURE SPACE

Data used to produce Oakland's Cultural Asset Map indicates that 42% of Oakland's arts and culture businesses, institutions and nonprofits are located downtown.<sup>6</sup> This space takes a variety of forms from outdoor festivals near the remodeled Lake Merritt amphitheater and at Frank H. Ogawa Plaza to renovated early industrial buildings and the transformation of traditional ground floor retail space into arts work and performance space (such as a black-box theater). Buildings include the Oakland Asian Cultural Center and the African American Museum and Library.

5 City of Oakland Cultural Affairs Division. *Belonging in Oakland*, Cultural Development Plan. Vanessa Whang, Communities in Collaboration and Alex Werth. 2018, pp. 85.

6 City of Oakland Cultural Affairs Division. *Belonging in Oakland*, Cultural Development Plan. Vanessa Whang, Communities in Collaboration and Alex Werth. 2018, pp. 69.

## CHAPTER 04: CULTURE KEEPING

### SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

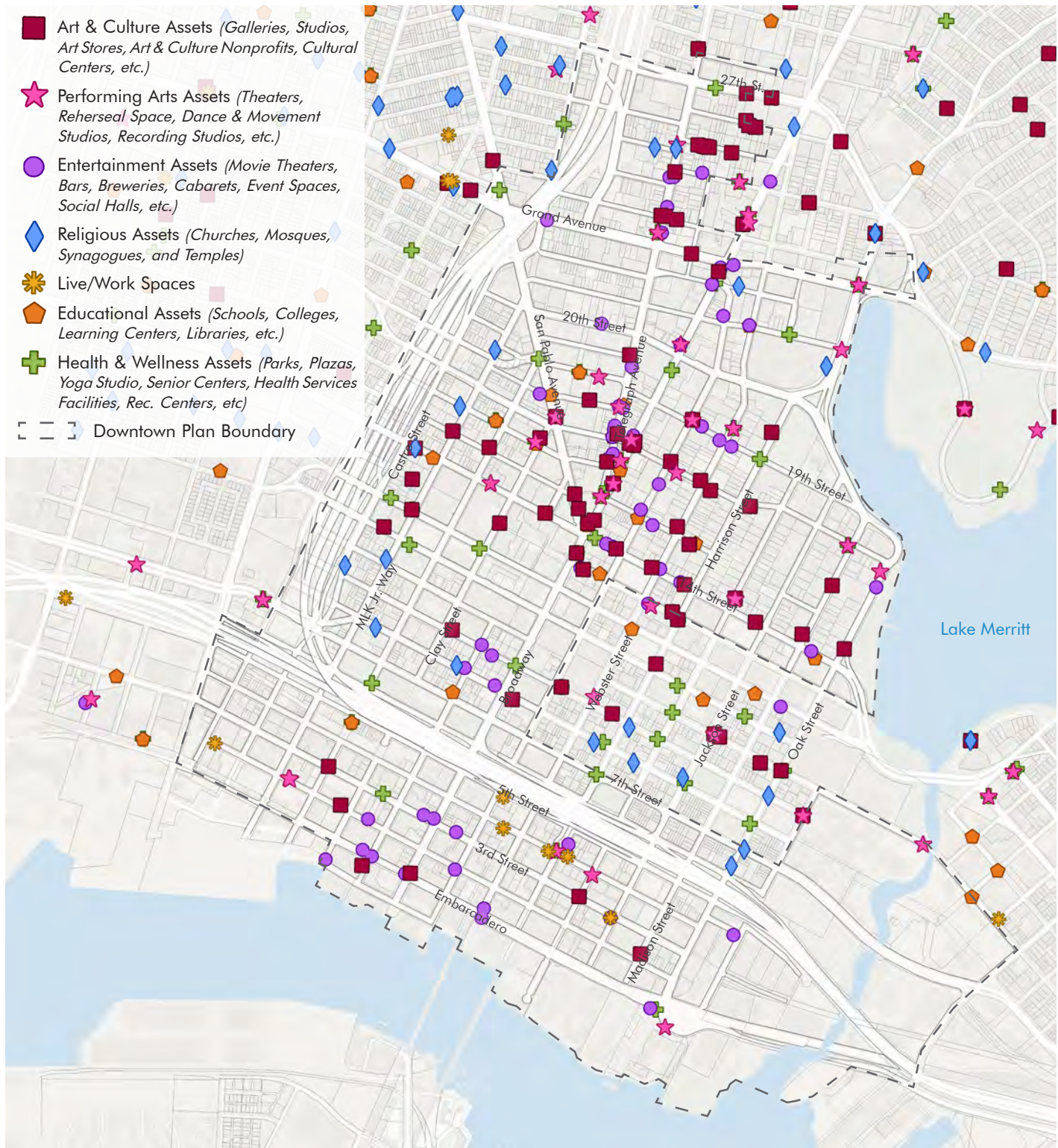


Figure C-1: Cultural Asset Map



## Addressing Barriers & Disparities

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The City's Cultural Plan reports that arts and culture funding has been on an overall downward trend, both in terms of the City's history of investment, as well as in the philanthropic field more generally. Many programs managed by the City's Cultural Affairs office are supported by the City's Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), which is levied on the hotel industry. However, there are rising costs of doing business downtown without a rise in City investment. Small organizations and emerging artists are abundant, but because funds are so limited, they are often outcompeted by more established organizations and artists.<sup>7</sup> Further, restaurants and bars, creative office, and shared office space have also outcompeted these arts and culture uses in certain districts downtown. A variety of policies and programs will be required to grow the arts and culture community and related industries which contribute significantly – both directly and indirectly – to the city's economy.

Addressing the lack of affordable work space and growing the arts and culture community will require a commitment by the City to invest in building the City's Cultural Affairs' capacity and resources to reorient grantmaking and technical assistance support toward cultural equity and asset-based approaches. The Cultural Plan outlines important steps toward this goal, including re-activation of the Cultural Affairs Commission with a clear charge and work plan aligned with the new cultural equity vision and purview of Cultural Affairs. Additionally, the Cultural Plan recommends: strengthening the Public Art Program's capacity to responsibly manage/monitor ongoing and new public art projects and initiatives; expanding support to individual artists and cultural practitioners; and fostering cultural equity across the work of the City.

The Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts is facing continuing challenges. During stakeholder meetings for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan, many of the issues identified by the dance and performance companies housed there were similar to those highlighted in a 1999 report to the City of Oakland Life Enrichment Committee as its "core" and "external" problems<sup>8</sup>: lack of an articulated mission and comprehensive plan of programming and operations; inconsistent communication system; inadequate staffing and deferred building maintenance, and a lack of loading and drop-off area (for classes and performances), and challenges with parking.

### CULTURAL DISTRICTS

A big part of preserving diverse voices and forms of expression in downtown includes maintaining the rich racial and ethnic composition found there. Dramatic demographic shifts continue to take place that are changing the diverse makeup of Oakland. Since 2000, the African American population has declined by 7% in the downtown area and 26% in the city overall, with the difference spread between increases in other racial and ethnic groups.

7 City of Oakland Cultural Affairs Division. *Belonging in Oakland*, Cultural Development Plan. Vanessa Whang, Communities in Collaboration and Alex Werth. 2018, pp. 29.

8 Jiroh, Safi. Staff Report. City of Oakland Life Enrichment Committee. July 29, 1999.

The share of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders declined from 42% of downtown's population to 39% of this population over the same period.<sup>9</sup> Community members have expressed during the planning process that these demographic changes are reflected in which types of business, art, recreation, and entertainment that have been able to thrive downtown in recent years and in which types have not.

Strong market pressures on the cost of housing and commercial space have disproportionately impacted people of color, shifting overall demographics downtown.<sup>10</sup> A concerted effort to protect and celebrate Oakland's unique history, businesses, institutions, and artists is necessary to prevent cultural displacement. Investments in the form of facility upgrades, marketing and branding targeted to the downtown's anchor institutions within its cultural districts, such as the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts and the Oakland Asian Cultural Center, should be prioritized, including improved marketing of these institutions as premiere arts centers.

#### THE CIVIC CULTURAL COMMONS

Public art can be an entry point into cultural equity discussions among partner agencies and open new opportunities for enlarging and diversifying the pool of artists knowledgeable about working on complex initiatives and bringing creative elements into public works projects. The City's 2015 ordinance requiring public art in private development projects has the potential to substantially increase resources for the creation of visual art or arts space accessible to the public and to help employ Oakland artists. Incorporating inviting artworks and cultural spaces at street level opens the possibility for visually relating to surrounding spaces, referring to the history of downtown, enlivening foot traffic, and giving passers-by a reason to interact. Managing this program is a welcome opportunity for more public access to culture and cross-department collaboration, but has strained the Public Art Program's reduced capacity.<sup>11</sup>

Public input for the Downtown Specific Plan process has included accounts of genre-bias in the permitting and enforcement of events downtown.<sup>12</sup> Members of the Police Department's Special Activities Permits Division describe a need for better coordination among departments involved in issuing special event permits including a citywide single point of contact leading the multi-departmental process to ensure equitable application of the requirements.

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9 Memo Prepared by Strategic Economics for The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan: Draft Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement Background and Strategies. 2018, pp. 8-9.

10 City of Oakland Planning & Building Department. Downtown Oakland Disparity Analysis. 2018, pp. 12-13.

11 City of Oakland Cultural Affairs Division. Belonging in Oakland, Cultural Development Plan. Vanessa Whang, Communities in Collaboration and Alex Werth. 2018, pp. 74.

12 Sam Lefebvre, "Blacklisted: How The Oakland Police Department Discriminates Against Rappers and Music Venues" East Bay Express, <https://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/blacklisted-how-the-oakland-police-department-discriminates-against-rappers-and-music-venues/Content?oid=6482231>

Currently, a myriad of permits are required for one-time special events (such as at a gallery or festival). Depending on the scope of the activity, the applicant may need a Special Event Permit (Section 9.52 of the Oakland Municipal Code (OMC)), a Sound Amplification Permit (Section 12.56 of the OMC), plus clearance from the Fire Department, and potentially a seller's permits and health permits from Alameda County. For ongoing live entertainment activities, the process is also confusing and lengthy. For example, the activity may be subject to a Cabaret Permit (Section 5.12 of the OMC), a Conditional Use Permit (regulated by the Planning Code) and an "ABC" license from the CA Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. There is no single point of contact for a community member to navigate these processes and many of the City codes themselves contain ambiguity.

### ARTS & CULTURE SPACE

Oakland's recent economic growth has fueled high demand for downtown's limited supply of commercial space, contributing to rapidly rising rents. These cost pressures are making it increasingly difficult for new, local, and small businesses to locate and remain in the area. There was a time when artists, nonprofit, and community organizations looked to Downtown Oakland as a refuge from rapidly rising prices elsewhere in the region; today, many of those same organizations are struggling to stay in downtown. Office brokerage CBRE reported that Downtown Oakland's 5.3% office vacancy rate in the first quarter of 2018 was the lowest of all major Bay Area employment centers.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Blanca Torres. Downtown Oakland's Office Market is now the Tightest in the Nation. San Francisco Business Times. <https://www.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/news/2018/05/09/downtown-oakland-office-market-lowest-vacancy-cbre.html>

# Measures of Success

*The measures below will help gauge the effectiveness of the Downtown Specific Plan at achieving its intended outcomes for Goal 04.*

- Number (and percentage) of long-time Black residents downtown does not drop below a baseline (to be determined)
- Number (and percentage) of long-time Asian residents downtown does not drop below a baseline (to be determined)
- Number (and percentage) of long-time Latinx residents downtown does not drop below a baseline (to be determined)
- Share of arts- and culture-related businesses remains the same or grows compared to a baseline (to be determined)
- Share of space for cultural institutions remains the same or grows compared to a baseline (to be determined)
- Increase in the number and type of public art works and installations

# Supportive Plan Policies

*The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan includes recommended policies, actions and programs to bolster the work of the Oakland Cultural Plan. This section includes proposals for regulatory changes and incentives to encourage the development of spaces for arts and culture (including enhancements to existing facilities/organizations), as well as recommendations for public realm improvements to connect existing arts districts together and for improved processes to provide public art and organize festivals downtown.*

## Recommended Regulatory / Policy Action

### C-1.1 Establish a Cultural Districts Program.

A process for establishing new cultural districts should be developed that prioritizes areas with unique cultural heritage. A new cultural districts program would formalize a collaborative partnership between the City and communities and, ideally, identify resources to stabilize vulnerable communities and to preserve, strengthen, and promote the City's cultural assets and diverse communities. The program should also seek to identify appropriate City departments to become partners in the districts' establishment and implementation.

Cultural District candidates discussed as part of this planning process include:

- 14th Street Black Arts Movement and Business District (adopted by Oakland City Council in 2016)
- Additional potential cultural districts:
  - Chinatown Cultural Heritage District
  - Art & Garage District in KONO
  - Jack London Maker District

### OUTCOME C-1

*Downtown is a place where all of Oakland's residents can see and express themselves and their culture.*

See map of adopted and potential Cultural Districts on Figure LU-7. Zoning and land use regulations will be explored to help preserve existing and encourage more arts, culture, Production, Distribution and Repair (PDR), and maker spaces.

Community members and arts and culture professionals have advocated for changes to zoning and land use regulations to help encourage more projects with arts & culture spaces in the places they are most desired. Development pressure downtown has many community members concerned that these spaces will soon disappear. The goals are to preserve existing affordable arts and culture spaces while ensuring more are also created; provide predictability for both developers and community; and implement the goals of the City's Cultural Plan. The following land use controls should be explored to encourage more arts uses:

- Create a new “arts & culture” land use category and expand and update categories for artisan, custom and light manufacturing, and other arts-related and culturally-significant uses to permit a more contemporary range of arts, PDR, and cultural uses by right (or through potential future incentive programs);
- Minimum gross floor area requirements for arts, culture, and PDR uses in developments of a certain size to facilitate

## What are PDR uses?

*PDR stands for “Production, Distribution, and Repair” land uses, including auto-related and manufacturing businesses. There are concerns that these types of spaces will be converted to offices, restaurants, entertainment, or cannabis uses, which can typically afford to pay higher rents, or that they will be demolished and replaced with new office or residential development.*



PDR spaces are concentrated in:

1. Art + Garage District/KONO, which includes a base of historic automobile repair facilities; and
2. Jack London, primarily west of Broadway and in the Waterfront Warehouse area, where there are a number of early- to mid-20th century manufacturing buildings.

the creation of this space; this could be coupled with a streamlined approval, i.e., no Conditional Use Permit for large projects that provide arts space;

- Displacement provisions that require private developments that directly displace existing arts, culture, and PDR space to replace the displaced use on site and in-kind, or provide an in-lieu contribution to assist with relocation;
- Restrictions on retail, office, bar, and/or restaurant street frontage (to limit competition for arts and culture space);
- Noise disclosures so that new residents acknowledge they are in housing near noise-generating arts and culture uses; and
- Design guidelines that require new buildings to be compatible with the surrounding and historic context in terms of massing and architectural character.

**C-1.2 Explore the development of an incentive program (such as a cultural density bonus program) for downtown that identifies affordable arts, culture, and commercial space, including space for community-serving nonprofits, as one of the priority community-benefiting uses (see Policy LU-1.3).**

A program to establish a streamlined development incentive program is described in Policy LU-1.3. An important part of this program is establishing a finite number of pre-defined community-benefiting uses from which developers can choose. Based on feedback collected during the Specific Plan process, 'Affordable Arts & Culture Space' was identified as a priority community-benefiting use for Jack London, KONO, and the Central Core. 'Affordable Commercial & Neighborhood Retail Space' was also identified as a priority community-benefiting use for the Central Core, Uptown, Chinatown, and Old Oakland, which if provided can help retain ethnic businesses that face displacement.

**C-1.3 Adopt regulations that help preserve and adapt historic buildings downtown, in order to help retain and create new spaces for arts and culture uses.**

Protecting historic buildings downtown, some of which house cultural institutions and arts-related uses, is an important part of preserving the existing stock of arts, culture, and PDR spaces. Similarly, facilitating adaptive reuse of historic structures can also unlock new potential spaces dedicated to those uses. The following two policies are cited in Chapter 06: Land Use & Urban Form, which help to fulfill these outcomes:

- Draft and adopt an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance that facilitates the reuse of older and underutilized buildings by relaxing typical zoning requirements and by providing flexibility in the approval and permitting process (see LU-2.1).
- Study and develop an updated Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program that will assist in overall preservation efforts downtown (see LU-2.2).

#### **C-1.4 Strengthen and connect downtown's cultural assets and districts by investing in marketing and branding and a network of public spaces and culturally-relevant streetscape elements, such as wayfinding, signage, historical markers and public art.**

Cultural districts, both formally designated and naturally occurring, can help support a sense of belonging and connection among diverse people, customs, and forms of expression. The West Oakland Specific Plan and Lake Merritt Station Area Plan, both of which border the Downtown Plan area, have identified active cultural enclaves and arts clusters. Downtown has one formally designated cultural district, the “Black Arts Movement and Business District” along and around 14th Street. Other proposed districts include Chinatown, Art + Garage district (focused around 25th Street), and the Jack London Maker district (west of Broadway near 3rd Street).

It is important to consider these assets within the larger context of cultural spaces citywide and to harness land use designation and urban design standards to ensure that both the districts themselves as well as the areas connecting them programmatically support the people whom they celebrate and serve. The City of Oakland can partner with downtown cultural institutions, businesses, and artists to help develop a more engaging experience for all downtown visitors and residents that invites them to experience Oakland’s rich history and cultural assets. In the Community Health Chapter, Outcome CH-1 describes desired public realm improvements, including recommendations for enhanced streetscapes and connectivity, that will be closely coordinated with this policy. Action steps include:

- Coordinate land use, mobility and arts/culture goals by creating an integrated system of quality walking and biking paths between districts (including the ‘Green Loop’ and the ‘West Oakland Walk’);
- Integrate public art (in accordance with City requirements and Downtown Plan goals), signage in multiple languages, and historical markers into planned streetscape improvements;
- Provide marketing and branding support for artists (including press and media relations), a City-supported networking

platform and social media presence, promotion of special events, and cultural activities/tourism marketing; and

- Work with the community to further define an implementation plan for an overarching arts and cultural district strategy.

**C-1.5 Provide support for the Black Arts Movement and Business District (BAMBD) and promote the district with special urban design elements and marketing materials.**

Formalized in 2016 by City Council resolution, the Black Arts Movement Business District (BAMBD) spans from Lake Merritt to Wood Street in West Oakland along the 14th Street corridor, and includes community anchors such as the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts and the African American Museum and Library. It celebrates spaces and businesses dedicated to Black expression in Oakland. A semifinalist in California Arts Council's State Cultural District pilot program and the first district of its kind, the BAMBD is an opportunity to celebrate Black history and identity while also promoting racial equity and tourism downtown, and reestablishing the connection between downtown and West Oakland.

Despite the district designation by City Council, many Black-owned businesses located in the BAMBD could be vulnerable to displacement. The district needs to be promoted within the broader context of downtown and of Oakland as a whole. The following tools should be explored to promote the BAMBD within the broader context of downtown and of Oakland as a whole:

- Map and quantify the amount of Black-owned businesses in the district (as a baseline for measuring the effectiveness of supporting strategies).
- Create a legacy-business fund like the San Francisco Legacy Business Registry and Preservation Fund (Proposition J), which provides technical assistance, subsidies, and grants for qualified legacy businesses & anchor institutions, particularly those at risk of displacement.
- Support small businesses, specifically targeting business support services designed to remove barriers for underrepresented populations, including businesses owned by people of color and women.
- Initiate a separate, dedicated planning process to promote the priorities of the BAMBD.
- Prioritize capital improvements to the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts in the City's upcoming budget cycles and Capital Improvement Planning processes to affirm its value as



**Figure C-2: BAMBD (14th and Alice Street)**

Existing Conditions (right)

Potential Future Conditions (above)



### **BAMBD (14th and Alice Street)**

The Black Arts Movement & Business District and one of its anchor institutions, The Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, can both be enhanced by street improvements, including wayfinding, urban furniture, and custom bike lanes. This illustration also shows how an existing two-story building can be redeveloped into a taller mixed-use building, but with a generous setback from the sidewalk to create a much needed pocket plaza to host artists, musicians, and locals as they explore they BAMBD.

To supplement the regulatory tools described in C-1.1, the following can be explored to support arts and maker space in KONO, Jack London, and the the BAMBD district:

- Planning Code changes to allow rooftop cultural spaces
- Temporary Activity Permits to allow for pop-up arts uses for a predetermined period of time
- Address noise complaints pro-actively by establishing 'no complaint' zones near industrial, maker, artist, and cultural activities, etc.
- Floor Area Ratio/height bonuses and incentives like streamlined permitting for the adaptive reuse and preservation of early 20th century production buildings in the Jack London and KONO areas

an internationally-renowned premier center for the arts and to address its long-standing issues.

#### **C-1.6 Explore use of land trust model to help stabilize cultural businesses, institutions and residents through community ownership of land. Consider cultural easements as well to restore Indigenous People's rights to land, habitat and stewardship.**

Community ownership of land is a strategy to reduce cultural displacement, build broad community wealth, and provide some level of community control over changes. The City can facilitate existing land trusts to acquire property to be used to support community organizations, residents and businesses in owning affordable properties, particularly in cultural districts. Similarly, the City can study providing cultural easements on City property to support activities of and stewardship by Oakland's Indigenous communities.

#### **C-1.7 Expand & enhance the Oakland Cultural Asset Map (2018), created by the City of Oakland Department of Cultural Affairs.**

As part of the City of Oakland Cultural Plan an online Cultural Asset map has been created to identify a wide variety of cultural assets throughout the city. Community feedback collected throughout the Specific Plan process, included requests to also identify and track specific cultural assets facing displacement (defined in partnership with the community and the City's Cultural Affairs Office), as well as those that have already been lost. Adding this to the current Asset Map and updating the information on an annual basis will help the City to prioritize arts and culture funding, as well as track the success of Specific Plan policies related to preserving and promoting arts, culture, and PDR spaces downtown.

#### **C-1.8 Expand the City's internal capacity in the Cultural Affairs Office and Planning Bureau to implement arts-related recommendations.**

Consistent with the City's Cultural Plan (2018) and the Mayor's Artist Housing and Workspace Task Force recommendations (2016), consider adding more permanent staff to the Cultural Affairs Office to focus on implementing the recommendations of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan.

#### **C-1.9 Celebrate and encourage youth activities in public spaces and businesses**

Consistent with the City's desire to foster a sense of belonging for all, the City can facilitate relationships between the Oakland Police Department, business owners, downtown business improvement districts, schools, youth services, and the youth who live in or use

public spaces, businesses and services downtown, with the goal of developing an ethos that allows young people to engage in activities they enjoy in the downtown without profiling and targeting. Efforts could include bias training for law enforcement and Business Improvement District ambassadors; developing a program to offer affordable food options at local businesses; and/or placemaking projects that involve youth and small business collaborating on creative solutions for public space programming and safety. This policy complements the youth programming proposed in CH-1.8.

*The Community Health chapter (Chapter 5) describes desired public realm improvements for parks and open spaces, plazas, and streetscape designs that serve the needs of all Oaklanders. Those policies and design concepts were crafted with the needs of downtown's artists and cultural celebrations as a top priority. Recommendations for regulatory refinements to facilitate the use of downtown's public spaces for special events are included here.*

## OUTCOME C-2

*Festivals, outdoor art installations, and cultural events are integral elements in downtown's public sphere and spaces.*

### **C-2.1 Invest in the creation of new and improved public spaces that can be used to host festivals and cultural gatherings, and that feature public art.**

Creative and welcoming public spaces are vital to fostering more interaction between Oakland's residents, workers, and visitors and the city's unique history, culture, and artists. The Specific Plan identifies several sites for public space improvements. Described in more detail in Outcome CH-1, these projects include:

- Implementation of the "Green Loop" and "West Oakland Walk," an integrated system of walking and biking paths that connect people with green, historic and community resources between downtown and adjacent neighborhoods and districts.
- Transformation of 15th Street between Broadway and Harrison Street into a shared street for all travel modes alike, providing a plaza-like experience in which to appreciate local art and host community events.
- Implementation of additional shared space/plazas on opportunity sites throughout downtown to improve connectivity and create new gathering spaces.

#### Additional shared spaces and plazas include:

- San Pablo and 17th Street intersection
- Franklin and 22nd Street
- 22nd Street, from Franklin Street to Kaiser Plaza
- 15th Street, West of San Pablo to Castro Street
- 13th Street, from Broadway to Webster Street
- 9th Street, from Clay Street to Broadway, and Washington from 8th to 10th Street

#### **C-2.2 Expand the purview of the City's Special Event Task Force, whose current processes focus on the occasional festival, parade, etc., to encompass uses such as bars, night clubs, and art galleries, to promote downtown as an entertainment destination and streamline event permitting.**

According to the Special Events Task Force, composed of staff from the City Administrator's Office, Mayor's Office, Cultural Affairs Office, Oakland Police Department, Oakland Fire Department, and Department of Planning and Building, several barriers currently exist that discourage proper compliance with special event permit requirements. These barriers include a lack of clarity around the rules that govern entertainment venues, administrative obstacles requiring applicants to navigate various city, county, and state departments, and the expense of bringing an event space into compliance.<sup>14</sup>

Other community members cited the difficulty of meeting all the necessary requirements, including having to visit the Special Events Unit at the OPD's Eastmont Precinct for paperwork as well as the Special Activities Unit of the City Administrator's office for a separate sound permit, and meeting criminal background checks and other broad conditions for denial even if alcohol is not served. Procedures for obtaining cabaret requirements were also described as difficult and outdated.<sup>15</sup>

Recommendations from the Task Force include the creation of a "one-stop shop" online application, a user-oriented website that compiles all relevant permitting information, and amendments to the Planning Code that would authorize ongoing accessory events in appropriate zones, eliminating the need to apply for individual events.

Potential Implementation Tools include:

- Streamline special event permitting by creating a "one-stop shop" and central point of contact.
- Review and update entertainment and event regulations such as Oakland Municipal Code Chapters 5.12 Cabarets, 9.52 Special Event Permits, and 12.56 Sound Amplification Equipment, and Planning Code Chapter 17.58 Central Business District Zones Regulations, specifically requirements for Conditional Use Permits for Group Assembly downtown, and Chapter 17.103 Special Regulations for Certain Uses (Section 17.103.030 Alcoholic Beverage Sales Commercial Activity).

<sup>14</sup> Sabrina Landreth "Status Report on Executive Order 2017-1: Improving Safety of Non-Permitted Spaces While Avoiding Displacement" (June 27, 2017): 4, <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/cityadministrator/documents/memorandum/oak064643.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Sam Lefebvre, "Critics Say Oakland's Entertainment Permit Process Too Arduous", <https://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/critics-say-oaklands-entertainment-permit-process-too-arduous-contributes-to-unsafe-spaces-like-ghost-ship/Content?oid=5084053>

- Address noise complaints pro-actively by establishing ‘no complaint’ zones near night clubs, rehearsal spaces, along parade routes, etc.

**C-2.3 Reduce regulatory barriers such as permit costs, business license and finger-printing requirements, to outdoor vendors in downtown, particularly within arts and culture districts, parks, and public gathering spaces.**

Temporary pop-ups and vendors can provide “eyes on the street” that enliven and increase safety in shared spaces and plazas. Vendors should be encouraged to fill vacant or underutilized lots that face Primary or Secondary Pedestrian Streets (Figure CH-3). In addition, vendors in public spaces such as City Center, Frank Ogawa Plaza, and Latham Square could help drive foot traffic to nearby retail.

A community survey could be conducted to further inform community priorities about the type of vendors and locations most desired. To incentivize those types of vendors to locate downtown, the City should explore reducing permit costs and requirements for business licenses in target areas, as well as providing infrastructure to support vending. These measures will help to activate streets and public spaces in arts and culture districts, as well as giving artists and makers another space to showcase and sell their work.

**C-2.4 Establish a program to connect available and underutilized venues with those seeking spaces for special events.**

While downtown Oakland has a wealth of performance, practice, and studio spaces, these can often go underutilized. Establishing a liaison within Cultural Affairs or setting up an online resource to help direct artists and organizations to available spaces will help ensure that downtown’s existing assets are being used to their full capacity.

#### OUTCOME C-3

*Oakland's artists and creative community are able to find workspaces, performance spaces, and galleries in downtown that they can access and afford and see their work integrated into the built environment and public domain.*

*Rising commercial costs threaten to displace Oakland's artists and creative community. The following policies can be adopted to protect and create access to affordable space to work, exhibit and perform.*

##### **C-3.1 Continue leasing City-owned properties downtown at below-market rents for arts and culture uses utilizing the City's existing process.**

In 2015, the Mayor's Artist Housing and Workspace Task Force recommended using City-owned property to provide affordable space for arts organizations, with long-term leases. To implement this recommendation, the City recently approved two below-market, long-term leases in the City-owned property at 150 Frank Ogawa Plaza. The City also has less formal below-market rate lease arrangements for other significant cultural institutions, including the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts and the Oakland Asian Cultural Center. The City is in the process of formalizing the below-market rate leases with various arts organizations housed at the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts and should continue to codify the process of securing permanent leases for arts organizations in City-owned facilities.

As part of the Downtown Specific Plan, the City can evaluate other vacant or underutilized properties it currently owns downtown to determine which spaces might be appropriate for arts uses. Developing a master lease program would enable the City to keep an up-to-date list of artists and arts organizations seeking space, as well as locations suitable for arts uses available for leasing.

##### **C-3.2 Incentivize the use of privately-owned, vacant, or underutilized buildings as temporary affordable art or social enterprise space.**

Potential action steps to implement this policy include:

- Establish a "pop-up" registry program to connect artists, local small businesses, and organizations with building owners who have available and underutilized ground-floor storefronts, and may be interested in making space available for temporary uses.
- Establish a program with a local nonprofit to create temporary artist studios or other arts uses in vacant retail spaces or buildings planned for redevelopment that are going through the entitlement process.

- Establish a temporary use classification in the zoning code (that could apply to uses as well as temporary interactive art installations).
- Work with the Building Bureau to identify the “occupancy status” of vacant buildings to determine those that could accommodate artistic, retail or nonprofit uses.
- Evaluate and change City requirements to make it easier to change the occupancy requirements of vacant buildings to serve as temporary arts uses.
- Consider ways to streamline permitting, reduce approval process time and reduce permit fees.
- Evaluate State Assembly Bill 2719, ‘Mobile retail operations and pop-up operations: model local ordinance or resolution,’ for applicability downtown.

**C-3.3 Increase funding and support for arts & culture programs and organizations, particularly for groups most impacted by racial disparities, by either increasing the hotel tax or reallocating existing hotel tax funds, which would require a ballot initiative.**

Throughout the Downtown Specific Plan process many in the arts community recommended increasing overall funding for arts and culture programs, as well as direct financial assistance to local artists and artists of color. One way to accomplish this is to allocate a larger percentage of Measure C Funds, which are collected through the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), to arts and culture causes.

**C-3.4 Expand existing technical assistance in business skills and marketing, and support the extension of CAST’s Keeping Space Oakland program, which provides technical and financial real estate support for arts organizations facing displacement, particularly for artists of color and artists from vulnerable communities.**

Established as a one-time pilot in 2017, CAST’s Keeping Space Oakland program was successful in providing critical technical and/or financial assistance to 18 different arts and culture organizations. Six of these organizations, including Pro Arts, United Roots, the Oakland Ballet Company, Qilombo, Bandaloop, and the Rock Paper Scissors Collective, are located downtown. CAST is funded through philanthropic donations, and the overall goal of the project was to provide safe, stable, permanent, and affordable real estate solutions for Oakland’s local arts organizations. The City should work with CAST on fundraising to continue this program, including considering General Fund dollars to support the program.

With many other organizations still facing displacement and given the success of the program, extending the Keeping Space - Oakland project for another round of applications and assistance is important.

**C-3.5 Consider creating a master lease program where a nonprofit intermediary with expertise in arts tenants, like CAST or EBALDC, could partner with building owners to sub-lease available and underutilized ground-floor building spaces to artists and arts organizations.**

In a slight modification to the model of having a nonprofit acquire real estate to lease to artists and arts organizations, the City could develop a master lease program to offer private building owners a City lease of their available and underutilized ground-floor spaces that the City could then sub-lease to artists and arts organizations.

# 05: Community Health





# 05 COMMUNITY HEALTH

# 05

Healthy neighborhoods support residents by providing access to parks, nature and open space with active and safe streets and gathering spaces, increased walkability and bikeability, and access to efficient transit service, as well as access to healthy food options, stable housing, and sustaining jobs and services. Providing these essential neighborhood elements leads to increased quality of life and feelings of security and fulfillment for inhabitants.

Healthy neighborhoods are also resilient to changing climate conditions, considering the needs of present and future generations. Healthy settlements follow transportation and development policies that respond to sea level rise, air quality concerns and other potential threats, promote clean energy and sustainable building design, and increase green infrastructure.

This Preliminary Draft Plan builds upon a strong foundation of existing City and regional sustainability plans and policies, and sets a path to realize a healthy, resilient public realm.

## CHAPTER 05: COMMUNITY HEALTH

### SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES



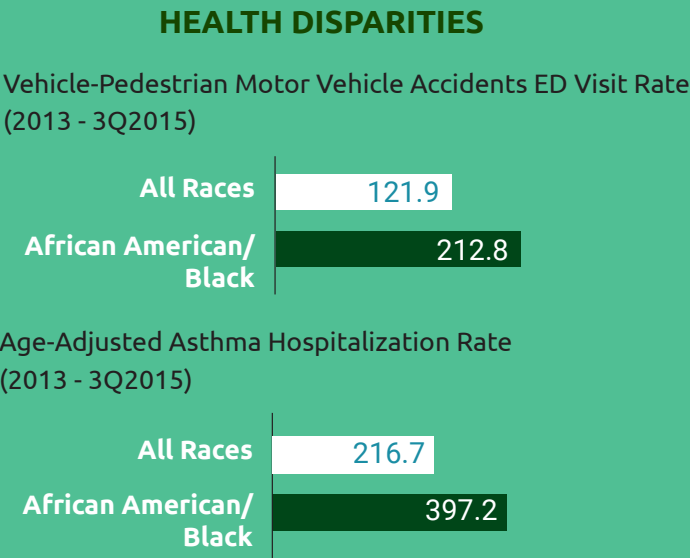
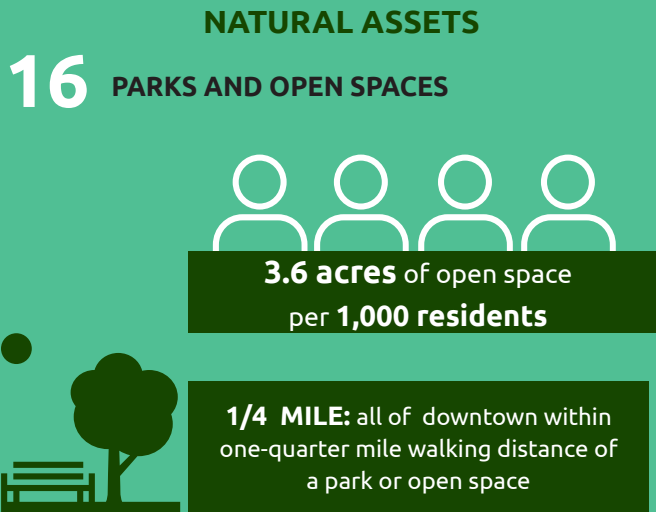
# CHAPTER 05:

## Community Health

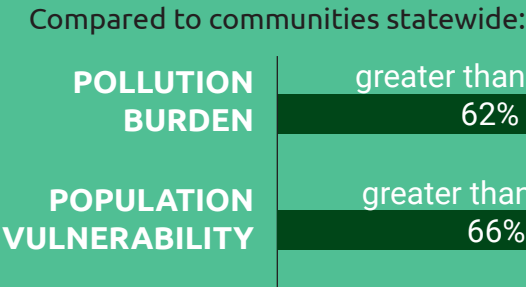
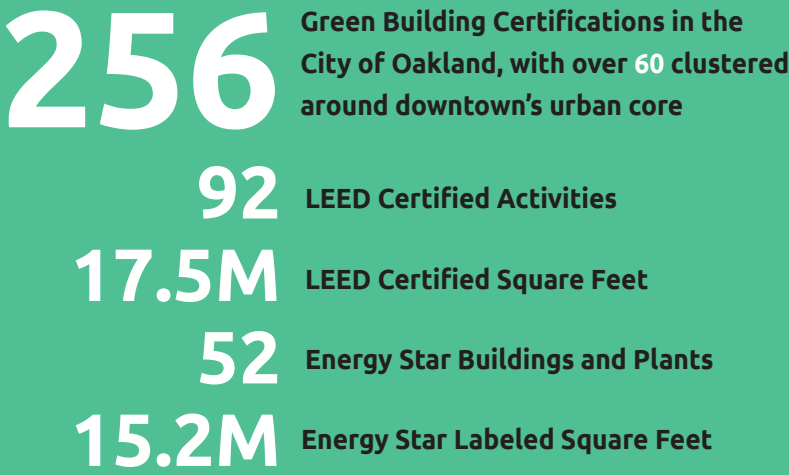
**Goal 05** *Provide vibrant public spaces and a healthy environment that improve the quality of life downtown today and for generations to come.*

**Outcome CH-1**  
PUBLIC REALM & SAFETY *All Oaklanders can lead safe and healthy lives, enjoying streets, public spaces, and parks downtown that provide opportunities to stay active and build community.*

**Outcome CH-2**  
SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE *Environmental stewardship informs operational, planning, and capital improvement decisions to create a more sustainable downtown where everyone can adapt and thrive in the face of changing conditions.*



**GREEN BUILDING STATISTICS**



**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

CalEnviroScreen scores measure environmental impacts spread inequitably over space, considering pollution burden (exposure to environmental effects) and population characteristics (sensitive population and socioeconomic factors). Higher scores indicate greater vulnerability.

# Summary of Existing Conditions

*Community health is a wide-reaching topic, encompassing climate resiliency, access to healthy food and clean air, public safety, and a high-quality public realm with streets and public spaces that support community gathering, healthy lifestyles and recreation. The summary of the existing conditions in this chapter identifies assets, barriers, disparities, and measures of success.*

## Leveraging Assets

### PUBLIC REALM & SAFETY

All of downtown lies within a one-quarter mile walking distance of a park or open space. The greater downtown area has approximately 3.6 acres of open space per 1,000 residents; this is close to the Oakland General Plan's desired standard of 4 acres per 1,000 residents. There are opportunities to add new parks, plazas, and gathering spaces throughout downtown's neighborhoods to help achieve this standard. Downtown's existing network of parks, public spaces, and streets can also be improved to promote healthier neighborhoods and provide residents with access to parks, recreational activities, healthy food, clean air, and safe streets.

The American Society of Landscape Architects cites the health benefits of time spent in nature (including parks and gardens); citing studies that document positive impacts from living in close proximity to greenspace, including impacts on children's health and educational outcomes, as well as reduced symptoms of depression in adults. Parks can also offer important mental benefits including stress reduction and heightened attention. Social cohesion and community building is another important element that takes place in parks, as they serve as critical places for providing a meeting place where people can develop social ties. Street trees are a key asset to a city's natural green infrastructure, providing a more comfortable walking experience for everyone, as well as contributing to improved air quality.

#### SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE

Protecting the natural resources that surround downtown is key to maintaining the environment that makes Oakland special. Lake Merritt and its channel, estuary waterfronts, and access to Bay Trail are key assets to downtown's natural green infrastructure. Through capital improvement projects and private development, there is an opportunity to incorporate infrastructure such as drought-tolerant landscaping and low-impact stormwater management that can reduce damaging runoff into these key bodies of water. Filling the gaps in downtown's existing urban tree canopy can also provide benefits, including reduced noise and air pollution, carbon sequestration, shade, and community character.

As a local and regional transportation and employment hub, downtown is able to accommodate greater density, bringing people closer to the places and services they need, reducing overall car trips, and promoting a more sustainable use of resources. Policies to build sustainability and resilience in Oakland were adopted in 2012 in the City's Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP), which was updated in 2018. The ECAP identified strategies to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of 36% over eight years (the 2020 Plan). In addition, the City of Oakland is guided by the Pathways to Deep GHG Reductions in Oakland (CURB Analysis). Between September 2016 and February 2018, Bloomberg Associates worked with the City of Oakland to identify opportunities and measure the impact of deep GHG reductions, utilizing a new climate planning tool called CURB. CURB is designed to provide strategic-level analysis to help cities identify and prioritize low-carbon infrastructure and GHG reduction actions, make the best use of limited funding by focusing on the actions with the greatest impact, and to quickly see the emission implications and cost effectiveness of potential actions. To understand what Oakland needs to do to put it on a pathway to meet its GHG targets, Bloomberg Associates developed and modeled two GHG scenarios. The first forecasts the GHG impacts of expected changes to the city's buildings and transportation system if the City takes minimal additional action, and the second models the scale of change needed to achieve Oakland's long-term GHG goal "Deep Decarbonization" in 2030 and 2050.

There are a few changes that have an outsized impact on the city's GHG emissions, such as the shift to 100% carbon-free energy. Reducing fossil fuel use in buildings and transportation offer the largest opportunities for GHG reductions in the Deep Decarbonization Scenario. In order to accomplish this, Oakland will need to change its passenger mode share, increase its vehicle electrification, and improve vehicle fuel efficiency.

The current mode share for private autos and trucks is 69.1%. In order to achieve deep decarbonization by 2030, private autos will need to make up 40% of the mode share, and by 2050, 20%. In addition, to reduce building

emissions, significant City action is needed to electrify heating systems and improve insulation and windows in existing buildings. Changes are also needed to lighting, appliances, space heating, water heating and fixtures, cooling, and building envelope. Space heating and building envelope improvements have the most impactful GHG reduction potential. With the CURB model, downtown is envisioned to become an even more environmentally-responsive urban center.

## Addressing Barriers & Disparities

### PUBLIC REALM & SAFETY

Healthy neighborhoods provide residents with access to parks, healthy food, clean air, sunlight, safe streets, social services and affordable housing. In communities where these needs are not met, people are more likely to suffer from chronic diseases. The Downtown Oakland Disparity Analysis (2018) shows that African Americans had roughly twice the rate of asthma hospitalization compared to all other races. Black carbon (microscopic airborne particles commonly known as soot) from diesel engines, a leading cause of respiratory illness, is also a concern for residents adjacent to I-880 and I-980 in Jack London, Chinatown, Old Oakland, and West of San Pablo.

Street quality and safety vary by neighborhood; streets identified in the City's disparity analysis as needing improvements include the edges of downtown traveling to West Oakland and in historic Chinatown. I-880 and I-980 also create barriers that divide downtown from Jack London and West Oakland. Neighborhoods like KONO and West of San Pablo lack spaces for community gathering and recreation, and Chinatown does not have adequate outdoor space for the number of people, particularly children, who live there. Currently, the City's open space requirements within private development can be met entirely with private open space, which is not accessible to other residents.

Though some of Oakland's parks are well-used, 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 events in Oakland. However, outside of Lake Merritt, there is still much to be done to increase public access to other parts of the downtown waterfront (Lake Merritt Channel and Estuary). Currently, public access to the waterfront is prohibited at Howard Terminal and limited on portions of the Lake Merritt Channel. Other portions of the Jack London waterfront and Lake Merritt Channel require improvements to paths, lighting, and amenities to enhance accessibility and views of these areas. In addition, participants in the Downtown Plan process report serious lack of maintenance in some downtown parks, as well as feeling discouraged from using playgrounds in other parks due to homeless encampments. Planning participants recommended the City

expand facilities for recreation downtown, specifically small-scale open spaces that serve area residents.

The Disparity Analysis also identified crime “hot spots.” These areas are concentrated in Chinatown and the Central Core bound by Broadway, Harrison, 8th, and 14th Streets, as well as nodes at 7th and Washington Streets, San Pablo and Clay Street, and along Broadway between 21st and 27th Streets. Concerns about perceived bias and discrimination in law enforcement have also been raised, which can often affect how public spaces are used. Several young people of color participating in the Specific Plan process reported feeling unwelcome in the downtown due to intervention, harassment, or perceived hostility from law enforcement, Business Improvement District ambassadors, business owners, and other downtown patrons.

### SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE

Several issues are identified in Oakland’s 2016-2021 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) Update and Preliminary Resilience Assessment that may pose a threat to downtown’s ability to adapt and thrive in the future. Other guiding documents that address environmental issues include the Oakland ECAP, CURB analysis, Sea Level Rise Roadmap, and Resilient Oakland Playbook. These reports highlight a number of well-known natural hazards such as earthquakes, fire, and flooding. For downtown, it is clear that mitigating the potential effects of future flooding from sea-level rise needs to be a high priority. Projected long-term sea-level rise poses a direct threat to the Jack London Waterfront, Oakland Estuary, Lake Merritt, and Oakland’s overall stormwater system. Therefore, with investments being made in Estuary Park, Jack London Square and Brooklyn Basin, as well as the future potential of sites like Howard Terminal and Victory Court, it is vital to prepare a comprehensive adaptation strategy for downtown.

As downtown adapts to future conditions, understanding the connections between aging infrastructure and health, poor walking conditions and vehicle-pedestrian accidents, and poor air quality and respiratory illness will be key. The City must investigate how improving any of these factors has the potential to improve others, as well as to lessen disparities between which groups are affected. One barrier to reducing car trips to meet GHG emissions targets is unreliable and infrequent bus service and a lack of connections between BART and AC Transit. To support improved transit, the Specific Plan will coordinate land use and development intensity with transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, as well as leveraging and responding to changing technology such as micro-transit (such as e-scooters) and autonomous vehicles. This is critical toward ensuring growth that induces a more walkable and less car-dependent downtown.

As mentioned above, the Pathways to Deep GHG Reductions in Oakland (CURB) model prioritizes transportation improvements such as passenger mode shift, increasing vehicle electrification, and improving vehicle fuel efficiency. As the future of transportation changes, mobility within the downtown area will also change. Some of these advancements include bike sharing, electric scooters, car shares and flex use cars.

# Measures of Success

*The measures below will help gauge the effectiveness of the Downtown Specific Plan at achieving its intended outcomes for Goal 05.*

- Increase in number of high-quality public recreational and community-gathering spaces located in downtown
- Increase in publicly-accessible waterfront area
- Increase in tree canopy coverage
- Reduction in crime rate downtown
- Reduction in downtown asthma rates and in racial disparities in asthma rates
- Achieve a 56% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with respect to GHG sources by 2030
- Establish zero-carbon mobility network to accommodate 100% of transportation needs by 2050
- Eliminate all fossil fuel use in downtown by 2050

# Community Health Framework

*Community Health goals can be achieved by changes in the built and natural environment that create a safe, active and inviting public realm, and through proactive policies that address green infrastructure, transportation modes and energy sources, and climate resilience.*

The public realm is where improvements to community health and placemaking, as well as realization of the Specific Plan's multi-faceted goals for economic opportunity, transportation, arts and culture, and increased sustainability can be achieved.

The public realm refers to a City's public spaces: its network of parks, plazas, parklets, streets, and sidewalks. A high-quality and well-maintained public realm invites residents and visitors to enjoy public spaces, fosters community activity and reinforces neighborhood character. A safe, beautiful, and well-designed public realm also supports multimodal travel (walking, biking and use of transit) and can help transform a street or park into a thriving cultural asset and community destination.

Enjoyment of the public realm is dependent on environmental factors, including air and water quality. Street trees and urban greening, stormwater control measures, "green" buildings and transportation systems all contribute. There are several foundational documents that establish a framework for community health and sustainability within the City of Oakland, including:

- The CURB methodology and Pathways to Deep GHG Reductions in Oakland (CURB Strategy)
- The Resilient Oakland Playbook
- The Oakland Sea Level Rise Roadmap
- The Oakland Energy and Climate Action Plan (updated 2018)

The key ideas and major recommendations of each of these plans represent previously agreed-upon factors, and are briefly summarized at right.

## Key Ideas Addressed in Foundational Documents

### CURB STRATEGY

- Shift to 100% carbon-free energy
- Eliminate fossil fuels from building heating systems
- Improve building insulation and windows
- Significantly shift people away from private auto trips
- Accelerate the electrification of vehicles

### RESILIENT OAKLAND PLAYBOOK

- Build a more trustworthy and responsive government
  - Design equitable and measurable community engagement
  - Create more opportunities for collaborative government
  - Apply data-driven principles to inform decision-making
  - Engage youth in shaping the future of Oakland
- Stay rooted and thrive in our town
  - Increase economic security
  - Promote safe and healthy neighborhoods
  - Increase affordable housing stock
- Reduce current and future climate and seismic risks
- Promote urban greening
- Maximize value of collective infrastructure investments

### THE OAKLAND ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

- Transportation and Land Use
- Building Energy Use
- Material Consumption and Waste
- Community Engagement
- Climate Adaptation and Increasing Resilience

### OAKLAND SEA LEVEL RISE (SLR) ROADMAP

- Identify and pursue engagement and collaboration opportunities
- Participate in Regional Coordination
- Better Understand Neighborhood Vulnerabilities
  - Leverage new Sea Level Rise (SLR) mapping
  - Enable and use community-generated data
  - Monitor updates of SLR projections
- Identify funding to complete a citywide vulnerability and risk assessment, a citywide comprehensive adaptation strategy, and to Complete a Cost-of-Inaction Study for Critical Public and Private Sector Assets
- Update Watershed Modeling to Include Climate Change Stressors
- Enable Climate-Smart Development
  - Incorporate SLR considerations in Plan Downtown Oakland
  - Incorporate SLR Considerations in General Plan Land Use Transportation + Element
  - Explore Incorporating SLR considerations in update to the green building ordinance
  - Develop SLR guidance for the capital improvement program
  - Roll out / support City staff and local developer training
  - Incorporate SLR considerations in the disaster recovery framework
  - Leverage Measure AA funding for wetland restoration

## **A Healthy, Active Public Realm**

To support community health, the public realm (downtown's streets, parks and open spaces) should be designed to allow for safe movement and to foster community activity. The design of the physical environment implements goals from other chapters of this report to provide spaces for arts, festivals and cultural events; to provide streets that allow for safe pedestrian and bicycle connections; and to support economic activity.

Streets represent one of the largest public realm resources in Downtown Oakland. Their design and function should enhance the public realm and create multifunctional places that attract people and commerce.

Figure CH-1 locates potential public realm improvements, including public open spaces and streetspace improvements, that have been envisioned in the Preliminary Draft Plan. Details of the proposed projects are described on the following pages. Additional pedestrian safety and connectivity projects are described in more detail in the Mobility chapter (Chapter 3).

In addition to specific projects/improvements, Figure CH-1 also locates neighborhoods and downtown areas identified by the community and through the Disparity Analysis as most in need of additional investment in public spaces. Figure CH-1 can be used to guide allocation of funding and implementation of the public space vision in the near- and long-term (see Policy CH-2.1).



Figure CH-1: Public Realm Improvements



#### STREETSPACE AND CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

A comprehensive list of proposed streetscape improvement projects is included in **Appendix A, Table CH-1**. Key ideas are described in additional detail below:

**Pursue implementation of the “Green Loop” and “West Oakland Walk,” an integrated system of walking and biking paths between downtown neighborhoods and districts.**

The “Green Loop” is a circulation concept linking the Lake Merritt, Lake Merritt Channel, and Estuary waterfronts to street improvements along Martin Luther King Jr. Way and 20th Street to form a continuous walking & biking loop surrounding downtown. The “Green Loop” concept could also be expanded to include a second loop to directly connect West Oakland to downtown and the waterfront along Market Street and 14th Street (overlapping with the “West Oakland Walk” concept described below). This integrated circulation system would help to link together the Uptown, Art + Garage District, Black Arts Movement & Business District, Jack London Maker District, and Chinatown.

Complementing the “Green Loop” concept is the “West Oakland Walk” circulation concept of connecting the system of parks, schools, historical sites, and community places along 14th Street and 18th/19th Street from Lakeside Drive downtown to Wood Street in West Oakland.

**Create shared streets that accommodate cars, bicycles, and pedestrians, providing a plaza-like experience that improves pedestrian connectivity and creates new community event / gathering spaces.**

Throughout downtown, several opportunity streets have been identified that could become shared / festival streets, which prioritize the pedestrian experience and provide needed locations for community events and gathering. Design treatments can include decorative paving treatments, new public art and street furniture. These shared spaces can function as an outdoor room or plaza, with space for outdoor art displays and opportunities for active ground floor uses to flow into the space. Such a space could be designed to support festivals and other events that have developed organically in the downtown.

These improvements can be coupled with a targeted program of technical and financial assistance to help existing businesses stabilize and then participate in the value capture of the public investment. Additionally, it can be paired with regulations that facilitate/promote arts uses in adjacent buildings, such as putting limits on the number and location of bars/restaurants (which might otherwise out-compete arts uses on the ground floor), and design standards for new buildings that face the public space (see Policy CH-2.3).

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**Implement new paseos to divide long blocks, increase pedestrian access, and become additional public gathering spaces.**

Two locations have been identified as priorities for new paseos in downtown: between 20th and 21st Streets in Uptown, and between 24th and 25th Streets in KONO.

25th Street is home to a large concentration of art galleries and studios in historic early 20th century production buildings, and serves as the natural center of the proposed Art + Garage District. Opening up a pedestrian paseo to connect 24th and 25th Streets will break up the long blocks between Telegraph and Broadway, increase walkability, and provide an additional public space to feature art and host public gatherings. Edges of the paseo can be defined with new uses that spill into the pedestrian space. Existing buildings can be maintained as spaces for art and maker production and simple modifications to these buildings could add new openings, awnings, signage and lighting that better activate the space.

Along 21st and 20th Streets, an envisioned paseo creates a new pedestrian connection along this very long city block, adding needed connectivity for pedestrians to navigate the Uptown district. As in the Art + Garage district, buildings can open onto this new public space, increasing activity.

**PUBLIC SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

**Fill gaps in the urban street tree canopy to link plazas and green areas.**

Initiatives to fill in gaps in the existing urban tree canopy can lead to greater walkability and improved air quality, ensuring a more comfortable walking experience for everyone.

**Transform the Webster Tube surface alignment into a greenway connecting downtown to the waterfront.**

The “Webster Green” is a proposed linear greenway between the estuary waterfront and I-880 constructed over the alignment of the underground Webster Tube. Development options are limited on these parcels due to the underground tube infrastructure, so the alignment area today is primarily parking lots and underutilized land. The “Webster Green” vision includes implementing a linear sequence of open spaces, greenspace and hardscape, to provide a gathering spot for residents and visitors, and better connect downtown neighborhoods to the waterfront. This vision was also described in both the Estuary Policy Plan (1999) and Lake Merritt Station Area Plan (2014).

The City will need to work with Caltrans, who owns the Webster Tube right-of-way, to implement portions of the proposed greenway. The greenway concept can be expanded to include adjacent city right-of-way, as well as private land

areas where development potential is limited (as illustrated in Figure CH-1). Today much of the envisioned greenway area is State-owned. Improved building facades (including increased transparency and shade/shelter devices) for buildings facing the Webster Green can be realized through no-build easements and design standards (see Policy CH-2 and LU-1).

**Include new public open space as part of redevelopment of the Victory Court area.**

The Victory Court area is an opportunity site between Oak Street and the Lake Merritt Channel envisioned for intense, mixed-use development that can advance this Plan's goals to provide new housing and workplaces. As part of new development in the area, a new public open space, connected with improvements to the Lake Merritt Channel, should be provided to support residents and workers.

**Include new public open spaces as part of the potential conversion of I-980 into a multi-way boulevard.**

The long-term vision to convert the I-980 into a multi-way boulevard fronted by new mixed-use development has the potential to transform the western edge of downtown. This conversion of the I-980 right-of-way would also unlock potential for new public open spaces to serve and connect downtown and West Oakland residents.

**Provide public waterfront access at Howard Terminal with new paths and trails, and public open spaces, uses and amenities.**

Increased public access to the waterfront can be realized with future reuse of Howard Terminal. This site is outside of, but adjacent to the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan boundary, and currently undergoing assessment for a potential reuse to include a new baseball stadium and mixed-use development. As ideas for future site design move forward, a portion of the Howard Terminal waterfront site should be used for a new public open space; and should connect to Jack London Square with a new waterfront trail extension to Water Street, and to the proposed Green Loop with a convenient pedestrian and bike link through the site to Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

## Urban Design and the Public Realm

The design of the public realm is essential to public health and safety, to encourage walkability, promote active lifestyles, and provide the physical environment needed to support a high quality of life. The public realm consists of the city's streets and public spaces; and it is defined and shaped by the buildings that line those public spaces. Thus, both public and private improvements guided by recommendations for housing and economic development, mobility, arts and culture, and land use and development will lead to the built environment envisioned by the Specific Plan.

Chapters 5 (Community Health) and 6 (Land Use & Urban Form) culminate with recommendations for the built environment, bringing together concepts from earlier chapters in physical form. The urban design concepts that support the common goals of community health, land use and urban form can create and reinforce community and a sense of place. It is not enough to simply provide public space; it must be well-designed, maintained and programmed with the needs of the community in mind.

Big ideas that will shape the character of downtown's neighborhoods include:

- Building forms vary to fit the character of each neighborhood, with the most intense mix of uses and highest intensities found in the Central Core and Lake Merritt Office District. Buildings with smaller footprints and less intensity are envisioned in some downtown neighborhoods, reflecting historic building patterns and providing a diversity of building types and urban experiences (Outcome LU-1 and Policy LU-1.1).
- The preservation of historic buildings and cultural districts maintains essential connections to community identity and sense of place (Outcome LU-2 and Policy LU 1.1, LU-2.2 and LU-2.3).
- Buildings with active facades, which are continuous facades with doors and windows (no blank walls) and include shading devices such as awnings or balconies above the sidewalk, define the areas of greatest pedestrian activity. These areas include downtown core streets, community corridors and public open spaces. In these areas, even greater scrutiny should be given to building frontages and ground floor uses to ensure these buildings define and activate the public realm (Policy LU-1.1 and CH-1.4).
- Downtown streets are designed to support all modes of mobility (walking, biking, driving and transit). This is realized through specific roadway design changes (bike facilities, crosswalks, transit lanes, introducing two-way travel), as well as streetscape design (continuous sidewalks, street trees and landscaping, pedestrian lighting, public art, wayfinding). The design of streets and public spaces should be tailored to the urban environment envisioned by the Character Area in which they are located (Outcome M-1, M-2, CH-1 and Policy CH-1.4).
- Public space improvements can be shaped by new guidelines, including updated Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles and active design standards that support multiple uses at different times of the day (to play, exercise, relax, attend events, and connect with nature), and include facilities designed for use by people of many ages, abilities, and cultures (Outcome CH-1 and Policy CH-1.3).



### The Webster Green

The “Webster Green” is a proposed linear greenway between the estuary waterfront and I-880 constructed over the alignment of the underground Webster Tube. Development options are limited on these parcels, so the alignment area today is primarily parking lots and underutilized land. The “Webster Green” vision includes implementing a linear sequence of open spaces, greenspace and hardscape, to provide a gathering spot for residents and visitors, and better connect downtown neighborhoods to the waterfront.





**Figure CH-2: The Webster Green**  
Existing Conditions (left)  
Potential Future Conditions (above)

#### DESIGNING STREETS FOR PEDESTRIANS

All downtown streets should be accessible and friendly to pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. The streetscape projects described on the previous pages, as well as the Plan's Mobility recommendations that contain specific improvements for pedestrian, bicycle, vehicular and transit networks, will create a downtown that accommodates all types of movement.

There are certain streets and corridors where special attention should be given to support the pedestrian realm through building design. This includes attention to active ground floor uses along the sidewalk, a minimum percentage of doors and windows (no blank walls or facades) on each building facade, and inclusion of shading devices such as awnings or balconies above the sidewalk. Figure CH-3 designates this hierarchy, locating Primary and Secondary Pedestrian Streets within the downtown area.

These priority streets include those in the Downtown Core and Waterfront Entertainment district areas, as well as the Community Corridors that link neighborhoods together, and streets that front parks and open spaces. Primary Pedestrian Streets should have limited curb cuts and few gaps in the streetwall. Secondary Pedestrian Streets could have more gaps in the street wall (compared to primary streets) to allow access to parking/garages. These designations can be implemented through changes to zoning or design guidelines (see Policy LU-1.1).



**Figure CH-3: Primary and Secondary Pedestrian Streets**



## Climate Resiliency and Sea Level Rise

Climate change is already impacting California and the Bay Area communities. In the last century, the San Francisco Bay water levels have risen 8 inches. Sea levels off shore of Oakland are projected to rise between 11 and 24 inches by 2050, and by 2100, they are likely to rise 36 to 66 inches. Rising waters already impact Oakland with some coastal flooding of low-lying shorelines, loss of valuable saltwater marshes, and impacts to wastewater treatment systems. High tide flooding associated with heavy precipitation can already been seen in Jack London Square, and Lake Merritt. Several capital improvements have been implemented to alleviate upstream flooding as the City is continuing to further manage water levels.

Without steps to curb climate change, Sea Level Rise (SLR) poses a threat to downtown's population and ecological systems. Some of these threats include temporary coastal flooding from extreme tides, urban or watershed flooding, accelerated loss of marshlands, daily tidal inundations, enhanced king tide flooding, and rising groundwater levels.

The City and Bay Area have a number of existing plans and policies that address climate change and resiliency, including the Sea Level Rise Road Map (2017) which identifies potential vulnerabilities and describes climate-smart development approaches. Climate resiliency strategies and technologies are constantly changing. The Specific Plan's supportive policies will provide guidance based on existing research and best practices; but it is anticipated that the City will continue efforts to understand and address climate challenges, and refine these Plan policy approaches over time as needed.

Climate change is also already impacting California's susceptibility to drought, wildfire, and its resulting air quality and health impacts. The City will address these expected climate change impacts through citywide approaches such as the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and in tandem with the Alameda County Department of Public Health.

- 48 inches of Sea Level Rise
- 72 inches of Sea Level Rise
- Downtown Plan Boundary

Figure CH-4 maps the 48-inch and 72-inch water levels above mean higher high water (MHHW) for Oakland. The 48-inch water level can be used to approximate areas that would be permanently inundated with 48 inches of Sea Level Rise (SLR), or the area that would be temporarily flooded due to a 100-year storm with 6 inches of SLR. The 72-inch water level can be used to approximate areas that would be permanently inundated with 72 inches of SLR, or the area that would be temporarily flooded due to a 100-year storm with 30 inches of SLR.

Source: Sea Level Rise Road Map (2017)



**Figure CH-4: Sea Level Rise Overlay**

Note: This map is intended as a planning-level tool to illustrate the potential for coastal flooding as sea levels rise and does not represent the exact location or depth of projected flooding. The map is based on model outputs and does not account for all of the complex and dynamic Bay processes or future conditions.



# Supportive Plan Policies

*Vibrant, safe, and inviting public spaces, including parks, plazas, streets, and pathways, directly impact and improve quality of life for residents, workers, and visitors. The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan envisions that existing public spaces can be improved, and new spaces created, with a priority on active, healthy living; facilitating arts and cultural activities; furthering economic activity and urban greening; and designing inclusive streets and open spaces that serve and welcome everyone.*

## OUTCOME CH-1

*All Oaklanders can lead safe and healthy lives, enjoying public spaces downtown that provide opportunities to stay active and build community.*

### CH-1.1 Working with the community, prioritize and implement public realm improvements to create a more connected and accessible network of inclusive, high-quality public open spaces.

Figure CH-1 identifies potential public space improvements recommended in the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan (DOSP). Following Plan adoption, this map can be updated at regular intervals with community input to guide implementation. In addition to providing increased quality of life for downtown residents, public investment in public open spaces and streetscapes can lead to private investment and improvements on adjacent parcels, which has potential for additional community benefits (jobs, arts space, housing). Standards for safety and inclusivity to guide design (see Policy CH-1.3).

During DOSP meetings, community members provided input on their priorities for public realm improvements, identifying a desire for improved streets and new open spaces, to be prioritized where art walks are organically occurring; a need for new parks and gathering spaces west of San Pablo; and a desire for increased access to waterfront areas. Improvements to implement the “Oakland Green Loop” and “West Oakland Walk” can connect arts and cultural districts within downtown on accessible, well-connected paths and sidewalks. Potential streetscape improvements are summarized in Appendix A, Table CH-1.

The Disparity Analysis completed as part of the Downtown Plan process identifies areas where more investment is needed, such as the edges of downtown traveling to West Oakland, and the KONO and Lakeside neighborhoods. This input, in addition to areas slated for intense new development, is reflected in the “Priority Areas for New Public Spaces” shown on Figure CH-1. Potential new neighborhood scale open spaces (including plazas, pocket plazas, pocket parks, and community gardens) should be prioritized in these areas.

### **CH-1.2 Coordinate new downtown development with implementation of improved parks and streetscapes.**

Private development should help to achieve a connected system of improved parks and streetscapes, which meets many Plan goals (improved public health, arts and culture, public realm). New or improved public spaces should be implemented through existing mechanisms (such as impact fees) or through a new incentive-based program which targets pre-defined benefits that address community needs (see Policy LU-1.3).

Updating open space standards, including a requirement for a percentage of required open space to be publicly accessible at the ground level, should be introduced as part of zoning revisions (see Policy LU-1.1). Figure CH-1 identifies specific open space improvements that could be realized in conjunction with redevelopment of large opportunity sites such as Victory Court and also identifies priority areas where new investment is most needed. This can help to guide the prioritization of available funds.

### **CH-1.3 Draft and adopt guidelines for new or improved parks and public open spaces, including ‘active design’ guidelines with policies and design standards that create healthier open spaces, promote healthy behaviors, and improve the quality of life for people of all ages and abilities.**

Updates to zoning and/or parks design guidelines should be fine-tuned to respond to the environment envisioned for each Land Use Character Area (Chapter 6). Standards can maximize the sense of identity, image and value creation that can result from high-quality, enclosed and publicly accessible open spaces and trails. Amendments should encourage the best location, usefulness and improvement of public open space over the total amount of public open space provided. Further, they should require that buildings directly contribute to the attractiveness, safety and activity of public areas, incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles such as encouraging active uses and

transparency on the ground floor of buildings adjacent to public spaces. Pop-ups and vendors should be permitted and encouraged to activate dead space including vacant or underutilized land (See Policy CH-1.5).

Lots narrow in width should be afforded an option to pay an in-lieu fee instead of providing ground level public open space, with funds collected to construct community-scale public open space. Parcels that are extra-large in width should have a percentage of the lot dedicated to ground-level open space.

Updated zoning or design standards can also include 'active' design standards (through design guidelines or form-based codes) for new or improved public spaces that promote use by many Oaklanders, based on recommendations in the DOSP. These standards would apply when public spaces are included as part of new development, or when the City invests/improves a public space, ensure the quality/types of spaces that are provided, and ensure that safety and inclusivity are considered as part of the design. For example, standards can require new/improved spaces of a certain size to include seating, public restrooms, art, and creative/efficient/pedestrian-scaled lighting. In addition, new/improved spaces could support multiple uses at different times of the day (to play, exercise, relax, attend events, and connect with nature), and include facilities designed by and for use by people of many ages, abilities, and cultures (and include the necessary infrastructure to support such activities, such as electrical outlets for events). Updates should involve a community engagement process that includes representatives of populations that are vulnerable, underserved and/or impacted by racial disparities.

**CH-1.4 Draft and adopt street design standards to support the intended physical character and land uses of the Character Areas (Chapter 6), to better connect parks and open spaces to one another as well as neighborhoods outside downtown, including connecting the downtown core with the waterfront. Public streets and rights-of-way can be used for active recreation, community gathering, economic activity, art, cultural activities, and urban greening.**

Streets represent one of the largest public realm resources in Downtown Oakland. Their design and function should enhance the public realm and create multifunctional places that attract people and commerce. Street design standards can specify the configuration of amenities that support a vibrant public realm and streetscape, which can include lighting, street trees and other landscape/green

infrastructure elements, public seating, parklets, public art and signs for wayfinding, as well as programming and encouragement of adjacent uses that support active use of the space. The Pedestrian Realm should be prioritized on Primary and Secondary Pedestrian streets (see Figure CH-3).

#### **CH-1.5 Activate public spaces by allowing vendors to sell there.**

Temporary pop-ups and vendors can provide “eyes on the street” and active uses, for relatively low cost and investment. Vendors should be encouraged to fill vacant or underutilized lots that face Primary or Secondary Pedestrian Streets (Figure CH-1). In addition, vendors in public spaces such as City Center, Frank Ogawa Plaza, and Latham Square could help drive foot traffic to nearby retail.

A community survey could be conducted to further inform community priorities about the type of locations that vendors are most desired. To incentivize vendors to locate in these target areas downtown, the City should explore reducing permit costs and requirements for business licenses, as well as providing infrastructure to support vending in the target areas. (See Policy C-2.3)

#### **CH-1.6 Protect, maintain and enhance the natural resources that surround downtown, including Lake Merritt and Channel, estuary waterfront areas, and parks/plazas/open spaces.**

Downtown’s natural resources are critical to community health and quality of life. A number of policies, existing and proposed (see Outcome CH-2), can work together to protect, maintain and enhance these assets.

#### **CH-1.7 Explore implementation of community safety initiatives, including strengthened community policing and partnerships, bias training for police and other neighborhood peacekeepers, partnerships with mental health service providers, and restorative justice programs and methods.**

Community organizations/leaders can work with the City (Department of Human Services and Oakland Police Department) to improve safety and strengthen community, including the use of community policing and restorative justice methods. Restorative justice methods foster dialogue and often involve the larger community, seeking to address the needs of those harmed and allowing offenders to take responsibility for their action.

Partnerships between community groups, justice nonprofits and police should be explored; a community engagement process can be initiated to identify appropriate programming details.

#### *How can downtown be more equitable and inclusive?*

*“multi-cultural food fairs, food trucks”*

*“support groups for youth”*

*“more youth employers”*

*“games, for kids, food, all races”*

*“family friendly parks”*

*“policy for affordable housing”*

*“child care access”*

*“make it safer”*

*“more music events (free)”*

*“have places for all ages”*

#### **CH-1.8 Invest in youth-driven programming for downtown public spaces.**

Oakland’s youth population is a key stakeholder served by downtown public spaces. Investing in youth programming for parks and open spaces will strengthen the downtown community.

In general, the Oakland youth participating in the Specific Plan process report not feeling welcomed in downtown today; there are a few exceptions, including the ice rink, Snow Park, the park by Oakland School for the Arts, and to some extent Jack London Square. In order to better serve community needs, some of the ideas and recommendations from youth and youth advocates for public spaces include:

- More activities oriented toward youth, including sports, cultural events, games for kids, street festivals, and art fair.
- Amenities including youth bike share/bike lanes, a youth center and event space, free wifi, free busing, a skate park, exercise stations around Lake Merritt, community-based urban gardens, spaces that attract people of different ethnic groups, art centers, and all-ages spaces such as malls and movies.

## Youth Engagement

The City of Oakland made intensive efforts to gather meaningful input directly from Oakland’s youth as part of the DOSP planning process; outreach included:

- City of Oakland Youth Advisory Committee: ten middle- and high-school aged commissioners participated in a facilitated discussion about how they use downtown and what would make it a more valuable and welcoming space.
- UC Berkeley Y-PLAN Program: MetWest and Skyline High School students have provided recommendations on issues such as social equity and greenhouse gas reduction that have been integrated into the Preliminary Draft Plan.
- Youth Summit: over 80 participants discussed youth ideas and needs for downtown on March 16, 2016 over pizza at City Hall, co-led by City and Y-PLAN staff. (Excerpts of that input are provided at right.)
- Youth Service Provider Focus Group: youth-serving organizations from around Oakland, including many located downtown, participated in a discussion to inform City staff about youth and organizational needs.
- Art Projects: Oakland School for the Arts and Chabot Elementary students participated in visionary art projects to describe and portray the future that they envision for downtown.
- Neighborhood Design Session: approximately 20 high school students participated in discussions about their ideas for Chinatown at the Neighborhood Design Session held at the Oakland Asian Cultural Center.

- To better engage youth, recommendations include youth-led engagement programs, youth on decision-making bodies, Civicorps, mayor approval of youth, internship programs with the City (particularly the Planning Bureau) and local business, and to involve the Golden State Warriors, Oakland A's, and other famous Oaklanders.

#### **CH-1.9 Implement an edible parks program, include garden spaces and amenities in public spaces.**

The City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Department has a Community Gardening Program, with 16 locations to grow organic vegetables, herbs, fruits and flowers. This includes ten rental-plot community gardens, as well as six locations run in partnerships with schools and nonprofits.

This program can be expanded to include additional sites downtown. As new neighborhood parks and open spaces are added downtown to accompany future development, or existing public spaces improved, opportunities to include community gardens should be explored. Downtown is home to a number of cultural institutions that can be approached to sponsor garden spaces to reduce rental fees for users.

#### **CH-1.10 Consider providing secure storage lockers for the unsheltered residents of downtown in places where they can access them.**

Having no secure place to store belongings can provide a challenge for homeless individuals to accessing shelters, employment and services. Storage lockers in underutilized space, particularly in public buildings such as parking garages, or near other services, can protect belongings from theft, damage or confiscation, as well as from blocking sidewalks.

#### **CH-1.11 Invest in more playgrounds to make downtown a more family-friendly location.**

*The Downtown Plan has a focus on achieving environmental goals to improve health and quality of life for downtown’s residents and businesses and for the broader community. Many of the following policies reinforce and build upon concepts and recommendations in existing City climate and sustainability studies.*

## OUTCOME CH-2

*Environmental stewardship informs operational, planning, and capital improvement decisions to create a more sustainable downtown where everyone can adapt and thrive in the face of changing conditions.*

### CH-2.1 Develop policy to support clean transportation modes to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Combustion of fossil fuels for transportation is a major source of GHG emissions in Oakland, as well as throughout California. Promoting alternative modes of transportation such as walking, biking and public transportation can help reduce GHG emissions. Continued support for bike share, scooters and other forms of micro transit can also encourage a shift away from private automobiles. By supporting commute alternatives to driving, these regulations benefit people of color, 20% of whom do not have access to a car in Oakland.

Strategies associated with this policy include supporting an interconnected bicycle and pedestrian network (see Outcome M-1); tailoring parking policies to reduce vehicle trips (Policy M-3.3); supporting affordable, safe, and reliable public transportation options (see Outcome M-2); promoting fuel-efficient vehicles and low-carbon fuels (Policy M-3.4); and establishing partnerships with the Port of Oakland to reduce Port-related emissions.

Oakland has made progress in a several of these areas, embracing a variety of climate-friendly development principles in the City’s General Plan, focusing new development around transit hubs, adopting forward-thinking Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans, and adopting a Clean Fleets policy aimed at improving the fuel efficiency of the City’s vehicle fleet.

### CH-2.2 Coordinate land-use regulations and transportation policies for reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that meet citywide targets established in the resolutions by Council that approved the City’s Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP).

Land use and transportation are interconnected: the placement of housing, jobs, shopping and other opportunities has a fundamental effect on both VMT and people’s daily transportation choices.

Efforts to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector also provide an opportunity to create a more equitable, sustainable, and healthy Oakland by addressing the interconnection between land-use and transportation.

In addition to developing a zoning hierarchy that coordinates higher intensity development around transit stations and employment hubs downtown, additional regulations for this strategy option include requiring new developments to join a transportation management association that promotes commute alternatives to driving alone and monitors progress toward transportation-related goals, as well as increasing transportation demand management (TDM) requirements for new developments and requirements for providing transit passes to new residents and employees.

**CH-2.3 Support the implementation of the Sea Level Rise Roadmap, which identified key actions needed to prepare for impacts of climate change; critical assets that should be prioritized for safety and resilience to SLR and flood risk, particularly for vulnerable neighborhoods; and identified policy regulations and data analysis systems that can support decision making around land use, building, and zoning.**

The Sea Level Rise Roadmap document summarizes existing impacts and future impacts of SLR; relevant policies and regulations; and vulnerability and risk assessments conducted to date, including mapping critical assets and identifying vulnerable communities to bring an equity lens and voice to the people who are most impacted. It also identifies priority actions.

**CH-2.4 Require new developments to install and maintain low-impact stormwater detention systems on private property to limit the amount of runoff into drains or surface water bodies including Lake Merritt, the Lake Merritt Channel, and the Oakland Estuary.**

Low-impact stormwater management is an approach that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle. In addition to improving San Francisco Bay water quality, low-impact stormwater management provides other benefits, such as the creation/protection of public open space, reduced heat-island effect, improved air quality, and reduced flood risks.

This requirement reinforces provision C.3 of the San Francisco Bay Region municipal regional stormwater permit (MRP), which requires stormwater site design measures be included as part of redevelopment projects of a certain size (projects with 10,000 square feet or more of new or existing impervious area; or 5,000 square feet

or more for certain land uses). Only low impact development (LID) measures are allowed for most regulated projects.

The site design measures used in downtown should be calibrated with the envisioned environment of each Character Area (Chapter 6). The City's Public Works Department and Planning Bureau should work together to create a toolkit of approaches (green roofs, cisterns and rain barrels, rain gardens, bioswales, permeable paving surfaces, etc.) that are contextually appropriate within each Character Area. Public Works will then formulate calculations for each tool to be able to evaluate the success of design and development proposals.

#### **CH-2.5 Develop a Green Infrastructure Plan to improve social, environmental, and economic resilience outcomes with standards and guidelines for the integration of low-impact design elements for all public realm and capital improvement projects downtown.**

In addition to green stormwater infrastructure and its benefits mentioned above, the Green Infrastructure Plan would identify areas of opportunity and standards for inclusion in public capital improvement projects, such as streetscape, public space, habitat protection and wildlife corridors, and park enhancements, as well as transportation projects and community engagement and education.

Opportunity areas for Green Infrastructure projects will be informed by multiple criteria, such as the ability to meet regulatory requirements, cost efficiency, space availability, and equity considerations. The Green Infrastructure Plan will prioritize the sites that would have the most urgent and severe impact by climate change. Not only will the Green Infrastructure Plan ensure that the City complies with Clean Water Act requirements, it will also be a multi-faceted guide for the City's Green Infrastructure efforts. Green Infrastructure design and implementation guidance for the inclusion of green infrastructure in public open space and transportation projects should be incorporated into the public open space and thoroughfare standards within a new proposed zoning system.

#### **CH-2.6 Prioritize the design and implementation of green streets that incorporate landscaping and permeable surfaces to sequester carbon, reduce noise pollution, buffer pedestrians from cars, and manage stormwater, water and air quality.**

All streetscape improvements in the downtown area should explore potential for including green infrastructure and permeable surfaces to meet community health and placemaking goals. For example, the proposed "Green Loop" shown in Figure CH-1 passes through and connects many of downtown's districts and neighborhoods,

creating a connected network of walking and biking paths. As the streets that form this loop are reconfigured to include enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities, street trees, green infrastructure, and permeable materials can also be included as part of the street design. Unless prohibited by utilities, underground infrastructure or other constraints, “green” design elements should be included.

#### **CH-2.7 Add green buffers along highway edges to filter air pollutants.**

I-880 and I-980 are large contributors to downtown air pollution, which is most significant near to the freeways and other high-traffic corridors. Green buffers should be included in adjacent streetscapes and new public spaces to filter air pollutants.

#### **CH-2.8 Accelerate the electrification of private vehicles and low capacity taxi/TNC vehicles, aiming to improve air quality by eliminating tailpipe emissions from transportation.**

The Sustainable Oakland Program is developing an Electric Vehicle (EV) Action Plan to accelerate EV infrastructure, with a focus on equity and community engagement. 20% Plug-in electric vehicle (PEV) infrastructure ready and 100% PEV capable is already set in City policy.

#### **CH-2.9 Transition to natural gas-free buildings to reduce safety and air quality/health risks in buildings.**

Elimination of fossil fuels from building heating systems is a key recommendation of the CURB strategy. Codes should be updated for new buildings to eliminate gas heating systems by 2030. The electrification of space heating systems can be accelerated, and building envelopes in existing buildings dramatically improved, by 2030. By 2050, the goal is to eliminate fossil fuel use in all buildings.

#### **CH-2.10 Require high-albedo (reflective) surfaces where appropriate, such as on rooftops and paving, to reduce the urban heat island effect in downtown.**

City codes should be updated to require high-albedo roofing and paving as part of future public and private improvements, to reduce the urban heat island effect.



# 06: Land Use & Urban Form



FOX  
OAKLAND

OAKLAND  
FEB 14 - J BOOG & THE GREEN  
15 - GRAMATIK  
16 - LETTUCE

BOX  
OFFICE



# LANDMARK #SEEDS FOR FUTURE URBAN LAND

# 06

The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan will establish the framework for how downtown will grow and adapt over the next 20 to 25 years to meet the community's needs for housing, jobs, cultural expression, mobility, health and sustainability.

This chapter contains development strategies and policies to shape future growth and preservation in the downtown, and to provide the physical environment needed to support the goals and outcomes of each of the preceding chapters. The outcomes and policies of this chapter seek to improve the built environment while centering the needs of the city's most vulnerable residents.

## CHAPTER 06: LAND USE & URBAN FORM

### SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES



# CHAPTER 06:

## Land Use & Urban Form

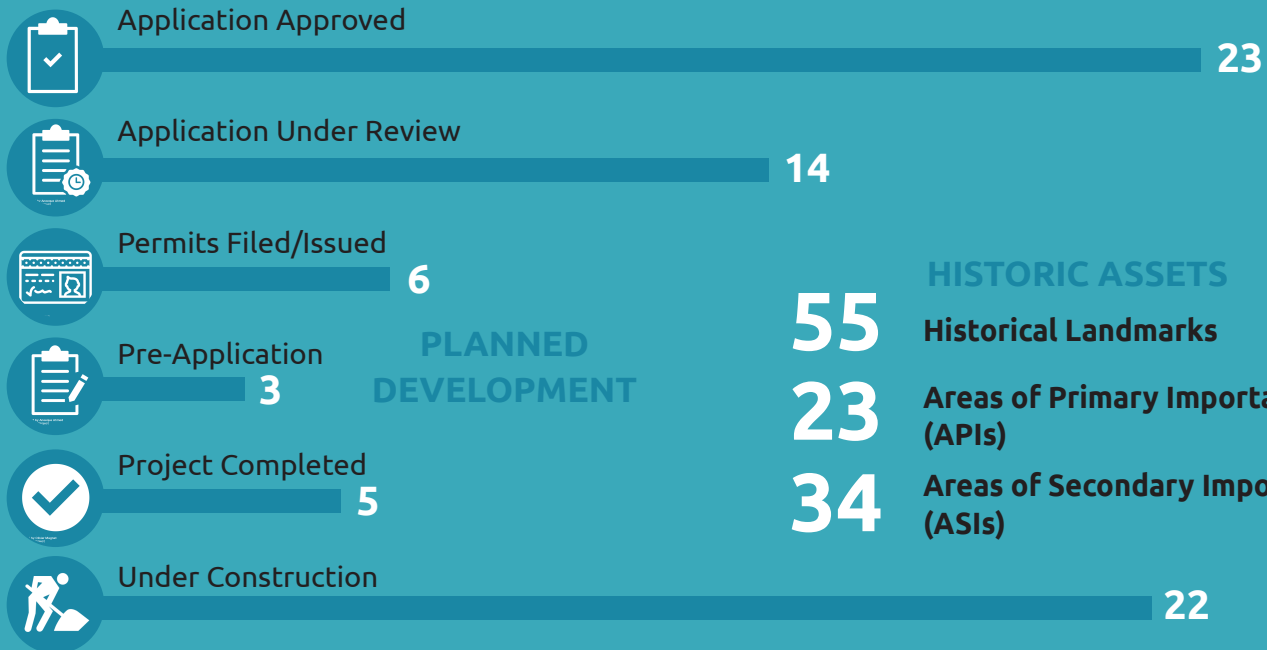
**Goal 06** *Develop downtown in a way that meets community needs and preserves Oakland's unique character.*

**Outcome LU-1**  
BUILT ENVIRONMENT *Development and design serve Oakland's diverse needs, contribute to improved conditions for all, and enhance downtown's authentic, creative, and dynamic local character.*

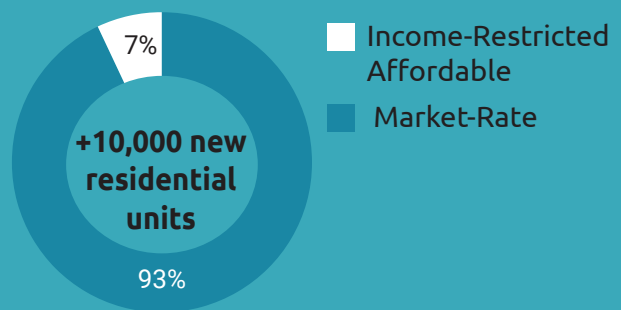
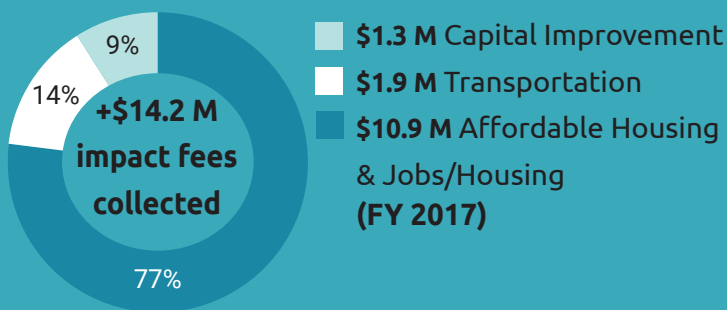
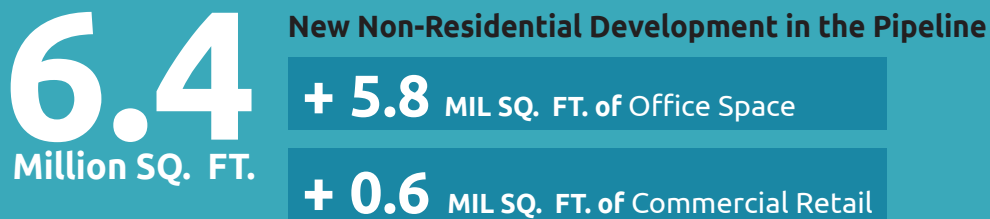
**Outcome LU-2**  
PRESERVATION *Oakland's extensive array of historic buildings, cultural enclaves, civic institutions and landmarks are preserved within downtown's built environment.*

# 73

**Development projects completed/to be completed  
in Greater Downtown Oakland\*  
(2015-2020)**



\*Includes the Downtown Specific Plan area, the Lake Merritt Station Plan area, and the Broadway Valdez Specific Plan area south of 27th street



# Summary of Existing Conditions

*One of the objectives of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan is to plan for an improved built environment that gives physical form to the community's social goals, such as fostering a sense of belonging, maintaining and enhancing Oakland's cultural character, encouraging creativity and exchange in the civic commons, driving economic opportunity, supporting community health, and promoting access to opportunity for all. A summary of the existing conditions in this chapter identifies the assets, challenges, and measures of success related to the physical environment that were considered in developing the supportive policies that follow.*

## Leveraging Assets

### DEVELOPMENT & PRESERVATION

While Downtown Oakland is a destination unto itself, it also includes several distinct neighborhoods, including Koreatown/Northgate (KONO), Uptown, the Central Core, the Lake Merritt Office District, Lakeside, West of San Pablo, Chinatown, Old Oakland, and Jack London. Each downtown neighborhood has unique characteristics and offers different opportunities for preservation, evolution, and transformation. Throughout these neighborhoods there also lies 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 1986, and continues to use the results of this survey to classify and preserve historic buildings. Many individual historic properties and districts have been identified. The result is a downtown that is an eclectic mix of old and new, large-scale and small-scale structures, office and housing uses, and significant entertainment and retail enterprises. It is this diversity of building types and construction eras that gives downtown a flavor all its own. Previous preservation strategies, set forward in

specific area plans as well as the Historic Preservation Element of the Oakland General Plan, provide a strong context for the continued use of preservation as an important planning tool in Oakland.

Downtown also features several vacant and underutilized sites, including surface parking lots, that make walking in some parts of downtown uncomfortable and unpleasant; but if these gaps in the street-wall are filled in, could accommodate much needed new office, residential, arts, and entertainment uses. Projects in the pipeline in Greater Downtown Oakland that have been or are scheduled to be completed between 2015 and 2020 will provide a combined estimate of 5.8 million square feet of office space (most of which is Class A office), 632 thousand square feet of commercial retail space, and 10 thousand residential units (7% of which are low- or very low-income units). The introduction of three new development impact fees for affordable housing, capital improvements, and transportation in 2016 (increased in 2018), has helped to ensure this new wave of development in Downtown Oakland contributes toward meeting critical community needs.

#### STREETSCAPE & URBAN DESIGN

Downtown Oakland has an abundance of street right-of-way that was built to move cars quickly through Oakland prior to the construction of the freeways, which now serve that purpose. Wide, fast-moving streets have been shown to be detrimental to retail businesses, pedestrian safety and a comfortable sense of place. By redesigning the downtown streets that are unnecessarily wide, the City can reduce traffic accidents, make walking and cycling safer, and stimulate economic activity.

Private development also has the capacity to contribute to the vibrancy, health and accessibility of the public realm. High standards for urban design can ensure that the new buildings contribute to downtown's character, safety and sustainability by including landscaping and other streetscape improvements, accessible public spaces, and other community-desired benefits.

## Addressing Barriers & Disparities

#### DEVELOPMENT & PRESERVATION

Oakland's booming real estate market necessitates a careful look at the causes and consequences of neighborhood change. Demographic shifts such as a reduction in the share of African-American residents downtown from 29% to 20% (2000-2015), as well as the loss of affordable commercial spaces and cultural resources have occurred.

While many factors influence the development of disparities, past policies and development practices in Oakland have contributed to an inequitable

distribution of jobs, housing, services, infrastructure and public amenities. In addition to pursuing more equitable implementation of capital improvement programs, recommended policies need to consider all communities, particularly those groups that have historically been impacted by disparities in life outcomes, to ensure that development serves the needs of everyone.

### **STREETSCAPE & URBAN DESIGN**

Along some downtown streetscapes, the pedestrian realm is less than desirable with blank building walls, missing sidewalks, a lack of street trees, and wide traffic-heavy intersections. The built environment around freeway under-crossings is particularly problematic; the freeway not only disconnects neighborhoods, it also is a hot spot for pollution as well as pedestrian and cyclist safety concerns. The number of homeless encampments at or near under-crossings emphasizes an urgent need to create more affordable, accessible housing options.

Streetscapes that lack amenities (such as benches, lighting, trees, etc.) are detrimental to all pedestrians, but particularly limiting for older adults and people with disabilities. In addition, ongoing downtown construction intermittently blocks streets and sidewalks, further limiting mobility.

# Measures of Success

*The measures below will help gauge the effectiveness of the Downtown Specific Plan at achieving its intended outcomes for Goal 06.*

- Capital improvement dollars spent in disinvested areas
- Number of designated historic buildings in active use
- Number of housing units built (see Chapter 2)
- Square footage of office space developed
- Square footage of retail/arts space created
- Amount of community benefits realized

# Land Use Framework

*The Land Use Framework applies the community's vision to downtown parcels and public spaces, and identifies the intensities of development and types of environments desired for each neighborhood.*

## EXECUTING THE VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

The Land Use Framework will implement the Plan's vision for downtown's physical environment, locating areas of intensity and opportunities for transformative change that are positioned around transit and activity nodes. It also identifies defining historic and cultural assets that will be preserved. This framework identifies character areas and intensity levels based on the community's vision for individual neighborhoods and an analysis of existing regulatory and physical conditions, aimed to balance desired outcomes for equity, housing, placemaking, arts, culture, mobility, and economic opportunity.

This framework establishes the basis for proposed General Plan amendments, revised zoning regulations, and supplemental design guidelines to guide redevelopment and public space improvements in the near term. It also is intended to synergize with recent and proposed nearby developments, such as the Brooklyn Basin project and the proposed A's stadium at Howard Terminal; and help set the stage for longer-term transformational opportunities outside the scope of the Downtown Plan, such as a second Transbay Tube crossing, a potential Jack London BART station, and the potential conversion of I-980 to a multiway boulevard.

Most importantly, the Land Use Framework fits into a larger economic development strategy for downtown. With the adoption of impact fees in 2016, new development not only increases downtown's tax base, but also increases the amount of money collected to fund affordable housing, transportation, and capital improvements. Also, creation of a streamlined bonus incentive program will ensure that both the public and project sponsors know exactly what community benefits a project will be required to provide in order to receive a building height or intensity bonus.

*The Land Use Framework establishes a vision for future growth and preservation; it is based on identification of opportunities and envisioned future improvements, as well as the location of existing resources and historic patterns.*

## Land Use and Urban Form Considerations

An analysis of existing physical infrastructure reveals opportunities to realize a built environment that better serves the needs of Oaklanders. Presented on the following pages, this analysis demonstrates where, why, and for whom downtown should grow and change, and provides the basis for the Land Use Character and Intensity maps later in this chapter.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSIT-ORIENTED GROWTH

Figure LU-1 identifies downtown's transit hubs and mixed-use corridors that have potential to move the greatest number of people and support the greatest intensity of additional housing, jobs and services.

The BART system provides rail transit access to and from the city and region. Land within walking distance of the three downtown BART stations can sustain the greatest density and intensity of development. The area within a quarter-mile (5 minute walk) to half-mile (10 minute walk) radius is a generally accepted distance that the average person will walk to a transit stop. Figure LU-1 shows that existing BART stations provide coverage to most of downtown. A portion of the waterfront including Jack London Square is beyond a 10-minute walk of BART. However, this area is served by the Oakland Ferry Terminal, Jack London Amtrak station, and bus transit service including the free "B" shuttle along Broadway.

The "Primary Connecting Corridors" are streets that provide connections between downtown districts and to/from surrounding neighborhoods. These mixed-use corridors traverse and tie together multiple downtown neighborhoods and districts, making them good locations for community activity and gathering, public services, retail and employment opportunities.

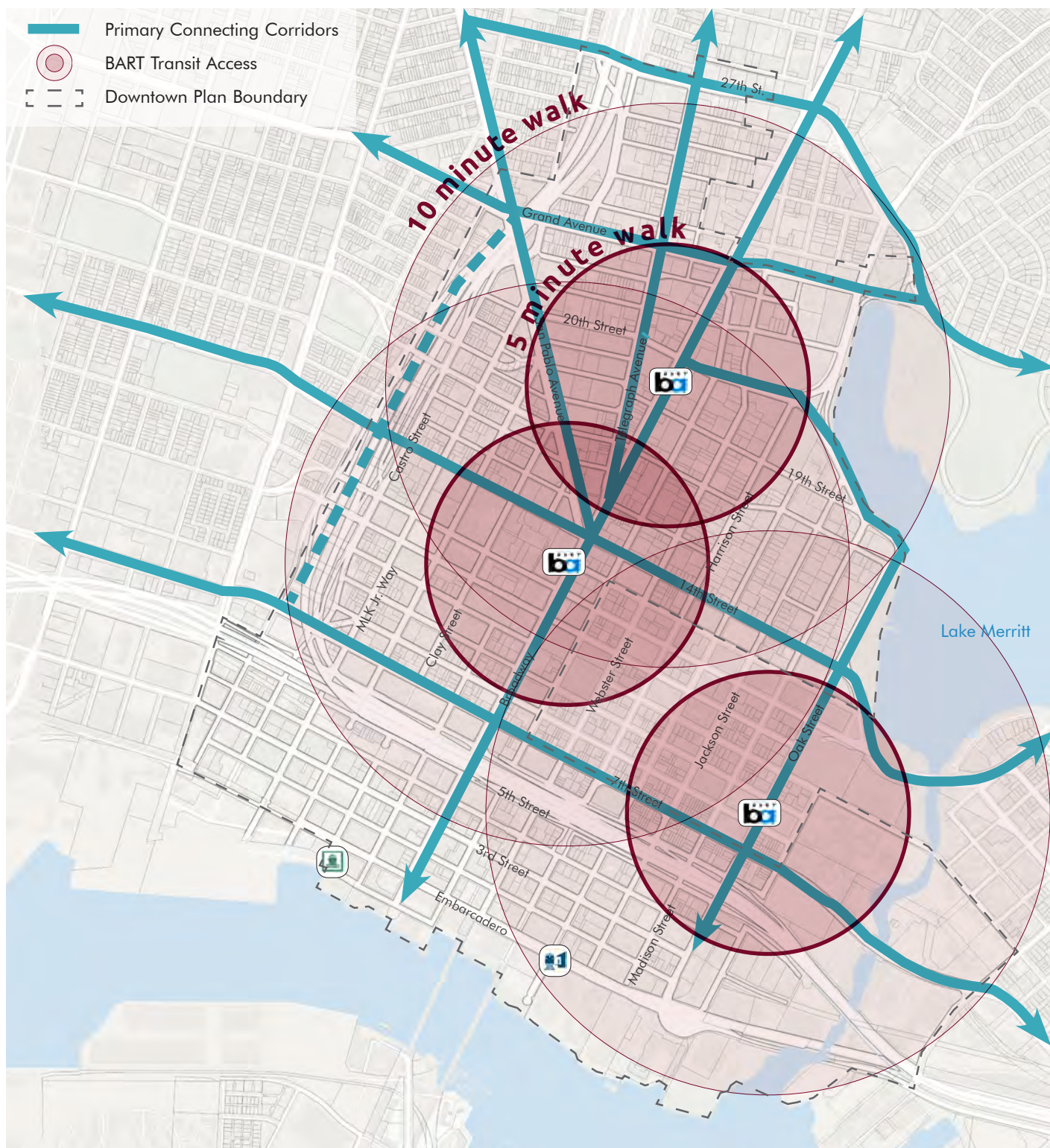


Figure LU-1: Transit Access and Connecting Corridors



#### GATEWAYS AND ACTIVITY NODES

Figure LU-2 identifies existing activity nodes, as well as the location of entryways along the Primary Connecting Corridors and Green Loops.

Downtown's areas of greatest activity are centered around the BART stations, in the downtown core, and on lower Broadway / Jack London Square, where there is a clustering of entertainment destinations oriented to the waterfront.

In addition to the Connecting Corridors, the proposed Green Loop will provide an integrated system of walking and biking paths through downtown that link cultural districts, and connect people to the Lake Merritt and Estuary waterfronts, and to adjacent neighborhoods and districts. Downtown's entries along these primary corridors and paths do not act as welcoming gateways today. Along many streets, the existing layout is unfriendly to pedestrians and cyclists, particularly where the corridors cross over or under freeways (I-880 and I-980). In addition to pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements, opportunities for open space, public art, and other placemaking features can be prioritized at gateways to mark the entry to downtown.

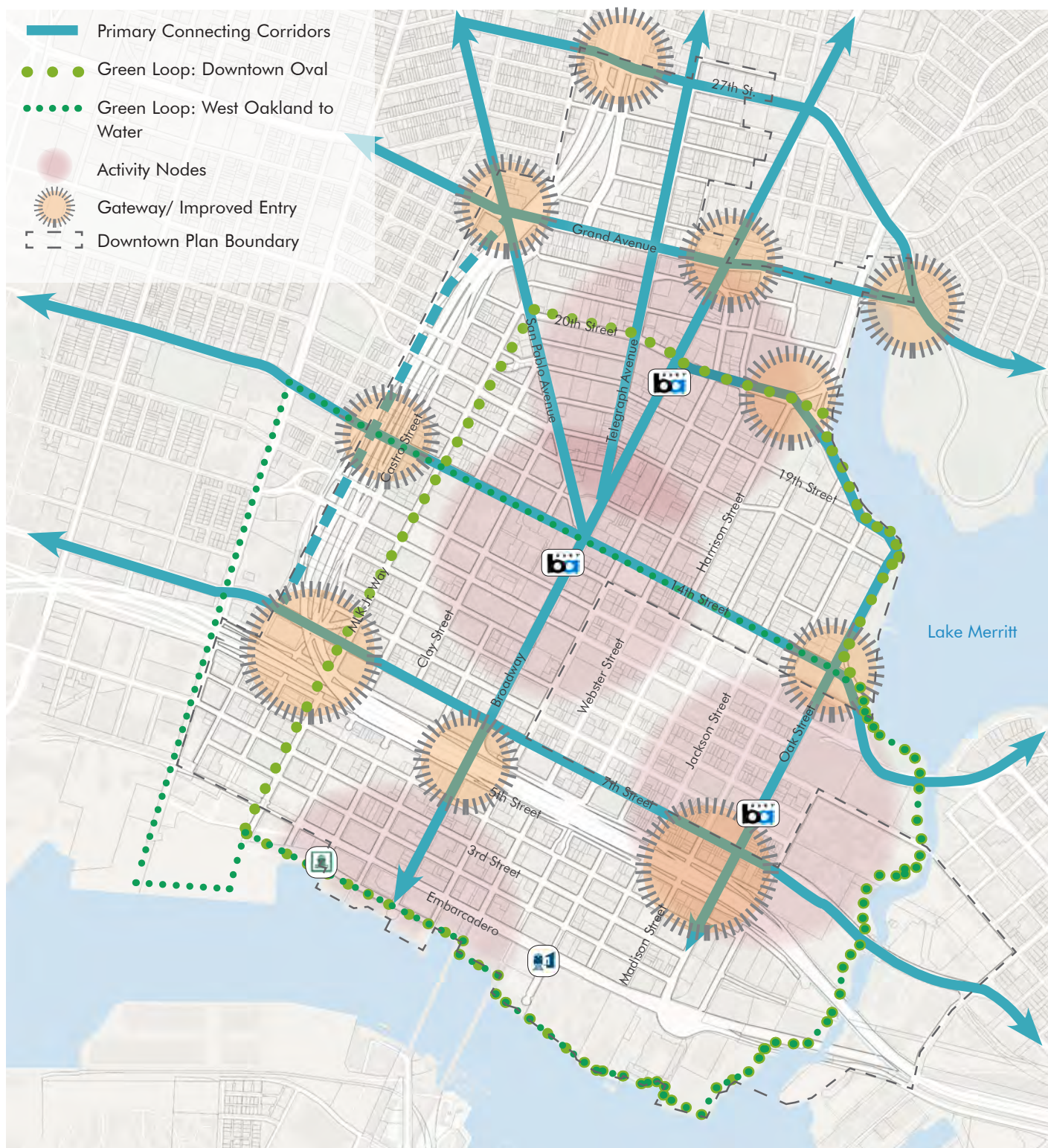


Figure LU-2: Downtown Gateways and Activity Nodes

#### IDENTIFYING SITES WHERE CHANGE IS ANTICIPATED

Downtown Oakland is currently undergoing a rapid period of growth and change. There are a number of sites where new development has been proposed and is approved or in the approval process, under construction or just recently constructed. New development on these “Anticipated Development” sites will affect downtown’s urban form and character. Notably, Brooklyn Basin, which is just outside the Plan boundary, has been approved for intense mixed-use development and open spaces along the waterfront; this new development activity will influence the reuse of surrounding properties along the Estuary. Howard Terminal is also just outside of the plan boundary, but under consideration for use as a new A’s stadium with additional mixed-use development.

As part of the Downtown Plan process, “development opportunity sites” were identified and mapped (see Figure LU-3). Later in this chapter, the amount of development potential for these sites is estimated to quantify the ability of future development to meet Plan goals.

*Sites that met one or more of the following criteria were considered “opportunity sites” for new development downtown:*

- *Land/improvement ratio < 0.25 (this ratio is the value of improvements divided by the total value of the property)*
- *Redevelopable existing uses (i.e. parking, vacant, auto-related, low-rise commercial)*
- *Minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet*

The development opportunity sites include:

- Infill sites, which are vacant land (including surface parking)
- Underutilized sites, or sites with buildings that could better contribute to the public realm.
- Additionally, major redevelopment opportunities are identified that are at the periphery of the planning boundary and beyond the scope of the Downtown Plan, including:
  - Howard Terminal, which is outside of the plan boundary but under consideration for use as a new A’s stadium with additional mixed-use development. New investment and reuse of this site is likely to influence development on nearby blocks.
  - The I-980 freeway, which could be converted to a surface-grade boulevard, with remaining land used for development of housing, jobs, and services. Conversion of I-980 is beyond the scope of the Specific Plan and would require further feasibility analysis.

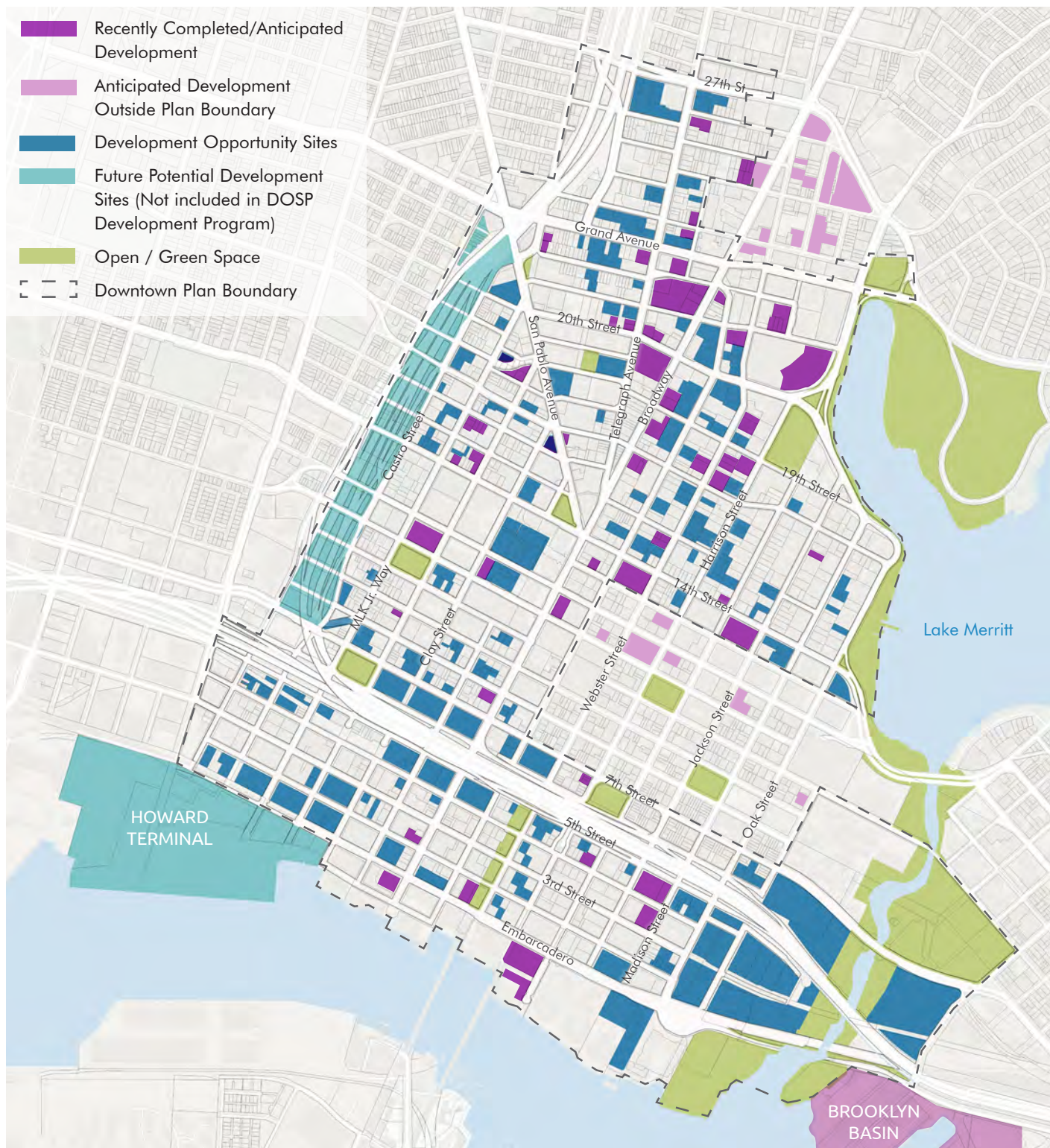


Figure LU-3: Anticipated Development and Opportunity Sites



#### INCREMENTAL INFILL TO ENHANCE EXISTING CENTERS, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

Combining layers from previous maps reveals a context for future growth and development. Vacant and underutilized opportunity sites that can support new development, occur throughout the downtown. New buildings can fill the gaps in neighborhood street walls, respect the form and massing established by existing buildings, and make existing activity nodes more vital and complete.

Analyzing the pattern of the Opportunity Sites map reveals several areas with a clustering of sites, and areas adjacent to large opportunity sites, where larger, more transformational changes are possible, identified on Figure LU-4:

- Area 1: Serving as a bridge between Brooklyn Basin, Lake Merritt BART Transit Oriented Development project, and an improved Estuary Park is a clustering of opportunity sites along the Oak Street corridor and in the Victory Court area. This area, currently a mix of primarily industrial uses, could become an intense node of mixed-use development, linking future development, public space improvements, and transit access to form a dynamic activity hub on the east side of the Jack London district.
- Area 2: Located along I-880 is a cluster of several publicly-owned parcels and a couple of privately-owned parcels that could be redeveloped over time for mixed-use development that includes both market-rate and affordable housing.
- Area 3: Potential future land use and transportation infrastructure decisions, including the proposed reuse of Howard Terminal for a new A's stadium and a second transbay tube crossing and BART station, could allow for significant growth and change to this area. Street improvements along Embarcadero and Water Street and a cluster of potential development sites between Embarcadero and 2nd Street could form a new mixed-use waterfront district that connects Howard Terminal to Jack London Square.
- Area 4: A cluster of opportunity sites around the 19th Street BART station provide an opportunity to aggregate parcels for larger footprint towers. Together with several nearby approved projects and projects under construction, this area will be downtown's premier office hub, featuring the tallest and most dense development downtown.

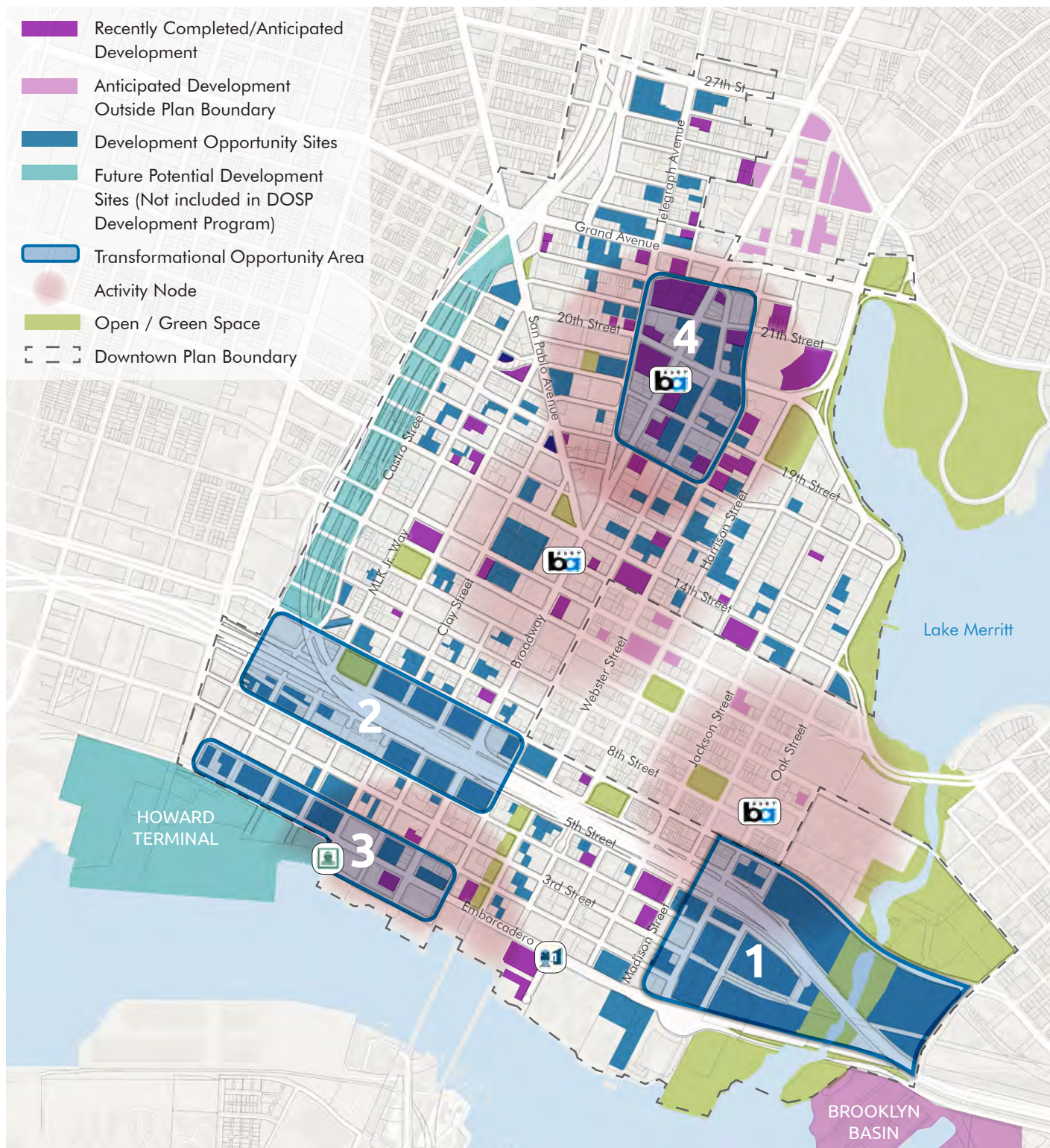


Figure LU-4: Transformational Opportunity Areas



#### HISTORIC RESOURCES

Downtown Oakland has a wealth of historic buildings and areas; maintaining these assets influences future development form and potential. The preservation and reuse of historic buildings is an essential element to maintaining community character. Policies to facilitate preservation and reuse should be prioritized; both new and reused buildings can help to meet Plan goals for commercial and residential spaces needed downtown.

Figure LU-5 locates the following historic resources:

- The Local, State and National Register of Historic Properties recognizes the city's most important buildings and districts, including designated Landmarks and Heritage Properties.
- Areas of Primary Importance (API) are areas that appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, although not all are listed as historic districts.
- Areas of Secondary Importance (ASI) are generally sites and districts of local interest.
- Potential Designated Historic Properties (PDHPs) are all properties that meet minimum significance thresholds. The City considers any property that has at least a contingency rating of C ("secondary importance") or contributes or potentially contributes to a primary or secondary district to "warrant consideration for possible preservation." PDHPs are a large group: a fifth of the buildings in Oakland. They are meant to be "numerous enough to significantly influence the city's character."

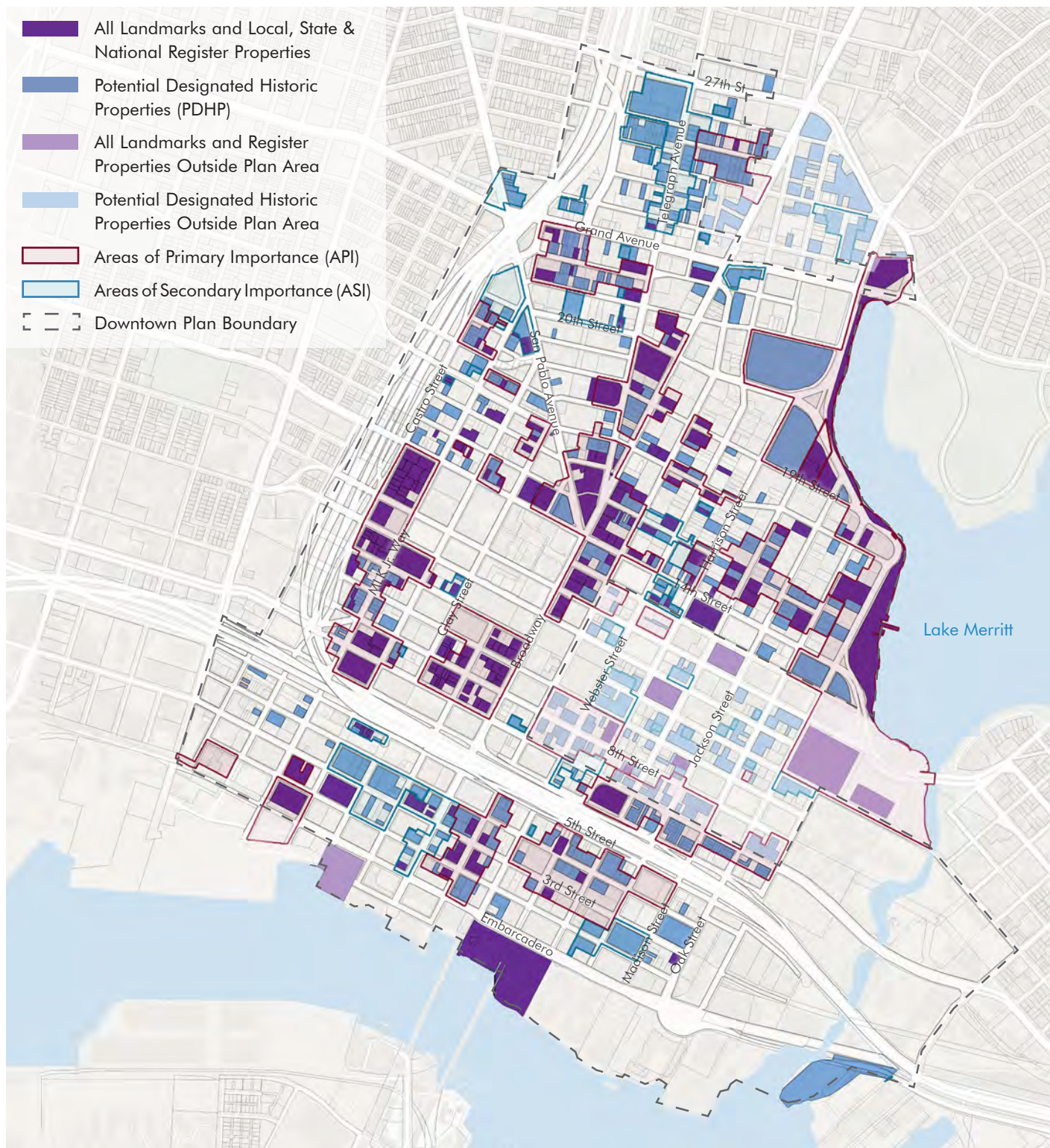


Figure LU-5: Historic Resources Map

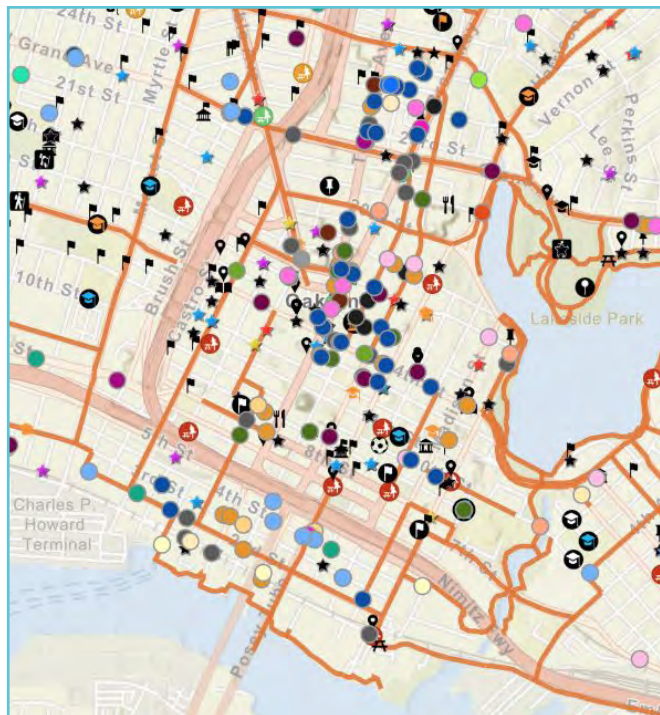


#### CULTURAL RESOURCES

Downtown is home to a wide variety of civic organizations and institutions, local small businesses, community-based nonprofits, and other cultural resources. As rents have increased, the ability for these culture keepers to remain downtown has become challenged. It is essential that future development policy include provisions to support the people and community that make Oakland what it is today.

In 2017, the City of Oakland launched a citywide Cultural Plan process, that has resulted in a draft online, interactive Cultural Asset map. The map locates art galleries and studios; dance and music studios; art and book stores; theaters; nightlife, educational and religious spaces; community spaces and organizations; public facilities and public art; open spaces; and bikeways. A high-level overview (Figure LU-6) shows a grouping of resources within downtown's central core, along 14th Street, in the Uptown/KONO area, in Chinatown, and in Jack London.

Existing and proposed cultural and entertainment areas are formed around these clusterings of cultural resources (Figure LU-7 ).



**Figure LU-6: Cultural Resources Map**

View details at <http://oakgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=d03eea33b23c4e679466c52bf3b6844b>

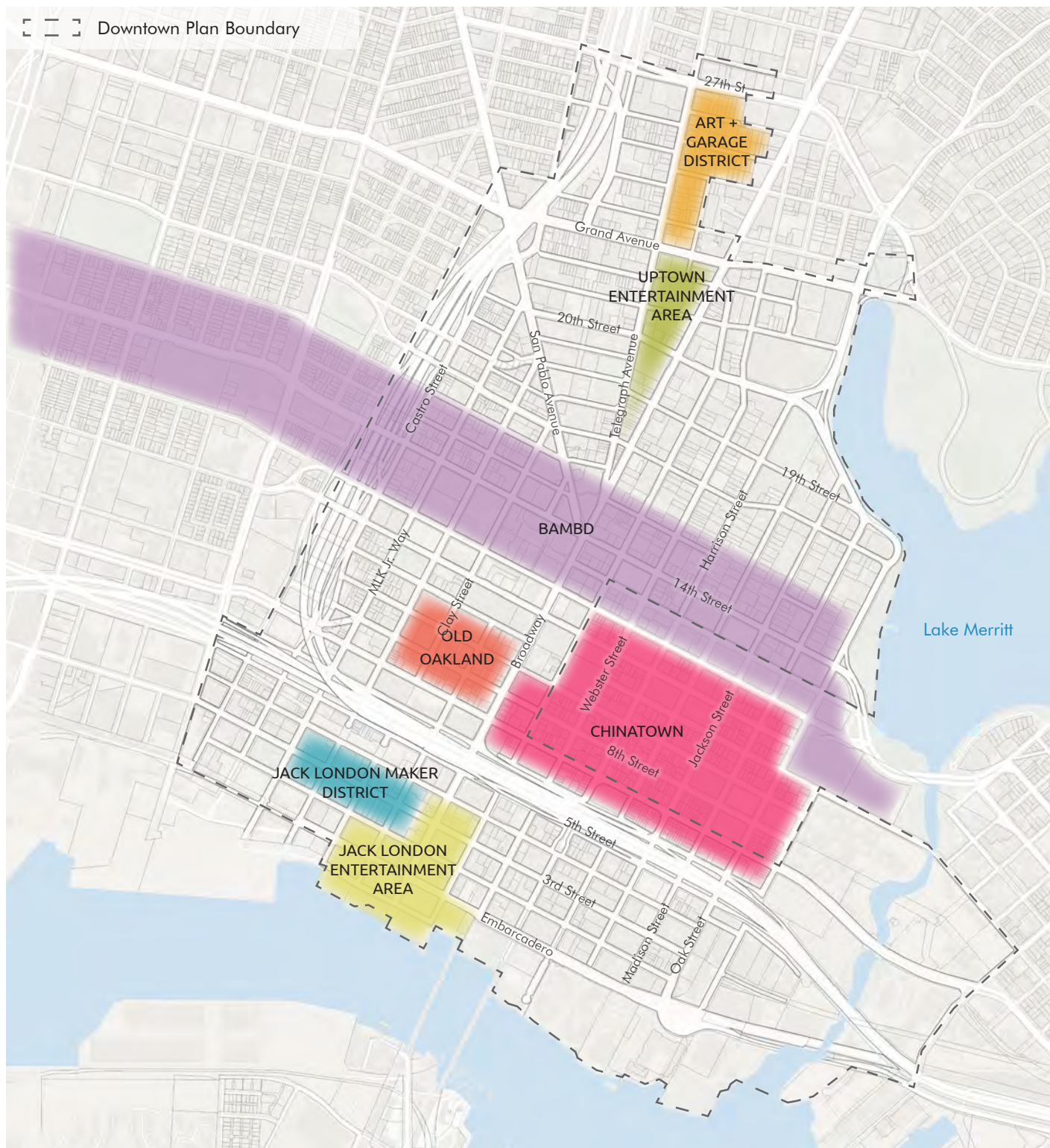


Figure LU-7: Existing and Potential Cultural & Entertainment Areas Map



#### GENERAL PLAN POLICY DIRECTION

The governing policy direction for downtown is contained in the Oakland General Plan Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) and Estuary Policy Plan (EPP). The LUTE governs the downtown area north of I-880. The Estuary Policy Plan governs the Jack London area. Achieving the vision for downtown will require amendments to both of these General Plan elements.

The Land Use and Transportation Element identifies downtown as a “showcase district.” This designation for downtown was intended to highlight the importance of downtown as a “mixture of vibrant districts, each with a unique identity, all contributing to around-the-clock activity and continued expansion of job opportunities.”<sup>1</sup> A key component of the General Plan LUTE vision was support for downtown growth in office activity and new housing. The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan can refine this vision to also target specific contemporary economic sectors for growth, such as professional, scientific and technical services; finance, insurance, and real estate; information; arts; and community-serving nonprofits, recognizing that investment from the city’s major employers boosts revenues that fund services citywide.

The Estuary Policy Plan contains a policy framework that supports a broad mix of activities that are oriented to the water. The EPP prioritizes expanding opportunities and enhancing the attractiveness of the Oakland waterfront as a place to live, as well as contributing to the city’s long-term economic development, capitalizing on its proximity to the Port of Oakland. Additionally, the EPP identifies shoreline access and public space improvements as priorities.<sup>2</sup> The Downtown Oakland Specific Plan can refine this direction by establishing a regulatory framework that intensifies discrete portions of the Jack London waterfront area, while offering appropriate transitions to the area’s unique historic districts, such as the Produce Market and Waterfront Warehouse District. In addition, major new development at Howard Terminal, which is outside of the plan boundary, is likely to have a significant influence on development of the nearby blocks. It is the role of the Downtown Plan to respond to this significant change in condition and amend the Estuary Policy Plan to guide new development in the nearby areas surrounding Howard Terminal. Another objective of the Downtown Plan is to continue the charge of improving public access to the waterfront and public open spaces.

1 Envision Oakland: City of Oakland General Plan Land Use and Transportation Element. March 1998, pp 52 and 64.

2 Estuary Policy Plan. June 1998, pp. 29-33.

Table LU-1 provides specific proposed amendments to the Oakland General Plan Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) and Estuary Policy Plan (EPP). Land Use

Figure LU-8 is a preliminary draft of the proposed general plan amendments described on the previous page to achieve the desired future condition for downtown. The Land Use Character Map that follows (Figure LU-9) identifies character areas that will implement that General Plan categories and serves as the early framework from which new zoning regulations will be established. It is a further drill-down into the desired future condition for specific corridors and activity nodes.

ID	Existing	Proposed
1	LUTE Urban Residential	LUTE Community Commercial
2	LUTE Urban Residential	LUTE Central Business District
3	LUTE Community Commercial	LUTE Central Business District
4	LUTE Mixed Housing Type Residential	LUTE Central Business District
5	LUTE Urban Residential	LUTE Central Business District
6	LUTE Community Commercial	LUTE Central Business District
7	LUTE Business Mix	EPP Mixed Use District
8	EPP Light Industry 1	EPP Mixed Use District
9	EPP Off-Price Retail District	EPP Mixed Use District
10	EPP Retail Dining Entertainment 2	LUTE Central Business District
11	EPP Retail Dining Entertainment 2	EPP Produce Market
12	EPP Retail Dining Entertainment 2	EPP Produce Market
13	EPP Mixed Use District	EPP Produce Market
14	EPP Mixed Use District	EPP Produce Market
15	EPP Waterfront Commercial Recreation 1	EPP Mixed Use District
16	EPP Waterfront Commercial Recreation 1	EPP Mixed Use District
17	EPP Retail Dining Entertainment 1	EPP Mixed Use District
18	EPP Retail Dining Entertainment 1	EPP Retail Dining Entertainment 2
19	EPP Off-Price Retail District	EPP Retail Dining Entertainment 2
20	EPP Off-Price Retail District	EPP Light Industry 1
21	LUTE Business Mix	EPP Light Industry 1
22	EPP Off-Price Retail District	EPP Mixed Use District
23	EPP Light Industry 1	EPP Mixed Use District
24	LUTE Business Mix	EPP Mixed Use District
25	[blank]	LUTE Central Business District
26	LUTE Urban Park and Open Space	LUTE Central Business District
27	EPP Parks	EPP Mixed Use District

**Table LU-1: Proposed General Plan Amendments**

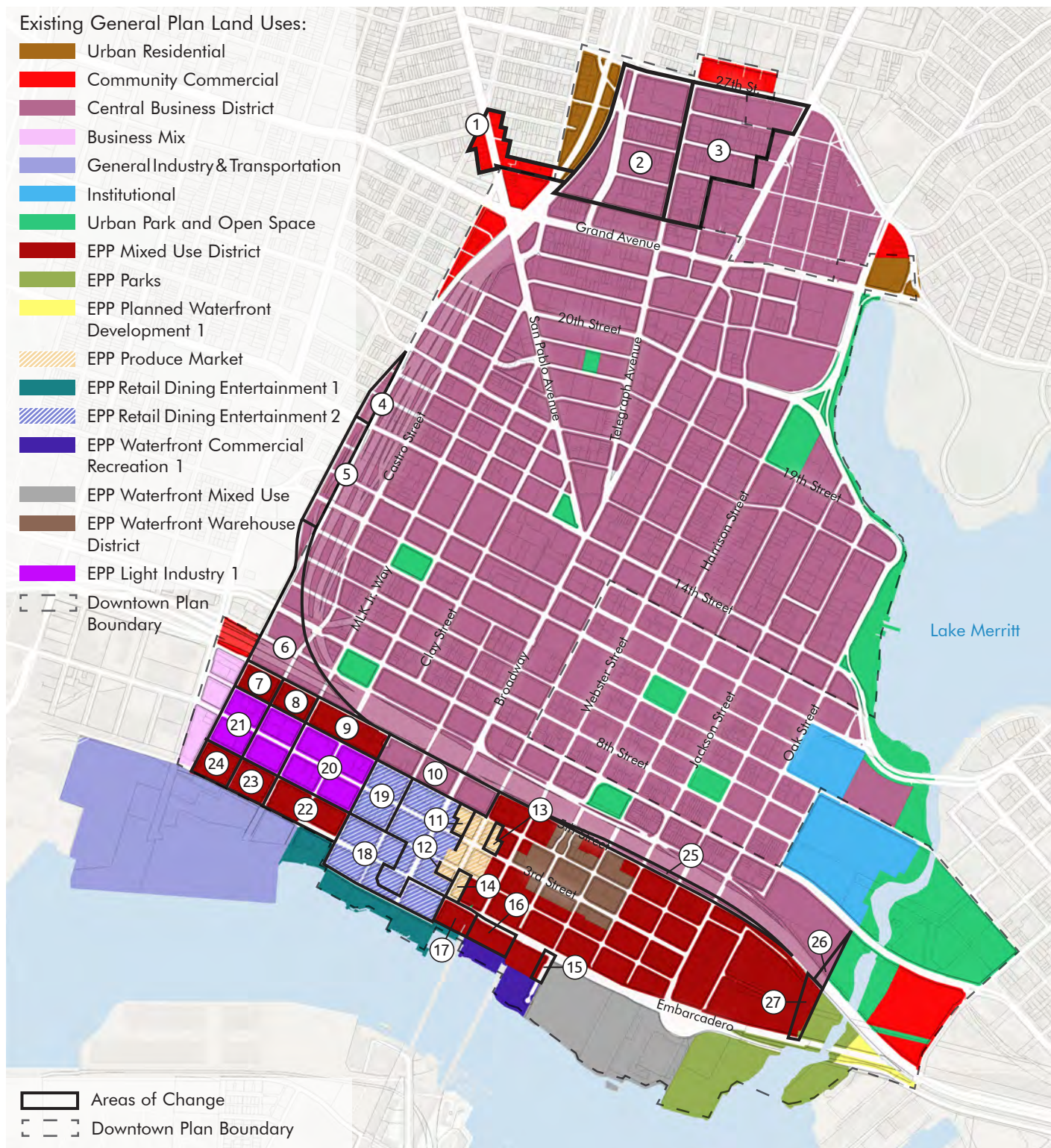


Figure LU-8: Proposed General Plan Amendments



## Land Use Character Map

*The Character Map implements the vision of the Downtown Plan, and identifies the type of environment envisioned for each downtown neighborhood, district and corridor.*

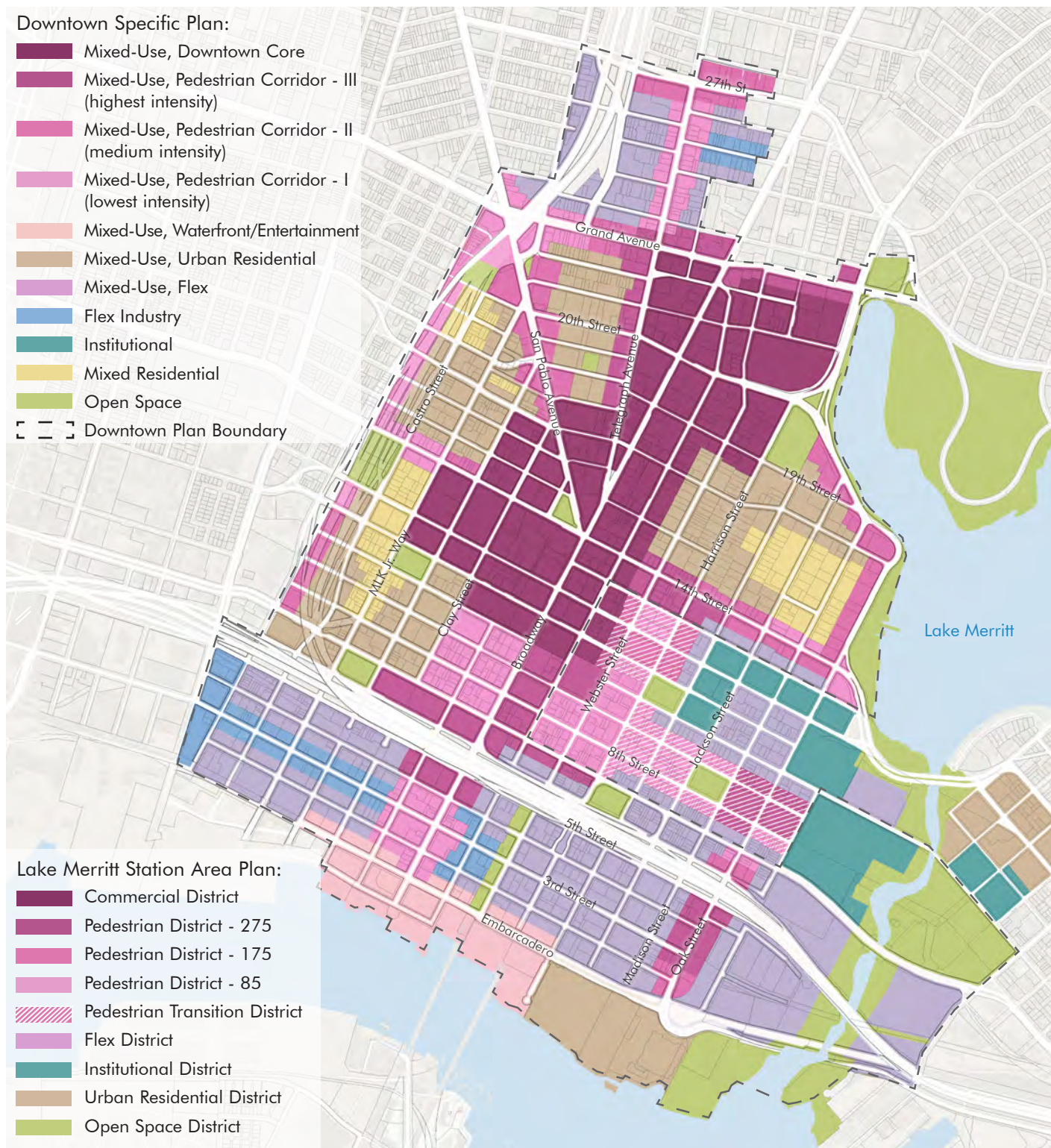
Building upon the existing conditions analysis presented on preceding pages, and input gathered from downtown stakeholders and community participants, the Land Use Character Map presents a vision for future development form in downtown.

Focused around the existing downtown BART stations, the greatest intensity of development will remain in the Mixed-Use Downtown Core. Provisions for minimum levels of office space in key corridors and opportunity sites within this Core area can ensure its purpose as an employment center is fulfilled (see Figure LU-11). The “Connecting Corridors” are identified as Mixed-Use Pedestrian Corridors, which act as hubs of community activity; new development in these corridors will have a particular focus on active ground floor frontages to enliven the sidewalk and create a quality pedestrian realm. There would be three types of Pedestrian Corridors (I, II, and III) that vary in intensity based on the surrounding context. Opportunities for transformational change, such as the Oak Street corridor, are mapped for their ideal future conditions.

Significant historic resources and cultural districts also inform the Land Use Character Map. For example, portions of the Lakeside neighborhood, Old Oakland and West of San Pablo (near I-980) are identified as Mixed Residential, reflecting the residential character of historic buildings. Historic warehouse areas such as the Produce Market, 3rd Street in Jack London, and 25th Street in KONO are identified as Flex Industry. The proposed Intensity Map (Figure LU-9) further reinforces the character for these areas, to ensure future development is consistent with the existing context.

One key aspect of the economic development strategy for downtown, in addition to encouraging more housing and commercial development in general, is to preserve and encourage more spaces for arts, culture, and light manufacturing. Downtown’s artist and maker communities are important contributors to Oakland’s creative and cultural economy. To address this priority, the Land Use framework introduces a Mixed-Use Flex in addition to the Flex Industry character area, to allow for a wider range of flexible ground floor uses in Jack London and KONO. Furthermore, arts and cultural districts are proposed to ensure a certain percentage of floor area for projects in key areas accommodate uses consistent with the district’s overall character and vision (see Policy C-1.1).

Additional details about the intent and envisioned urban form for each Character Area is shown in Table LU-2.



**Figure LU-9: Land Use Character Map**



### ← Less Intense

	FLEX INDUSTRY	MIXED RESIDENTIAL	MIXED-USE, WATERFRONT / ENTERTAINMENT	MIXED-USE, FLEX
				
INTENT STATEMENT	The “Flex Industry” character area would encourage a walkable, urban area of interconnected streetscapes with a variety of small-to-large footprint buildings that can accommodate light industrial or commercial uses and encourage investment and economic opportunity. This area would include a mix of industry/businesses in low scale warehouse buildings, such as light industrial, warehousing and manufacturing/maker space. Buildings may include artist studio or production space. This type of environment is currently found in Jack London, as well as in the historic Garage district.	The “Mixed Residential” character area would encourage a walkable, urban area of interconnected residential neighborhood streetscapes with medium intensity housing choices in small-to-medium footprint buildings at or near the sidewalk that support neighborhood-serving retail and services downtown. This area would include a mix of medium-density housing types, such as small apartments, townhouse, and duplexes. This type of environment is currently found in portions of Lakeside, West of San Pablo and near I-980 where existing smaller-scale residential (often historic) buildings exist.	The “Mixed Use Waterfront / Entertainment” character area would encourage a walkable, urban area of interconnected tree-lined, mixed-use streetscapes and waterfront paths with small-to-large footprint buildings at or near the sidewalk, all of which form a waterfront destination. This district would include mid-intensity building types with a focus on providing retail/restaurant/entertainment destinations.	The “Mixed Use, Flex” character area would encourage a walkable, urban area of interconnected mixed-use streetscapes with a variety of small to large footprint buildings that can accommodate a diverse range of uses to reinforce the existing pattern of diverse walkable neighborhoods and encourage investment and economic opportunity. This mixed-use zone allows flex uses at the ground floor, including manufacturing/maker space, artist studio, or production space. Ground floor activities will be restricted to uses compatible with upper floor residences.
DESIRED FORM	<b>Attachment</b> Attached or Semi-Detached	<b>Attachment</b> Semi-Detached	<b>Attachment</b> Attached or Semi-Detached	<b>Attachment</b> Attached or Semi-Detached
	<b>Lot Width</b> Narrow-to-Large	<b>Lot Width</b> Narrow-to-Medium	<b>Lot Width</b> Narrow-to-Large	<b>Lot Width</b> Narrow-to-Large
	<b>Footprint</b> Small-to-Large	<b>Footprint</b> Small-to-Large	<b>Footprint</b> Small-to-Large	<b>Footprint</b> Small-to-Large
	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> Small-to-None	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> Medium-to-Small	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> Small-to-None	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> Small-to-None
	<b>Intensity</b> Low to Medium Intensity	<b>Intensity</b> Low Intensity	<b>Intensity</b> Low to Medium Intensity	<b>Intensity</b> Medium to High Intensity
	<b>Frontages</b> Terrace, Dooryard, Shopfront	<b>Frontages</b> Porch, Stoop, Terrace, Dooryard (Entrance Every 75')	<b>Frontages</b> Terrace, Dooryard, Stoop, Lightcourt, Shopfront	<b>Frontages</b> Terrace, Dooryard, Shopfront
	<b>Ground Floor</b> Flush with Sidewalk or Slightly Elevated	<b>Ground Floor</b> Elevated	<b>Ground Floor</b> Elevated (Residential); Flush with Sidewalk (Non-Res)	<b>Ground Floor</b> Flush with Sidewalk or Slightly Elevated
USE	Light industrial including neighborhood-supporting commercial	Primarily residential	Mixed-use, non-residential ground floors at corners and along main corridors	Light industrial, including supporting mixed-use

**Table LU-2: Land Use Character Areas**

The proposed land use character areas would implement the Specific Plan land use vision. The standards above describe the intent, desired uses and building form for each area.

More Intense →

MIXED-USE, URBAN RESIDENTIAL	MIXED-USE, INSTITUTIONAL	MIXED-USE, PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR	MIXED-USE, DOWNTOWN CORE	INTENT STATEMENT
				
The “Mixed Use, Urban Residential” character area would encourage a walkable urban area of interconnected tree-lined, neighborhood streetscapes with medium-to-high intensity housing choices in small-to-large footprint buildings at or near the sidewalk, to support neighborhood-serving retail and services at some corners and along key corridors in this zone. Buildings would range from townhouses/ small apartments to mid- and high-rise apartments. Ground floors may be commercial or residential, upper floors are typically residential.	The “Institutional, Mixed Use” character area would encourage a mix of uses to complement Laney College may occur on development opportunity sites in this area. Medium- to high-intensity development is envisioned in areas leading to the Lake Merritt BART Station.	The “Pedestrian Corridor” character area would encourage a walkable urban area of interconnected, tree-lined, mixed-use city center streetscapes with high intensity housing choices in small-to-large footprint buildings with non-residential ground floors at the sidewalk, to reinforce and enhance the vibrant city core and form complete neighborhoods with locally-serving retail, artisan and arts, services, employment, entertainment, civic, and public uses. These corridors would link neighborhoods together and serve as the mobility spines of downtown.	The “Mixed Use, Downtown Core” character area would encourage a walkable urban area of interconnected, tree-lined, mixed-use city center streetscapes with the most intense mix of uses centering on commercial office uses, with some housing choices in medium-to-large footprint buildings with non-residential ground floors at the sidewalk, that provides a focal point to reinforce and enhance the vibrant, walkable city core. This area would be concentrated around BART stations in the Central Core and Lake Merritt Office districts. Buildings located here would typically be mid-rise to high-rise.	DESIRED FORM
<b>Attachment</b> Attached or Semi-Detached	<b>Attachment</b> Attached or Semi-Detached	<b>Attachment</b> Attached	<b>Attachment</b> Attached	
<b>Lot Width</b> Narrow-to-Large	<b>Lot Width</b> Narrow-to-Large	<b>Lot Width</b> Narrow-to-Large	<b>Lot Width</b> Medium-to-Block	
<b>Footprint</b> Small-to-Large	<b>Footprint</b> Small-to-Large	<b>Footprint</b> Small-to-Large	<b>Footprint</b> Medium-to-Block	
<b>Front / Side Setback</b> Small-to-None	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> Per adj. Character Area	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> None	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> None	
<b>Intensity</b> Medium to High Intensity	<b>Intensity</b> Medium to High Intensity	<b>Intensity</b> Low to High Intensity	<b>Intensity</b> Medium to High Intensity	
<b>Frontages</b> Terrace, Dooryard, Stoop, Light-court (Old Oakland), Shopfront	<b>Frontages</b> Per adj. Character Area	<b>Frontages</b> Terrace, Dooryard, Shopfront, Forecourt	<b>Frontages</b> Terrace, Dooryard, Shopfront, Forecourt	
<b>Ground Floor</b> Elevated (Residential); Flush with Sidewalk (Non-Res)	<b>Ground Floor</b> Per adj. Character Area	<b>Ground Floor</b> Flush with Sidewalk or Slightly Elevated	<b>Ground Floor</b> Flush with Sidewalk or Slightly Elevated	USE
Mixed-use, non-residential ground floors at corners and along main corridors	Primarily civic or institutional, non-residential ground floor	Mixed-use, non-residential ground floor	Mixed-use, non-residential ground floor	

#### PRIORITY OFFICE SITES

The Downtown Core area, centered around existing BART stations, provides a hub of workplaces that serves the downtown community and region. The Land Use Framework seeks to balance the need for office space (which produces jobs), with market forces for residential development.

Figure LU-10 supplements the Land Use Character Map by locating Office Priority Sites near BART stations within the Mixed-use Downtown Core Character area. Office Priority Sites include properties in the Lake Merritt Office District as well as the Central Core area. Zoning updates for these identified Workplace Opportunity Sites can require new mixed-use development that has a designated percentage of office space (see Policy LU-1.2).

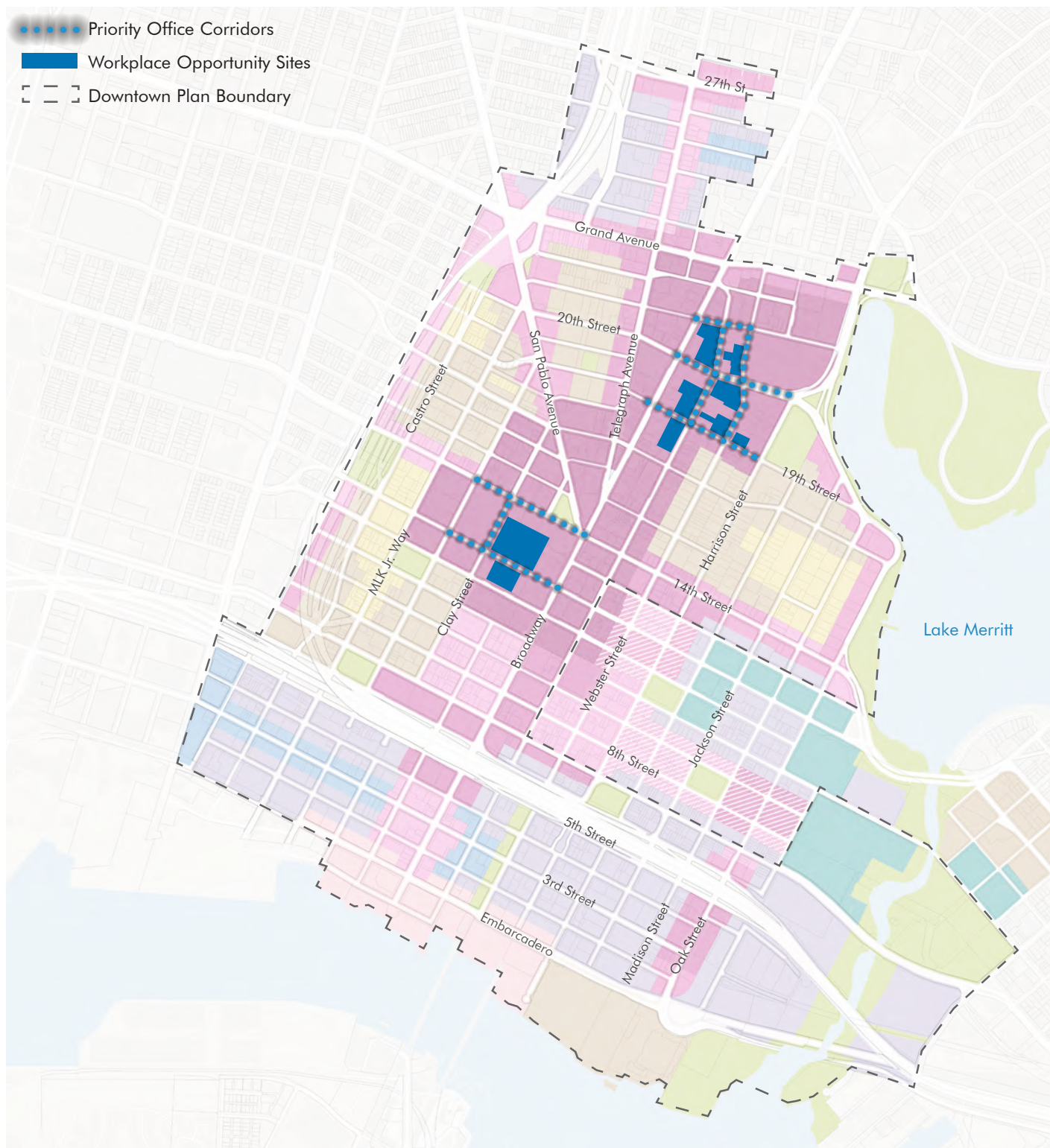


Figure LU-10: Priority Office Sites Map



# Intensity Map

The Existing Intensity Map (Figure LU-11a) identifies the current maximum height, density, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) permitted for each downtown zone, as summarized in Table LU-3. There is opportunity to permit additional density or intensity in some downtown areas to achieve Plan goals, as part of zoning updates for Jack London or through a bonus incentive program that prioritizes needed community benefits.

Opportunities for increased intensity, outlined on Figure LU-11a, include the Central Core (near transit, and where mixed-use workplace opportunity sites are present); areas of KONO that have much lower allowed height than the balance of downtown (excluding historically significant areas) and that line major corridors (Telegraph Avenue, 27th Street); the I-980 corridor; and portions of Jack London identified as transformational opportunity areas (Figure LU-4), including the Oak Street corridor and Victory Court. This map does not capture all sites where some increase in intensity could be permitted, but rather identifies areas with the most significant potential for change from existing regulations.

**Table LU-3:  
Existing Intensity Regulations**

*Existing downtown zoning districts include Central Business District (CBD), Lake Merritt Station Area Districts (LM) and Community Commercial (CC) areas*

*General Plan intensity regulations are referenced for Jack London as these have been the controlling factors most often applied for new development in this area*

	Intensity Area	Height Maximum	Density	FAR <sup>†</sup>	Max Density with State Bonus <sup>††</sup>	Max FAR with PUD Bonus <sup>†††</sup>
	CBD - 1	55'	300 SF	4.5	222.2 SF	5.625
	CBD - 2	85'	200 SF	6.0	148.1 SF	7.5
	CBD - 4	275'	90 SF	14.0	66.7 SF	17.5
	CBD - 5	400'	90 SF	17.0	66.7 SF	20.0
	CBD - 6	No Limit	90 SF	20.0	66.7 SF	20.0
	CBD - 7	No Limit	90 SF	20.0	66.7 SF	20.0
	LM - 45	45'	450 SF	2.5	333.3 SF	3.125
	LM - 85	85'	225 SF	5.0	166.7 SF	6.25
	LM - 175	175'	110 SF	8.0	81.5 SF	10.0
	LM - 275	275'	110 SF	12.0	81.5 SF	15.0
	CC - 35	35'	550 SF	2.0	407.4 SF	2.5
	CC - 45	45'	450 SF	2.5	333.3 SF	3.125
	CC - 60	60'	375 SF	3.0	277.8 SF	3.75
	CC - 75	75'	275 SF	4.0	203.7 SF	5.0
	CC - 90	90'	225 SF	4.5	166.7 SF	5.625
	PM	No Limit	NA	1.0	NA	1.25
	Industrial	No Limit	NA	2.0	NA	2.5
	OPR	No Limit	871 SF*	2.0	645.2 SF	2.5
	LI-1	No Limit	871 SF*	2.0	645.2 SF	2.5
	WMU	No Limit	653 SF*	2.0	483.7 SF	2.5
	WCR-1	No Limit	NA	3.0	NA	3.75
	RD&E-1	No Limit	NA	3.5	NA	4.375
	Business Mix	No Limit	NA	4.0	NA	5.0
	WWD	No Limit	261 SF*	5.0	193.3 SF	6.25
	MUD	No Limit	209 SF*	5.0	154.8 SF	6.25
	RD&E-2	No Limit	209 SF*	7.0	154.8 SF	8.75

\* For the sake of comparison these have been converted from Dwelling Units Per Acre (DUA) to square feet of lot area per unit using a 60% gross-to-net conversion factor (e.g. 100 DUA = 261.4 SF of lot area per unit)

<sup>†</sup> FAR does not include parking or loading areas

<sup>††</sup> Refers to the 35% max density bonus awarded to eligible residential projects that provide affordable housing, senior housing, and/or childcare facilities.

<sup>†††</sup> Refers to the 25% max FAR bonus awarded to eligible to eligible Planned Unit Development (PUD) projects in which the total land area exceeds 60,000 square feet.

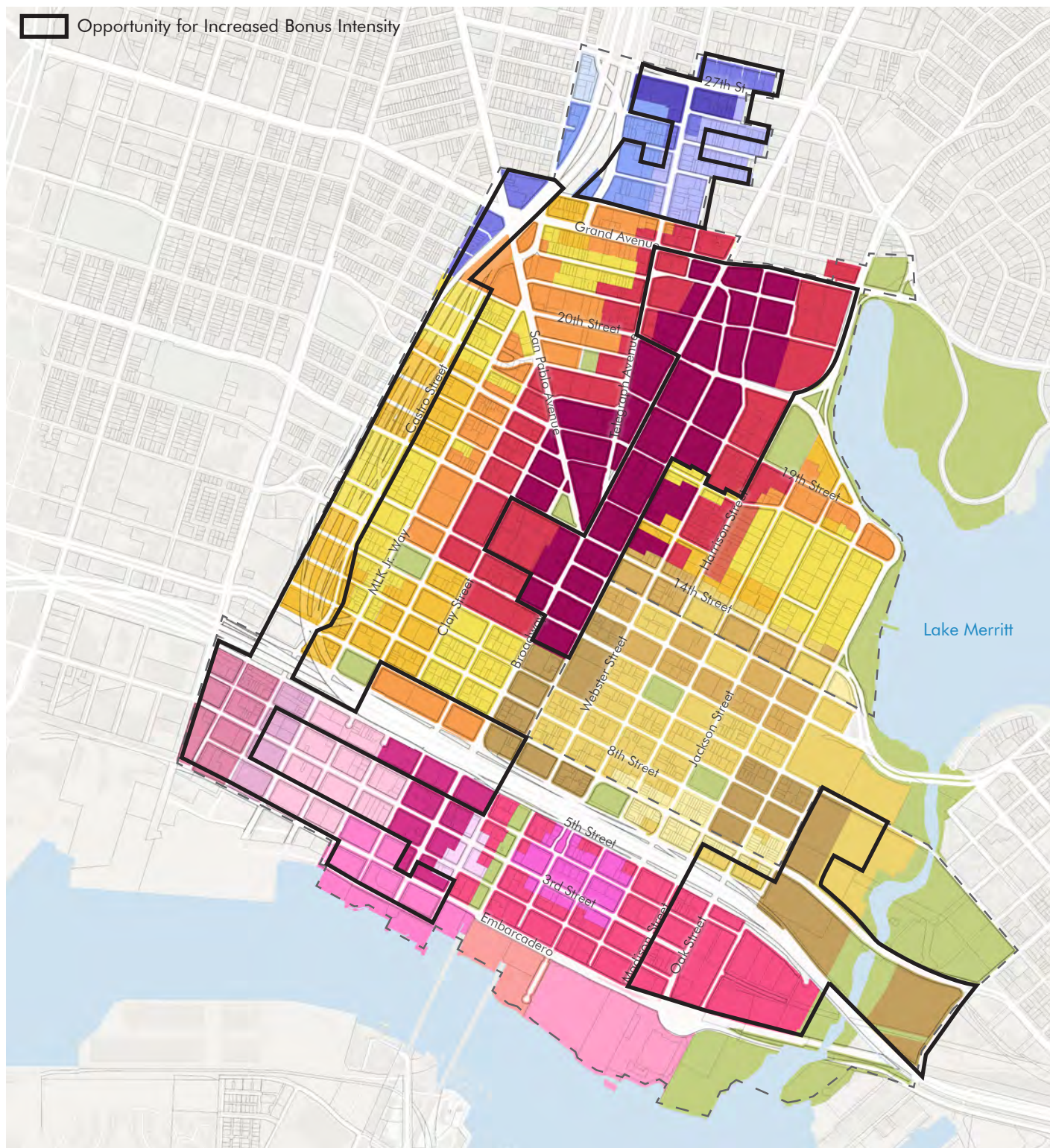
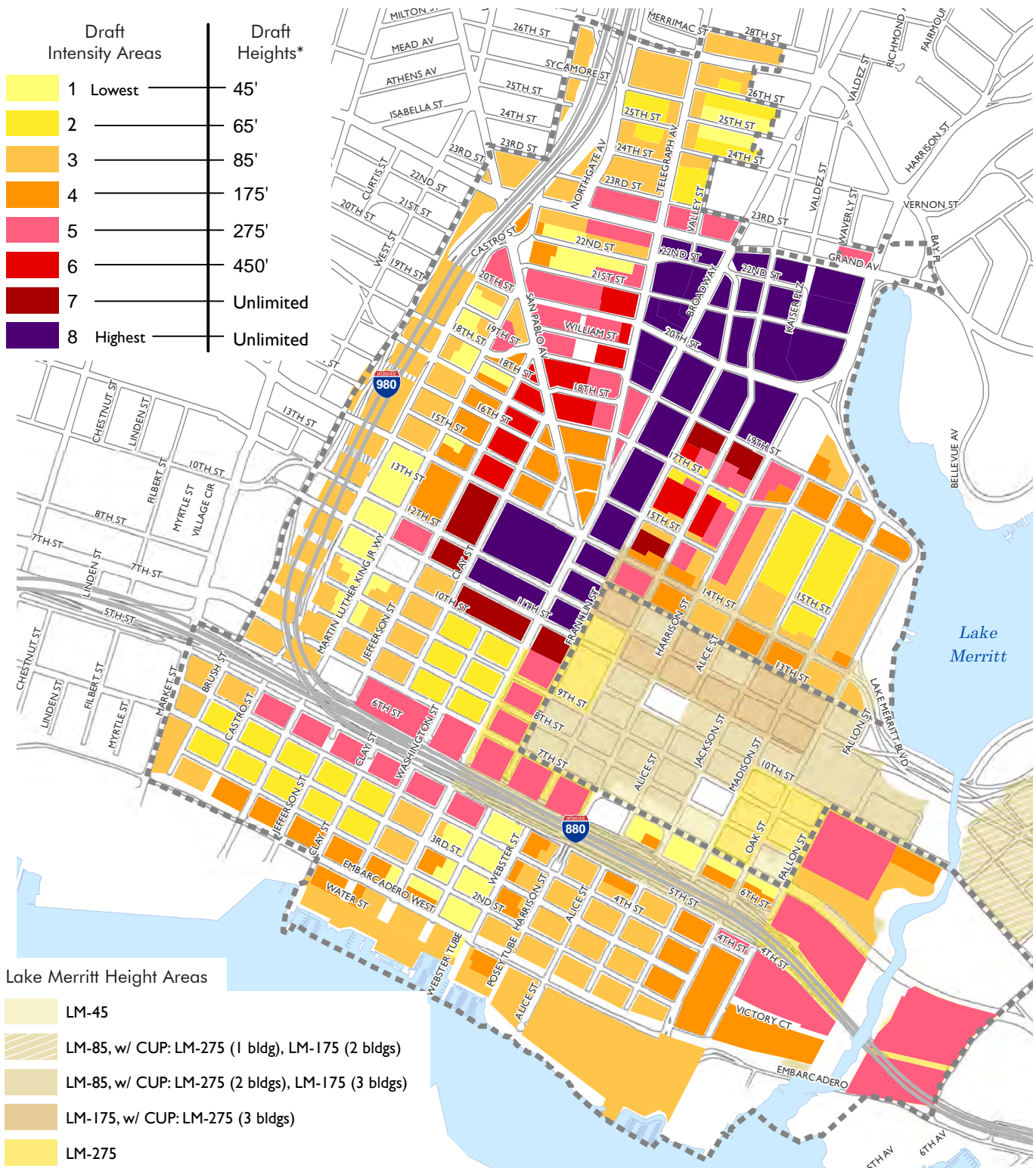


Figure LU-11a: Existing Intensity Map





**Figure LU-11b: Draft Intensity Map**

\*Draft Heights are preliminary and will be further refined based on community input. The purpose of this map is to show the proposed levels of allowed height in relation to each other, from high to low. Areas showing an increased allowed height would only be allowed as a bonus as part of the proposed Incentive Program.

Figure LU-11b illustrates the proposed intensity map with a potential range of the scale of future building heights and intensities in the downtown. As the Preliminary Draft Plan is refined and implementation strategies detailed, this map will be refined, and specific recommendations for future building form throughout downtown will be included.

### **UNLOCKING MORE BONUS DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL IN EXCHANGE FOR NEEDED COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

Unlike the Central Business District (CBD), Lake Merritt Station Area (LM), and Community Commercial (CC) Zones downtown, zoning for Jack London district has not been updated recently and is inconsistent with the General Plan. New development proposals in the district typically utilize the form standards of the General Plan. Since density in the General Plan is set in Dwelling Units per Acre (DUA), it is difficult to compare development potential to other downtown lots where density is regulated by square feet of lot area per unit. A 60% gross-to-net conversion factor is applied in Table LU-3.

As the Specific Plan is finalized, new regulations can be introduced that more closely align with community priorities. Zoning standards for the Jack London district can be updated to reflect the vision, character and intensity prescribed by the Land Use Character Map. A carefully calibrated bonus incentive program can be created that can apply to mixed-use projects of any size, with clearly identified benefits to be provided in exchange for increases in intensity. The increased intensity allowed can be in the form of increased height, Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits, or increased density provisions (to encourage micro-units and other affordable-by-design residential unit types).

The updated regulations may also include an increase in the FAR permitted under the General Plan, particularly for a portion of the downtown core where the greatest intensity is desired, to be consistent with the proposed new bonus provisions. Increasing the maximum FAR in select locations will not only capture value and contribute to community benefits, but it can also add intensity to the downtown core without requiring lot aggregation, which often results in overly large building footprints and bulky podiums. Increasing FAR would also make it possible to develop iconic skyscrapers in key locations, such as near the 12th Street and 19th Street BART Stations.

# DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

*The Development Program for the Downtown Plan is a numerical estimate of potential future development based on the land use and intensity recommendations presented in this chapter, as well as on economic and market realities. This section seeks to quantify the level of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional growth that can be accommodated downtown over the next 20-30 years.*

## *Notable Considerations That Informed Future Development Models:*

1. *Focusing additional height & intensity in the Central Core and Lake Merritt Office District*
2. *Unlocking potential in Jack London and along I-880 and I-980*
3. *Stepping down building footprints and heights adjacent to historic areas*
4. *Maintaining a balance of building types, from iconic skyscrapers down to four-story townhomes, and everything in between*

## CALCULATING DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

As is shown in Figure LU-3, several opportunity sites were identified to accommodate potential future development and redevelopment downtown. New development that is consistent with existing building trends, and that follows definitions and standards set in the Land Use Character and Bonus Intensity Maps was then modeled for each opportunity site. Residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional square footage and employment were calculated using the gross square footage extracted from these models and the assumptions outlined below.

The Downtown Plan development program does not dictate where future development will go or what it will look like; rather, it presents an overall numeric build-out concept that will be studied in the Plan's Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for potential impacts. Sites not identified as "opportunity sites" may redevelop, and vice versa. The EIR prepared for the Plan will mitigate future environmental studies for development projects in compliance with the Plan, thus streamlining future development. That is how the Specific Plan facilitates development, in addition to the regulatory changes that are made to achieve the desired future neighborhood character.

**Table LU-4: Development Program Calculation Assumptions**

	Gross to Net Area Factor	Avg. Unit Size	People	Parking
Residents	80%	750 SF	1.7 Residents/Unit	0.25 Space/Unit
Office	75%	N/A	200 SF/Employee	2,000 SF/Space
Retail/Neighborhood Serving Commercial	75%	N/A	900 SF/Employee	2,000 SF/Space
Flex Commercial	80%	N/A	1,200 SF/Employee	3,000 SF/Space
Flex Industrial	90%	N/A	1,500 SF/Employee	4,000 SF/Space
General Industrial	90%	N/A	1,500 SF/Employee	4,000 SF/Space
Institutional (SF)	75%	N/A	250 SF/Employee	2,000 SF/Space

**Table LU-4: Downtown Future Development by Land Use**

	Approved/Under-Construction (Through 2020)	DOSP Future Development (Through 2040)	TOTAL
Residential (Units)	10,502	29,077	39,579
Total Commercial (SF)	6,468,219	17,235,531	23,703,750
Office	5,835,760	13,846,918	19,682,678
Retail/Neighborhood Serving Commercial	632,459	2,448,503	3,080,962
Flex Commercial	-	940,110	940,110
Flex Industrial (SF)	-	184,308	184,308
Institutional (SF)	-	1,298,043	1,298,043
Parking (Spaces)	N/A	14,062	14,062

**Table LU-5: Downtown Future Residents & Employees by Land Use**

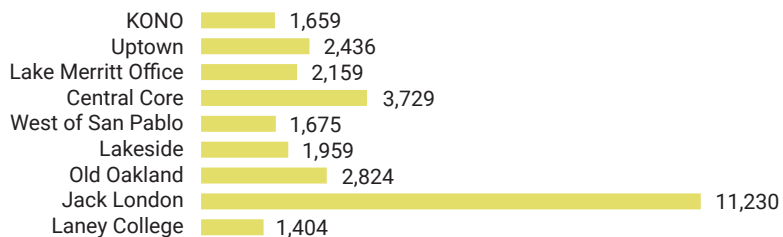
	Approved/Under-Construction (Through 2020)	DOSP Future Development (Through 2040)	TOTAL
Residents	15,753	49,431	65,184
Total Employees	22,411	58,598	81,009
Office	21,884	51,926	73,810
Retail/Neighborhood Serving Commercial	527	2,040	2,567
Flex Commercial	-	627	627
Flex Industrial	-	111	111
Institutional (SF)	-	3,894	3,894



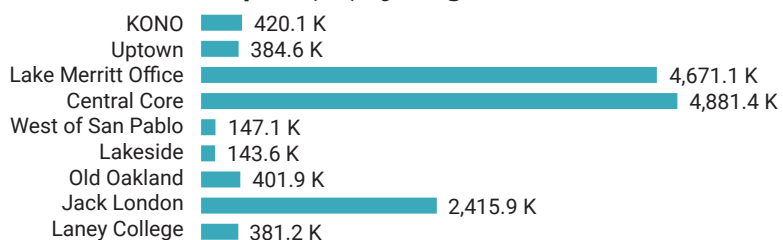
Figure LU-12: Aerial Looking South of Potential Future Development by Land Use



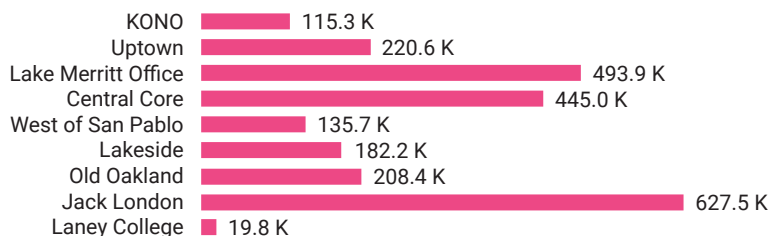
#### DOSP Future Residential Units by Neighborhood



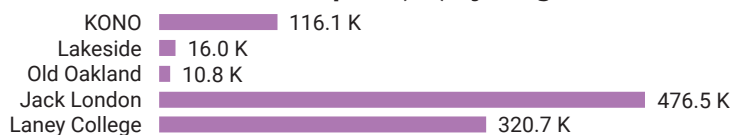
#### DOSP Future Office Space (SF) by Neighborhood



#### DOSP Future Retail/N'hood Commercial (SF) by Neighborhood



#### DOSP Future Flex Commercial Space (SF) by Neighborhood



#### DOSP Future Flex Industrial Space (SF) by Neighborhood



#### DOSP Future Institutional Space (SF) by Neighborhood



# Supportive Plan Policies

*One of the primary Plan objectives is to improve the built environment to meet the community's social and physical goals. The following supportive policies guide new development and preservation to achieve the urban form that supports Plan goals for economic opportunity, housing, mobility, arts and culture, safety, livability and sustainability.*

## OUTCOME LU-1

*Development and design serve Oakland's diverse needs, contribute to improved conditions for all, and enhance downtown's authentic, creative, and dynamic local character.*

**LU-1.1** **Revise zoning and subdivision regulations within the Downtown Plan area to reflect community goals and feasible development potential. This new zoning framework should address the need for a clear development hierarchy, improved public space standards, expanded frontage requirements and principles, building-form criteria, rational lot requirements, and a streamlined development process to ensure flexibility and predictability for developers and the community.**

The Land Use Character Map, supplemental Intensity Map, and Office Priority Sites Map establish a clear development hierarchy for downtown, depicting nodes and corridors of activity and intensity, as well as transitions to areas of preservation and less intensity. New development downtown should be consistent with the overall community vision established by this Plan. The following sub-actions should be considered when updating the code for downtown.

**LU-1.1.1** **Rationalize lot requirements and relate height and bulk of buildings to the envisioned urban form.**

The qualitative information provided in Table LU-1 can guide implementation of the envisioned environments of each Character Area through physical character and form, intensity of development, type of place, and mix of uses in that environment. This direction can then be carried into the preparation of zoning and subdivision standards for day-to-day implementation. Of particular importance is establishing built form and lot standards

for each Character Area, including, but not limited to:

- Maximum and minimum lot width and depth
- Maximum building footprint
- Front and side building setbacks (base and tower)
- Minimum and maximum building heights

**LU-1.1.2 Revised zoning regulations should include standards for open space and thoroughfare design, and be calibrated to include a range of frontage types appropriate to each Character Area.**

The public realm policies described in the Community Health chapter of this Plan should be incorporated into future zoning revisions, including provisions for active and transparent building facades, standards for Primary and Secondary Pedestrian Streets, requirements for new public open spaces, and enhanced streetscape design (See Outcome CH-1). Building design requirements should elevate shopfronts to industry standards and further enrich downtown's frontage palette with standards for porch, stoop, terrace, flex, lightwell, forecourt, gallery, and arcade types.

**LU-1.1.3 Use zoning changes and economic development incentives to make the iconic and historic waterfront a regional and local amenity with dining, living, entertainment, and civic uses.**

The zoning for the Jack London area dates to the 1960s; it was not updated as part of recent (2009 and 2011) citywide zoning updates, and is inconsistent with the General Plan. Updates associated with implementation of the Downtown Plan can make the zoning for the Mixed-use Waterfront/Entertainment character area consistent with the community vision to create an iconic waterfront that is a regional and local amenity, with dining, living, entertainment, and civic uses.

**LU-1.1.4 In order to offer a streamlined development process for developers and the community, zoning and subdivision amendments should provide flexibility and predictability.**

This can be handled in essentially two ways:

- Use the zoning system being employed today and modify the regulations as well as design guidelines through amendments and overlays; or
- Use a form-based system to simplify the various layers of current regulations by locating all requirements pertaining to envisioned built form in one intuitive location.

**LU-1.2 Designate ‘Office Priority Sites’ in key areas of City Center and the Lake Merritt Office District, which require a certain percentage of gross floor area to be dedicated to commercial office space.**

Given Downtown Oakland’s competitive advantages for employment in office-based sectors, maintaining the availability of office space will be critical. To address this need, development on “Office Priority Sites” will be required to dedicate a percentage of total gross floor area to commercial office space, as described in Figure LU-10. While downtown has a significant amount of developable land, there are a limited number of prime sites for office development, which must be appropriately-sized (large enough floorplate), and preferably located near BART stations and proximate to existing office concentrations at City Center and the Lake Merritt Office District. Estimates of Downtown Oakland’s potential capture of additional office space demand over the next 25 years vary from 6 million to 10.5 million square feet of space, and significantly more over additional time.<sup>3</sup> Despite this demand, prime office sites could potentially be lost in the near future to development for residential uses, which is currently more lucrative. Accommodating demand for additional office development could also potentially moderate price increases at relatively affordable Class B and Class C office buildings for businesses and nonprofit organizations that cannot afford higher rents.

**LU-1.3 Create and adopt a streamlined development incentive program for downtown that works seamlessly with updated zoning regulations and addresses the community’s most pressing needs.**

Ensuring that the community benefits from new development projects is an important aspect of the Specific Plan. Today, increasing demand by the public for community benefit agreements (CBAs) often results in drawn-out negotiations that slow down project approvals and do not always focus on the overall community’s most urgent needs. Critical to this strategy is a program that establishes a finite number of consistent, pre-defined project requirements based on Plan goals. Finalizing a development incentive program and its menu of pre-defined benefits will be done in partnership with the community. But based on feedback collected during the Specific Plan process, the following benefits are preliminarily identified as priorities (Chapter 2, Housing and Affordability, contains a complementary but separate Affordable housing strategy):

<sup>3</sup> Estimates of potential office space demand ranges come from a nearly 6 million square foot estimate produced by Strategic Economics for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission in 2015, and a range of 7.5 million to 10.5 million square feet produced by Hausrath Economics Group for the Oakland Chamber of Commerce in 2018.

Neighborhood	Draft Options for Priority Benefits
KONO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Arts &amp; PDR Space</li> <li>Parks &amp; Open Spaces</li> </ul>
Uptown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Commercial (including community-serving nonprofit) / Neighborhood Retail</li> </ul>
Lake Merritt Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks &amp; Open Space</li> </ul>
Lakeside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks &amp; Open Spaces</li> </ul>
Central Core (Including BAMBD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Commercial / Neighborhood Retail</li> <li>Affordable Arts &amp; PDR Space</li> </ul>
West of San Pablo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks &amp; Open Space</li> </ul>
Old Oakland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Commercial / Neighborhood Retail</li> </ul>
Jack London:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Arts &amp; PDR Space</li> <li>Parks &amp; Open Space*</li> </ul>
* Larger developments, including potential projects in Victory Court, will likely need to provide a greater array of community benefits, in particular public open space.	

*Although affordable housing is clearly a critical community benefit, this incentive program is intended to address community desired benefits over and above affordable housing. To address affordable housing, the City has an existing density bonus incentive program and affordable housing impact fee, and the Preliminary Draft Plan also proposes several affordable housing-related policies as part of Outcome H-1 (page 137).*

#### LU-1.4 Encourage incremental development to fill in gaps in the existing urban fabric, while also identifying opportunities for larger and more transformative developments.

Vacant, underutilized, and surface parking lots could accommodate much needed residential, entertainment, retail, arts, and office uses. While incremental infill is a key strategy to accommodate growth gradually and with softer impacts on the surrounding neighborhood character, identifying opportunities for larger and more transformative developments is also important.

A first step to achieve this goal would be to conduct a comprehensive inventory of downtown's vacant, empty, or underutilized parcels. A preliminary identification of Opportunity Sites, which include downtown's vacant, empty, and underutilized parcels can be found in Figure LU-3. Identified underutilized sites met one or more of the following criteria:

- **Land/Improvement Ratio  $\leq$  0.25** (this ratio is the value of improvements divided by the total value of the property)
- **Redevelopable existing uses** (i.e. parking, vacant, warehouse, auto-related, one-story retail)
- **Minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet**

As a next step the City can conduct a more comprehensive inventory analysis that consolidates parcel data including ownership, tax assessment, potential site contamination and remediation costs, and any pending legal matters.

## OUTCOME LU-2

*Oakland's extensive array of historic buildings, cultural enclaves, civic institutions and landmarks are preserved and fortified within downtown's built environment.*

### Additional Tools to Aid in the Preservation of Historic Buildings

1. Rehabilitation Tax Credits for National Register-status historic buildings
2. Conservation/Facade Easements, which offer income tax deduction for the donation of a specific part of a National Register historic building
3. Mills Act, which can provide tax relief in exchange for the continued preservation and restoration of historic properties
4. Additional funding sources could be identified for seismic retrofit and other building rehab costs

*Continued use of downtown's impressive collection of historic structures provides an ongoing resource for housing, jobs and civic spaces, and maintains the materials, energy and artistry embodied in the buildings. Realizing a built environment that preserves community character and culture while also meeting community needs for housing, employment and mobility is a primary emphasis of this Plan.*

**LU-2.1 Draft and adopt an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance that facilitates the reuse of older and underutilized buildings by relaxing typical building and zoning requirements and by providing flexibility in the approval and permitting process when buildings are converted to new uses.**

An adaptive reuse ordinance ensures that older and historic buildings are not subjected to the same zoning and code requirements that apply to new construction. In peer cities where they have been implemented, the result has been the creation of many new housing units and a powerful engine for economic revitalization. The following incentives could be included:

- **Mezzanines:** New construction to create mezzanine level space in an existing story is permitted. The floor area of the new mezzanine level may not exceed 33% of the floor area of the room or space below.
- **Loading space:** If one does not exist, then it is not required to be added.

To mitigate the potential for gentrification that adaptive reuse projects may cause, an additional incentive may be included:

- **Intensity:** In exchange for providing a specified amount of affordable rental units or affordable commercial/retail spaces, the project may waive all underlying intensity restrictions, including density and FAR. Note that Investment Tax Credits for Low-Income Housing also may be applied to historic structures.

### **LU-2.2 Study and develop an updated Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program that will assist in overall preservation efforts downtown.**

When downtown was re-zoned in 2008, the mechanism that had been in place to allow transfers of density between abutting properties was eliminated. It is likely that interest in the previous TDR ordinance was limited by the slow real estate market and restrictions on the location of receiving sites.

Now that development opportunities and pressures are increased, the City could consider re-introducing a Transfer of Development Rights program for downtown. The program could incentivize smaller-scale building owners and developers to preserve existing historic buildings and build new context-sensitive projects in historic areas by selling unused development potential to developers in areas of downtown where the desire for higher intensity has been identified. Sending and receiving sites should coordinate with the proposed Character Map (Figure LU-9) and Intensity Map (Figure LU-10) described in the beginning of this Chapter. However, because of the generous zoning allowances that already exist for most areas downtown, there are only limited areas where a Transfer of Development Rights program might be effective. In fact, most of the same areas that would be candidates for a TDR program are also being considered for the development incentive program mentioned earlier in Policy LU-1.3, which lists other community benefit goals than historic preservation. Therefore, a discussion is needed to determine the priority of community needs, and based on that direction, the most appropriate incentive program for further development.

### **LU-2.3 Establish a Cultural Districts Program and use the zoning regulations developed in support of such a program to both require and incentivize specific uses identified by the community as priorities in those areas.**

A process for establishing new cultural districts should be developed that prioritizes areas with unique cultural heritage. A new cultural districts program would formalize a collaborative partnership between the City and communities and, ideally, identify resources to stabilize vulnerable communities and to preserve, strengthen, and promote the city's cultural assets and diverse communities. The program should also seek to identify appropriate City departments to become partners in the districts' establishment and implementation. (See Policy C-1.1)

Cultural District candidates discussed as part of this planning process include:

- 14th Street Black Arts Movement and Business District (adopted by Oakland City Council in 2016)
- Chinatown Cultural Heritage District
- Art & Garage District in KONO
- Jack London Maker District

# **07: Implementation & Ongoing Engagement**

Example: Convert some existing one-way streets to two-way streets to improve access to Chinatown and other downtown neighborhoods.

**BROADWAY & 880**

Other Ideas:

Most at least to address physical barriers along Broadway

Reduce 1000 barrier

Re-write West Oakland and Jack London with the Downtown area defined by 880, 980, and 1080

**ENHANCED BROADWAY MAIN ST TRANSIT/MOBILITY**

**UNDERGROUND 880**  
from Laney to Brush St

helps lessen feel of "island" in DT

Oak - Alameda gap already looking @ this

**SHARED MOBILITY IS EQUITABLE**

**SAFETY**

Make street safer, comfortable for bikes and pods, including at night

**CONNECT 1-WAYS TO 2-WAYS**

and increase peds/bikes/transit

**WIDER SIDEWALKS**

**TEAR DOWN 980 FROM 2TH ST ONWARD**  
to make promenade

Change all one ways with 3 or more lanes to 2 way with bike lanes

Remove all thru fares for roads with more than 2 lanes in low volume areas

**ROAD DIETS & BETTER CHANNELLING TRAFFIC**

**Parallel BART/2nd BART**

Line that connects to the regions - loops on microtransit

**2ND CENTRAL BART LINE**  
FRANKLIN ST

**TRANSIT**

**OTHER STRATEGIES**

**Underground 980**  
AT LOW VOLUME INTERSECTIONS Program signals flashing red during non-peak hours

Bridge ED strategies with streets mobility to provide more opportunities

**9th Ave to 14th St**  
**14th St to 19th St**

PREPARE for autonomous self-driving vehicles

# IMPLEMENTATION

## EFFICIENT

# 07

In order for the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan streetscape, transportation, development and infrastructure improvements to realize significant equity outcomes as well as accomplish its range of objectives, ongoing oversight and accountability mechanisms need to be established. The outcomes and strategies presented in this chapter address these issues.

While a complete implementation chapter will be developed as part of the Draft Plan, this work-in-progress version addresses key community feedback related to accountability. Implementation details related to infrastructure improvements, specific policy recommendations, including capacity analysis and feasibility, and other topics will be provided as part of the Specific Plan.

# CHAPTER 07:

## Implementation & Ongoing Engagement

### Goal 07

*The City and Oakland community work together to implement and realize the Downtown Plan's many goals, outcomes, and supportive policies.*

### Outcome I-1

*Residents and stakeholders are included in the ongoing decision-making and implementation of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan, and, with the City, are accountable for current initiatives and for the successful adaptation of the Specific Plan over time as conditions change.*

# Summary of Existing Conditions

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## Leveraging Assets

Residents have been integral to the development of the Downtown Specific Plan to date, with hundreds of participants in community outreach activities ranging from a multi-day open house and large public workshops to online surveys and dozens of small stakeholder focus group meetings and interviews. The additional outreach conducted in Phase II of the Specific Plan process broadened the membership of the Community Advisory Group and targeted underrepresented communities – particularly African-American, Latinx and disabled residents, and community leaders representing East and West Oakland. This approach for engagement can continue to provide a representative base of community involvement into the future. Additionally, the City's new Department of Race and Equity is a resource that the supported the Planning Bureau during the Specific Plan process, and that will continue to be available to help the Planning Bureau adapt its processes to center equity in the implementation process.

## Addressing Barriers & Disparities

Many community members expressed skepticism during the planning process in the City's ability to follow through on Plan implementation or to maintain a focus on racial equity as the Plan is implemented. In order to address these concerns, the City could look toward the creation of a dedicated ongoing structure for interdepartmental coordination and staffing for implementing specific plans, which can lead to proactive implementation of previous plans. Creating an interdepartmental coordination forum for Plan implementation will require buy-in from City administration and officials.

Developing an ongoing implementation body that has broad community participation and can develop the tools and partnerships needed to implement this and other specific plans will require inter-agency partnership, buy-in from City officials, and targeted attention to ensure that Oakland's most vulnerable communities are well-represented.

# Measures of Success

*The measures below will help gauge the effectiveness of the Downtown Specific Plan at achieving its intended outcomes for Goal 07.*

- On-schedule implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan with measurable accomplishments
- Ongoing advisory body represents all communities in Oakland, including low-income residents, people of color, people with disabilities, and neighborhoods across the city

# Supportive Plan Policies

## Recommended Regulatory / Policy Action

- I-1.1** Develop a citywide Specific Plan Implementation Committee with an inclusive constituency of underrepresented populations, including African American, Asian, Latinx, LGBTQ, unsheltered, Indigenous populations and people with disabilities, business, and institutional presence.

Successful implementation of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan (DOSP) will require ongoing community participation. The DOSP is one of several specific plans the City has adopted, so an approach to ongoing engagement that addresses implementation of these plans is needed to ensure equitable attention to the different plan areas. One option being considered is a Specific Plan Implementation Committee that addresses all the specific plans that can advise the Planning Bureau on community priorities, develop partnerships for implementation, maintain ongoing communication about plan progress, and respond to changes in conditions. Participants would represent Oakland's diverse communities, partner agencies, community organizations and City departments, and include representatives from areas that have not yet adopted specific plans.

The Planning Bureau is continuing to explore options related to specific plan implementation and will bring back additional proposals in the draft specific plan.

- I-1.2** Continue regular meetings of the DOSP Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee to coordinate implementation between departments.
- I-1.3** Dedicate resources to and develop a structure for ongoing implementation of specific plans, including policy projects, ongoing coordination between departments, and organization of the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee and Specific Plan Implementation Committee.

### OUTCOME I-1

*Residents and stakeholders are included in the ongoing decision-making and implementation of the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan, and, with the City, are accountable for current initiatives and for the successful adaptation of the Specific Plan over time as conditions change.*

- I-1.4** With the participation of a Specific Plan Implementation Committee, review the Downtown Oakland Specific Plan every year to report on progress, evaluate whether the strategies are achieving the desired equity and other outcomes, evaluate whether strategies are still appropriate, and update as needed.
- I-1.5** Conduct annual racial equity impact assessments of Plan actions as they are developed after adoption to ensure that investments, programs and policies narrow disparities and do not have unintended negative consequences on vulnerable populations.



# a

*Appendix A includes the Improvement Project Lists referenced for Mobility (Chapter 3) and Community Health (Chapter 5).*

Table M-1: Pedestrian Safety Project List .....	p A.2
Table M-2: Connectivity & Access Project List .....	p A.10
Table M-3: Freeway Crossing Project List .....	p A.14
Table M-4: Bicycle Project List .....	p A.16
Table M-5: Transit Project List .....	p A.22
Table M-6: One-Way to Two-Way Conversions .....	p A.24
Table CH-1: Streetscape Project List .....	p A.26

**Table M-1: Pedestrian Safety Project List**

CORRIDORS AND INTERSECTIONS: SOUTH TO NORTH			
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Project Improvement Type
7th St	Washington St	7th St Bridge	Corridor
7th St	Harrison St	N/A	Intersection
8th St	Franklin St	N/A	Intersection
8th St	Webster St	N/A	Intersection
8th St	Harrison St	N/A	Intersection
8th St	Jackson St	N/A	Intersection
8th St	Madison St	N/A	Intersection
8th St	Oak St	N/A	Intersection

	Description	
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install pedestrian countdown timers at each crossing</li> <li>• Install pedestrian activation buttons at each crossing</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) at each crossing</li> <li>• Integrate protected northbound right turn phase</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Convert permissive phase to protected phase</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement road diet to manage vehicle speeds and shorten crossing distance</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20 feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement road diet to manage vehicle speeds and shorten crossing distance</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Convert permissive phase to protected phase</li> <li>• At each intersection, restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install curb extensions on each corner</li> <li>• Implement road diet to manage vehicle speeds and shorten crossing distance</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Convert permissive phase to protected phase</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement road diet to manage vehicle speeds and shorten crossing distance</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Convert permissive phase to protected phase</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement road diet to manage vehicle speeds and shorten crossing distance</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement road diet to manage vehicle speeds and shorten crossing distance</li> </ul>

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Table M-1: Pedestrian Safety Project List (continued)

Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Project Improvement Type
8th St	Fallon St	N/A	Intersection
9th St	Franklin St	N/A	Intersection
9th St	Webster St	N/A	Intersection
9th St	Harrison St	N/A	Intersection
9th St	Alice St	N/A	Intersection
CORRIDORS AND INTERSECTIONS: WEST TO EAST			
Brush St	12th St	14th St	Corridor

Description		
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add a high visibility crosswalk on the north leg and re-stripe marked crosswalk with high visibility markings</li> <li>• Install advanced yield signage at each crossing</li> <li>• At each intersection, restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install curb extensions on each corner</li> <li>• Implement road diet to manage vehicle speeds and shorten crossing distance</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Implement near-term road diet with signing and pavement markings only; consider moving on-street parking away from curb to create separated bike facility</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert near-term road diet to more permanent installation by providing hardscape sidewalk improvements</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Implement near-term road diet with signing and pavement markings only; consider moving on-street parking away from curb to create separated bike facility</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert near-term road diet to more permanent installation by providing hardscape sidewalk improvements</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Implement near-term road diet with signing and pavement markings only; consider moving on-street parking away from curb to create separated bike facility</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert near-term road diet to more permanent installation by providing hardscape sidewalk improvements</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install advanced yield signage at marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of the intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Implement near-term road diet with signing and pavement markings only; consider moving on-street parking away from curb to create separated bike facility</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install rectangular rapid flashing beacons on each crossing</li> <li>• Convert near-term road diet to more permanent installation by providing hardscape sidewalk improvements</li> </ul>
	<p>Short-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At signalized intersections, re-stripe marked crosswalks for general maintenance</li> <li>• At each intersection, restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb along Brush Street</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement road diet along Brush Street; would need to extend beyond the limits of 12th and 14th Streets</li> </ul>

(continued next page)

Table M-1: Pedestrian Safety Project List (continued)

Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Project Improvement Type
Brush St	12th St	N/A	Intersection
Telegraph Ave	Broadway	William St	Corridor
Telegraph Ave	William St	27th St	Corridor
Broadway	9th St	11th St	Corridor
Broadway	9th St	N/A	Intersection
Broadway	10th St	N/A	Intersection
Broadway	11th St	N/A	Intersection
Broadway	11th St	16th St	Corridor
Broadway	16th St	19th St	Corridor
Broadway	16th St	N/A	Intersection

Description	
<p>Short-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add "Pedestrian Crossing Prohibited" (R49) signage at the north side of Brush Street</li> <li>• Re-stripe marked crosswalks for general maintenance</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Restrict on-street parking within 20-feet of intersection and marked crosswalks</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install curb extensions on each corner</li> </ul>
Incorporate streetscape improvements	
Incorporate streetscape improvements	
<p>Short-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate streetscape improvements such as street furniture and street trees.</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement road diet on low volume cross streets to shorten pedestrian crossing distances</li> </ul>
<p>Short-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert intersection to fixed pedestrian recall</li> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust signal timing to separate turning movements from pedestrian crossing phase "</li> </ul>
<p>Short-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert intersection to fixed pedestrian recall</li> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust signal timing to separate turning movements from pedestrian crossing phase "</li> </ul>
<p>Short-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert intersection to fixed pedestrian recall</li> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust signal timing to separate turning movements from pedestrian crossing phase</li> <li>• Extend median to provide refuge island on the south side of the Broadway and 11th Street intersection</li> </ul>
<p>Short-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate streetscape improvements such as street furniture and street trees.</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement road diet on low volume cross streets to shorten pedestrian crossing distances</li> </ul>
<p>Short-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert the intersection to fixed pedestrian recall</li> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul>	<p>Long-term improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust signal timing to separate turning movements from pedestrian crossing phase</li> </ul>

(continued next page)

Table M-1: Pedestrian Safety Project List (continued)

Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Project Improvement Type
Broadway	17th St	N/A	Intersection
Broadway	18th St	N/A	Intersection
Broadway	19th St	N/A	Intersection
Broadway	27th St	N/A	Intersection

	Description
	<div> <div> Short-term improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert the intersection to fixed pedestrian recall</li> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul> </div> <div> Long-term improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust signal timing to separate turning movements from pedestrian crossing phase</li> </ul> </div> </div>
	<div> <div> Short-term improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert the intersection to fixed pedestrian recall</li> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul> </div> <div> Long-term improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust signal timing to separate turning movements from pedestrian crossing phase</li> </ul> </div> </div>
	<div> <div> Short-term improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert the intersection to fixed pedestrian recall</li> <li>• Set pedestrian countdown timers within the CA MUTCD recommended time of 3.5 feet per second</li> <li>• Shorten signal cycle length</li> <li>• Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)</li> <li>• Implement pedestrian safety zones extending from the curb</li> <li>• Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals</li> </ul> </div> <div> Long-term improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust signal timing to separate turning movements from pedestrian crossing phase "</li> </ul> </div> </div>

**Table M-2: Connectivity and Access Improvement Project List**

CORRIDORS AND INTERSECTIONS: SOUTH TO NORTH			
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Project Improvement Type
Jack London District	Chinatown	N/A	Corridor
Embarcadero West	Clay Street	Market St	Corridor
Embarcadero West	Oak St	N/A	Intersection
Embarcadero West	Oak St	Market St	Corridor
Water St	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Clay St	Corridor
Oak St	2nd St	N/A	Intersection
2nd St	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Jefferson St	Sidewalk Gap Closure
3rd St	Brush St	Clay St	Corridor
3rd St	Webster St	Posey Tube	Sidewalk Gap Closure
3rd St	Oak St	Near the channel	Corridor
4th St	Jackson St	Madison St	Sidewalk Gap Closure
6th St	Franklin St	Webster St	Sidewalk Gap Closure
7th St	Brush St	N/A	Intersection
7th St	Alice St	N/A	Intersection
7th St	Jackson St	N/A	Intersection
7th St	Fallon St	N/A	Intersection
7th St	Laney College entrance	N/A	Intersection
8th St	Broadway	Fallon St	Corridor
9th St	Broadway	Fallon St	Corridor
10th St	Webster St	N/A	Intersection
10th St	Fallon St	N/A	Intersection
10th St	Kaiser Auditorium entrances (two)	N/A	Intersection
10th St	Kaiser Auditorium entrances (two)	N/A	Intersection
11th St	Alice St	N/A	Intersection
17th St	Broadway	Harrison St	Corridor
19th St	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Castro	Sidewalk Gap Closure

Description	
	Connect the Lake Merritt BART Station and Chinatown to the Jack London District. Install distinctive lighting; enhance pedestrian crossings; encourage active uses; and install attractive parking area screen walls if parking remains in place (on map, Oak St from 8th to 4th St)
	Continue pedestrian, bicycle, and public realm improvements from the Jack London Waterfront to serve the proposed A's stadium
	Realign Embarcadero West through Port-owned parking lot. Install directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals.
	Rail Safety Project on Embarcadero West from Oak St to Market St. Project to facilitate an application for a "Quiet Zone" and provide pedestrian safety improvements, including quad gates at each crossing and fencing on both sides of the railroad tracks between each intersection. Embarcadero West would become a pedestrian corridor through much of its length except where property access is needed.
	Intersection improvements needed for pedestrians and bicyclists, such as installing/repainting the crosswalks, improving/constructing refuge medians, installing directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals. Complete sidewalk gap on west side of street
	Complete sidewalk gap on south side of street
	Complete sidewalk gap along corridor
	Complete sidewalk gap on south side of street
	Connect Oak Street to Victory Court; will require additional study and coordination with property owners
	Complete sidewalk gap on north side of street
	Complete sidewalk gap on south side of street
	Safety improvements needed for pedestrians and bicyclists, such as repainting the crosswalks, installing directional curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals, and constructing refuge medians.
	Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, and accessible flashing pedestrian signals
	Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, and accessible flashing pedestrian signals
	Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals, lane changes, or sidewalk widening
	Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, and accessible pedestrian signals
	Implement streetscape amenities, lighting, street crossing improvements, and other traffic calming measures. Extend Chinatown's character east along 8th and 9th Streets to Lake Merritt BART and Laney College. Establish an active, pedestrian-oriented, well-lit connection between Chinatown and the Lake Merritt BART Station/Laney College.
	Implement streetscape amenities, lighting, street crossing improvements, and other traffic calming measures. Extend Chinatown's character east along 8th and 9th Streets to Lake Merritt BART and Laney College. Establish an active, pedestrian-oriented, well-lit connection between Chinatown and the Lake Merritt BART Station/Laney College.
	Phase I: Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, and accessible pedestrian signals; Phase II: Install a pedestrian scramble
	Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, and accessible pedestrian signals
	Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals, and flashing pedestrian signals
	Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals, and flashing pedestrian signals
	Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals, lane changes, or sidewalk widening
	Widen sidewalks
	Complete sidewalk gap on the north side of the street

(continued next page)

Table M-2: Connectivity and Access Improvement Project List (continued)

CORRIDORS AND INTERSECTIONS: WEST TO EAST			
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Project Improvement Type
San Pablo Ave	17th St	N/A	Intersection
San Pablo Ave	18th St	N/A	Intersection
San Pablo Ave	20th St / Thomas L Berk- ley Way	N/A	Intersection
Brush St	End of Brush Street	Embarcadero West	Corridor
Jefferson St	End of Jeffer- son St	Embarcadero West	Corridor
Washington Ave	6th St	7th St	Corridor
Webster St	5th St	14th St	Corridor
Lake Merritt Channel	7th St	N/A	Intersection

	Description
	Implement pedestrian improvements such as repainting crosswalks, installing directional curb ramps, bulbouts, accessible pedestrian signals, and leading pedestrian intervals.
	Implement pedestrian improvements such as repainting crosswalks, installing bulbouts, directional curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals, and leading pedestrian intervals. Also repaint crosswalk at 19th Street.
	Implement pedestrian improvements such as repainting crosswalks, installing bulbouts, directional curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals, crosswalk on north leg of intersection, and leading pedestrian intervals.
	Provide pedestrian connectivity across the railroad tracks between Brush St and Embarcadero West
	Provide pedestrian connectivity across the railroad tracks between Jefferson St and Embarcadero West
	Long-term: Remove the pedestrian bridge if buildings are redeveloped
	From 5th St to 14th St: Implement streetscape amenities, lighting, street crossing improvements, and other traffic calming measures. Extend design elements that promote Chinatown's character east along 8th and 9th Streets to Lake Merritt BART and Laney College. Establish an active, pedestrian-oriented, well-lit connection between Chinatown and the Lake Merritt BART Station/Laney College. From 7th St to 13th St: Explore options for sidewalk widening.
	Install bulbouts, directional curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals, and flashing pedestrian signals

Table M-3: Freeway Crossing Improvements Project List

FREEWAY CROSSING PROJECTS: SOUTH TO NORTH			
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Project Improvement Type
6th St	6th St south of Jefferson Square Park	6th St east of Castro St	Freeway crossing
7th St	West of John B Williams Fwy	Gerry Adams Way	Freeway crossing
11th St	Castro St	Brush St	Freeway crossing
12th St	Castro St	Brush St	"Freeway crossing"
14th St	Castro St	Brush St	Freeway crossing
17th St	Castro St	Brush St	Freeway crossing
18th St	Castro St	Brush St	Freeway crossing
San Pablo Ave	Castro St	W Grand Ave	Freeway crossing
W Grand Ave	San Pablo Ave	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Freeway crossing
23rd St	West of Martin Luther King Jr Way	East of John B Williams Fwy	Freeway crossing
Sycamore St	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Northgate Ave	Freeway crossing
27th St	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Northgate Ave	Freeway crossing
FREEWAY CROSSING PROJECTS: WEST TO EAST			
Market St	5th St	6th St	Freeway crossing
Brush St	5th St	6th	Freeway crossing
I-980 on ramp	12th St	N/A	Intersection
Castro St	North of 6th St	Gerry Adams Way	Freeway crossing
Martin Luther King Jr Way	6th St	5th St	Freeway crossing
Jefferson St	6th St	5th St	Freeway crossing
Washington St	6th St	5th St	Freeway crossing
Broadway	4th St	7th St	Freeway crossing
Franklin St	5th St	6th St	Freeway crossing
Webster St	4th St	7th St	Freeway crossing
Jackson St	6th St	5th St	Freeway crossing
Madison St	5th St	6th St	Freeway crossing
Oak St	6th St	5th St	Freeway crossing

	Description
	Potential treatments include: safety enhancements and speed reduction measures at ramps and intersections, widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and installing directional curb ramps
	Potential treatments include: safety enhancements and speed reduction measures at ramps and intersections, widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and installing directional curb ramps
	Widen sidewalks, add buffering streetscape, and shorten crossing distances at intersections. Implement traffic calming on Bush and Castro Streets.
	Potential treatments include: safety enhancements and speed reduction measures at ramps and intersections, widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and installing directional curb ramps
	Potential treatments include: safety enhancements and speed reduction measures at ramps and intersections, widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and installing directional curb ramps
	Potential treatments include: safety enhancements and speed reduction measures at ramps and intersections, widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and installing directional curb ramps
	Potential treatments include: safety enhancements and speed reduction measures at ramps and intersections, widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and installing directional curb ramps
	Complete sidewalk gap under I-880 overpass
	Pedestrian Plan recommendation
	Potential treatments include: safety enhancements and speed reduction measures at ramps and intersections, widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and installing directional curb ramps
	Transform the areas around, under and through the Broadway and Webster Street underpasses of the I-880 Freeway, into a beautiful, safe, walkable, inviting, green and iconic passageway connecting Downtown Oakland and the Waterfront. Project description to be revised as Walk This Way study recommendations are drafted.
	Create a new pedestrian connection under I-880 on Franklin St
	Transform the areas around, under and through the Broadway and Webster Street underpasses of the I-880 Freeway, into a beautiful, safe, walkable, inviting, green and iconic passageway connecting Downtown Oakland and the Waterfront. Project description to be revised as Walk This Way study recommendations are drafted.
	Potential treatments include: safety enhancements and speed reduction measures at ramps and intersections, widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and installing directional curb ramps
	Widen sidewalks; improve ADA access and crosswalk design across 5th St; install pedestrian-scale lighting and other streetscape or public art elements in underpass
	Potential treatments include: safety enhancements and speed reduction measures at ramps and intersections, widening sidewalks, improving pedestrian-level lighting, public art, and installing directional curb ramps

**Table M-4: Bicycle Project List**

LOW-STRESS CORE NETWORK CORRIDORS: SOUTH TO NORTH				
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Existing Facility	Proposed Facility
Waterfront Trail Embarcadero Bridge Connection	SF Bay Trail Terminus	Embarcadero	None	Class I Shared Use Path
Waterfront Trail A's Stadium Connector	Clay St	Market St	None	Class I Shared Use Path
Water St	Martin Luther King Jr. Way	Clay St	None	Class I Shared Use Path
3rd St	Market St	Lake Merritt Channel	Class II from Market St to Brush St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
2nd St / Oak St	Broadway	Embarcadero Bridge	Class II from Broadway to Oak St Class II Buffered from Oak St to Embarcadero Bridge	
6th St / 5th St Posey Tube Access	Broadway	Lake Merritt Channel	Class III from Oak St to Lake Merritt Channel	Class IV Separated Bikeway
7th St	Castro St	Washington St	None	Class IV Separated Bikeway
7th St / E. 8th St	Fallon St	5th Ave	Class II Buffered Bike Lanes	Class IV Separated Bikeway
8th St	Madison St	Fallon St	Class II from Jefferson St to Broadway Class II from Harrison St to Fallon St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
9th St	Martin Luther King Jr. Way	Fallon St	Class II from Harrison St to Fallon St Class III from Clay St to Washington St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
10th St	Madison St	5th Ave	Class II from Oak St to Lake Merritt Channel	Class II Buffered Bike Lane
14th St	Market St	Internation Blvd	Class II from Market St to Castro St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
15th St / 16th St West- bound Access	Clay St	Harrison St	Class II from Telegraph Ave to San Pablo Ave	Class II Bike Lane
20th St	San Pablo Ave	Lakeside Dr	Class II from Franklin St to Harrison St Class III from San Pablo Ave to Franklin St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
Grand Ave	San Pablo Ave	Bay Pl	Class II from Market St to Telegraph Ave, Webster St to Bay Pl Class III from Telegraph Ave to Webster	Class IV Separated Bikeway
27th St	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Grand Ave	Class II from San Pablo Ave to Harrison St Class III from Harrison St to Grand Ave	Class IV Separated Bikeway

Notes	
	Include a trail connection around the Howard Terminal site should this be developed.
	<p><b>Option 1:</b> One-way Class IV Separated Bikeways - Install a parking protected Class IV Separated Bikeway (westbound) along the north side of the roadway with curb stops for the angled parking and delineator posts or concrete medians. Diagonal parking and 11-foot travel lanes for buses would be maintained. On the south side of the roadway, install a Class IV Separated Bikeway Lane (eastbound) and remove parallel parking.</p> <p><b>Option 2:</b> Two-way Class IV Separated Bikeway - Install a two-way Class IV Separated Bikeway on the south side of the roadway. Remove parallel parking on the south side and maintain diagonal parking throughout the corridor on the north side. Maintain 11-foot travel lanes for buses.</p>
	Intersection improvements such as bike boxes or wayfinding to facilitate turning movements to other Low-Stress Core Corridors
	<p>Project may require the removal of one travel lane or one lane of parking. A Class III Bike Boulevard may be acceptable on 4th St with improvement wayfinding and directional signage.</p> <p><b>Option 1:</b> Class IV Separated Bikeway (two-way)</p> <p><b>Option 2:</b> Class III Bike Boulevard depending on volumes</p> <p><b>Option 3:</b> Class I Shared Use Path Connection</p> <p>Coordinate with Oakland Alameda Access Project</p>
	Project may require the removal of one travel lane. Project should address 8th St connection from Martin Luther King Jr Way
	Project should focus on connectivity at the Fallon St/7th St intersection with the possibility of a protected intersection.
	Project may require the removal of one travel lane or one lane of parking and potential conversion to a two-way street.
	One-way facilities on both sides of the street that will require conversion to a two-way street. Project may require the removal of one travel lane.
	Project may require the potential conversion of angled parking to parallel parking.
	Project may require the removal of one travel or one lane of parking.
	Project may require the removal of one travel lane in portions of the corridor to implement a westbound bike lane to compliment eastbound connectivity on 17th St.
	Project may require parking removal to install transit-only lanes and separated bicycle facilities.
	Project may require parking removal or removal of travel lanes to install transit-only lanes and separated bicycle facilities.
	Project may require the removal of one travel or one lane of parking.

**Table M-4: Bicycle Project List (continued)**

LOW STRESS CORE NETWORK CORRIDORS: WEST TO EAST				
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Existing Facility	Proposed Facility
Martin Luther King Jr Way	Embarcadero	San Pablo Ave	Class III from Embarcadero to San Pablo Ave	Class II Buffered Bike Lanes
San Pablo Ave	17th St	27th St	Class II from 20th St to Grand Ave Class III from 17th St to 20th St, Grand Ave to 27th St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
Telegraph Ave	Broadway	27th St	Class II from 16th St to 20th St Class IV from 20th St to 29th St	Class II from 16th St to 20th St Class IV Separated Bikeway 20th St to 29th St
Clay St	7th St	17th St	Class II Buffered Bike Lanes from 7th St to 17th St	Class II Buffered Bike Lanes
Broadway	Franklin St	27th St	Class II from 27th St to Webster St Class III from Franklin St to Webster St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
Franklin St	6th St	22nd St / Broadway	Class II from 14th St to Broadway	Class IV Separated Bikeway
Harrison St	Grand Ave	27th St	Class II from Grand Ave to 27th St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
Madison St	Embarcadero	19th St	Class II from 2nd St 19th St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
Fallon St	7th St	10th St	Class III from 7th St to 8th St	Class IV
Oak St	Embarcadero	14th St	Class II from Embarcadero to 14th St	None
Lake Front Connectivity - Lakeside Dr /Oak St / Lake Merritt Blvd	12th St	Grand Ave	Class II from 12th St to 19th St	Class IV Separated Bikeway
LOW-STRESS CORE NETWORK INTERSECTIONS				
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Existing Facility	Proposed Facility
Broadway / Franklin St Intersection Improvements	Broadway	Franklin St	None	Intersection Improvement
Castro St / 7th St Intersection Improvements	Castro St	7th St	None	Intersection Improvement
Embarcadero / Webster Intersection Improvements	Embarcadero	Webster St	None	Intersection Improvement
Lakeside Dr / Madison St Intersection Improvements	Lakeside Dr	Madison St	None	Intersection Improvement
Oak St / Embarcadero Intersection Improvements	Oak St	Embarcadero	None	Intersection Improvement

	Notes
	Project may require the removal of a travel lane in each direction.
	Project may require parking removal or removal of travel lanes to install transit-only lanes and separated bicycle facilities.
	Class IV segment full buildout streetscape improvements.
	Wayfinding and intersection improvements to facilitate turning movements to other low-stress core network.
	Project may require the removal of travel lanes or parking.
	Project may require the removal of travel lanes and conversion to a two-way street to install one-way separated bikeways on both sides of the street.
	Project may require the removal of travel lanes or parking.
	Project may require the removal of travel lanes and conversion to a two-way street to install one-way separated bikeways on both sides of the street.
	Two-way Class IV connection between future East Bay Greenway/ and 7th St Bikeway to BART connection
	No new bicycle facilities.
	Project may require the removal of travel lanes or parking.
	Notes

Table M-4: Bicycle Project List (continued)

LOW-STRESS VISION NETWORK CORRIDORS: SOUTH TO NORTH				
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Existing Facility	Proposed Facility
2nd St	Broadway	Brush St	Class III Bike Route	Class II Bike Lanes
6th St / 7th Wiggle	Broadway	Washington	None	Class IV Separated Bikeway
6th St	Harrison St	Madison St	None	Class IV Separated Bikeway
11th St	Market St	Oak St	None	Class IV Separated Bikeway
12th St	Market St	Lake Merritt Blvd	None	Class IV Separated Bikeway
13th St	Broadway	Lake Merritt Blvd	None	Class II Buffered Bike Lane
17th St	Castro St	Lakeside Dr	Class II Buffered Bike Lane from MLK Blvd to Telegraph Ave	Class II Buffered Bike Lane
24th St	Telegraph Ave	Harrison St	None	Class III Bike Boulevard
Waterfront Trail Lake Merritt Channel Path West Connector	Embarcadero Bridge	Peralta College	None	Class I Shared Use Path
LOW-STRESS VISION NETWORK CORRIDORS: WEST TO EAST				
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Existing Facility	Proposed Facility
Jefferson St	6th St	San Pablo Ave	None	Class II Buffered Bike Lanes
Clay St Connector (Jack London Square)	Embarcadero	3rd St	Class II from Embarcadero to 2nd St	Class II Bike Lanes
Washington St	Embarcadero	7th St	Class II from 2nd St to 7th St	Class II Bike Lanes
Webster St	Bay Trail	6th St	None	Class II Bike Lanes
Webster St	14th St	Broadway	Class II from 14th St to Grand Ave	
Class III from Grand Ave to Broadway"		Class II Buffered Bike Lanes	Project may require the removal of a one lane of parking in certain segments.	
Jackson St	2nd St	Lakeside Dr	Class II from 8th St to 14th St	Class II Bike Lanes
LOW-STRESS VISION NETWORK INTERSECTIONS				
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Existing Facility	Proposed Facility
8th St / MLK Way Intersection Improvements	8th St	Martin Luther King Jr Way	None	Intersection Improvement

	Notes
	Project may require the removal of one parking lane.
	Project may require the removal of one travel lane or one lane of parking. Implement in coordination with Washington St to connect with Clay Street.
	Project may require the removal of one travel lane or one lane of parking.
	Plan in coordination with 12th St, Consider Two-way on 12th St to avoid 11th St tunnel. Project may require the removal of one travel lane.
	Consider Two-way on 12th St to avoid 11th St tunnel. Project may require the removal of one travel lane.
	Class IV One-way facility could be accommodated with a parking protected bike lane. Project may require the removal of one travel lane.
	Consider Class IV One-way facility depending on the amount of bicycle lane blockages. Project may require the removal of one travel lane or one lane of parking.
	Traffic calming and contra flow bike lane between Valdez St and Harrison Street.
	Notes
	Project may require the removal of a travel lane in each direction.
	Extend existing Class II Bike Lanes on Clay St to connect with 3rd Street bikeway.
	Project may require removal of parallel parking on one side of the street to provide back-in diagonal parking on the opposite side.
	Class II Bike Lanes from 2nd St to 5th St, Two-way Class IV from 5th St to 8th St, and Class II Bike Lanes from 8th St to Lakeside Drive. Project may require the removal of a one lane of parking in certain segments
	Notes
	TBD - Based on facility type and transit assessment

**Table M-5: Transit Project List**

Project / Recommendation	Limits	Notes
Dedicated transit lanes on 11th, 12th Streets	Downtown	In progress east of Broadway. Extension west of Broadway would serve layover areas and potential extension to Howard Terminal via MLK
Dedicated transit lanes or vehicle access restrictions on Broadway	20th Street to 11th Street	Corridor design study is needed to resolve interface with protected bikeway
Bus stop enhancements - larger shelters permeable with sidewalk, improved wayfinding (specifically designed to celebrate the cultural district the bus stop is located in or near), real time arrival information	Downtown	
Dedicated two-way transit lanes on 7th	Broadway to Oak	Needs to be evaluated in conjunction with multimodal options/alternatives on 7th/8th/9th
Dedicated transit lanes on 20th	Telegraph to Franklin	
New transit street on Oak		Assumes two-way conversion.
Lake Merritt BART transit center - Bus priority improvements	8th to 9th	Assumes two-way conversion.
New transit street on 10th	Oak to E 8th St	
Bus layover priority areas (Lafayette Square, Lake Merritt BART, Oakland Convention Center, Jack London Amtrak, and Washington/Embarcadero parking garage, and Greyhound terminal)		
New traffic signals	Broadway/2nd & Broadway/3rd	
New transit street on Jefferson	11th to San Pablo	Serves potential extension of service from Lafayette Square to Greyhound Terminal/Uptown to serve potential growth
Broadway Shuttle service enhancements or fare-free zone		Either increase service frequency on Broadway Shuttle and extend to 27th during daytime hours or enact fare-free zone within downtown area
Potential Capitol Corridor Vision Plan improvements to enable greater capacity and faster operating speeds through Downtown Oakland		
Potential addition of second transbay tube connection. Possible alignments run under Alameda and propose Oakland connections to: 1. MacArthur, Downtown Oakland, Lake Merritt and Jack London Square 2. MacArthur and Jack London Square		
Planned expansion of ferry service and terminal facilities; improve first-/last-mile connections to ferry terminal		Long-term Transit Improvement
Rail Safety Project on Embarcadero West from Oak St to Market St. Project to facilitate an application for a "Quiet Zone" and provide pedestrian safety improvements.	Embarcadero West (Oak St to Market St)	

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**Table M-6: One-Way to Two-Way Conversions List**

STREETS: SOUTH TO NORTH				
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Category	Recommendation
7th St	Castro St	Fallon St	Priority two-way street conversion	Convert from one-way to two-way street
8th St	Castro St	Fallon St	Priority two-way street conversion	Convert from one-way to two-way street
9th St	Castro St	Fallon St	Priority two-way street conversion	Convert from one-way to two-way street
10th St	Webster St	Madison St	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
13th St	Broadway	Oak St	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
15th St	Broadway	Harrison St	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
17th St	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Lakeside Dr	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
18th St (westbound)	Martin Luther King Jr Way	San Pablo Ave	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
18th St (eastbound)	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Telegraph Ave	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
19th St	San Pablo Ave	Madison St	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
21st St	San Pablo Ave	Broadway	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
22nd St	Martin Luther King Jr Way	Telegraph Ave	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
22nd St	Franklin St	Broadway	Priority two-way street conversion	Convert from one-way to two-way street
STREETS: WEST TO EAST				
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Category	Recommendation
Castro St	5th St	7th St	Priority two-way street conversion	Convert from one-way to two-way street
Franklin St	7th St	22nd St	Priority two-way street conversion	Convert from one-way to two-way street; one travel lane and one parking lane in each direction.
Webster St	14th St	Grand Ave	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
Harrison St	8th St	10th St	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
Madison St	2nd St	Lakeside Dr	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street
Oak St	2nd St	Madison St	Vision Network	Convert from one-way to two-way street

	Project Notes / Considerations
	Overlaps with the Core Bicycle Network from Castro St to Clay St, and with the Vision Bicycle Network from Clay St to Washington St Overlaps with the bus transit network from Castro St to Broadway, and with the Bus Transit Priority Treatments from Broadway to Oak St"
	Overlaps with the Core Bicycle Network from Madison St to Fallon St
	Overlaps with the Core Bicycle Network from Martin Luther King Jr Way to Fallon St
	Overlaps with the Vision Bicycle Network from Broadway to Oak St
	Overlaps with the Core Bicycle Network from Broadway to Franklin St, and with the Vision Bicycle Network from Franklin St to Webster St
	Overlaps with the Vision Bicycle Network from Castro St to Clay St and from Franklin St to Lakeside Dr, and with the Core Bicycle Network from Clay St to Franklin St
	Overlaps with the Core Bicycle Network from Franklin St to Broadway
	Project Notes / Considerations
	Overlaps with the Core Bicycle Network from 7th St to 22nd St
	Overlaps with the Vision Bicycle Network from 14th St to Grand Ave
	Overlaps with the Bus Transit Network from 8th St to 10th St
	Overlaps with the Core Bicycle Network from 2nd St to Lakeside Dr
	Overlaps with the Core Bicycle Network from 14th St to Madison St Overlaps with the Bus Transit Network from 2nd St to 7th St and from 10th St to 14th St, and with the Bus Transit Priority Treatments from 7th St to 10th St The segment from 14th St to Madison St is on Lakeside Drive.

Table CH-1: Streetscape Improvements Project List

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS: SOUTH TO NORTH			
Project Name (Street)	Cross Street A	Cross Street B	Project Improvement Type
Jack London Waterfront	West of Washington St	Embarcadero West	Corridor
Water St	Clay St	Broadway	Corridor
9th St	Clay St	Broadway	Corridor
9th St	Castro	Oak St	Corridor
10th St	Webster St	Harrison St	Public Realm
10th St	Alice St	N/A	Public Realm
13th St	Broadway	Webster St	Public Realm
13th St	Webster St	Harrison St	Corridor
14th St	Myrtle St	Oak St	Corridor
14th St	Broadway	Oak St	Corridor
15th St	Castro St	East of Jefferson St	Public Realm
15th St	Broadway	Harrison St	Corridor
17th St	Castro St	San Pablo Ave	Corridor
18th St	19th St	N/A	Public Realm
20th St	Castro St	San Pablo Ave	Corridor
22nd St	Broadway	Kaiser Plaza/Valdez St. extension	Public Realm
New paseo	20th St	21st St	Public Realm
New paseo	24th St	25th St	Public Realm
STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS: WEST TO EAST			
Green Loop	Throughout Downtown		Corridor
West Oakland Walk	Throughout Downtown		Corridor
Clay Street	Water Street	Embarcadero West	Corridor
Bishop Floyd L. Begin Plaza	Castro St	San Pablo Ave	Public Realm
Gerry Adams Way	7th St/Castro St	8th St/Martin Luther King Jr Way	Public Realm
Washington St	8th St	10th St	Public Realm
Washington St	10th St	11th St	Public Realm
Plaza	22nd St	Telegraph Ave	Public Realm
Franklin St - Plaza St	21st St	22nd St/Broadway	Public Realm
Webster Green	Embarcadero	4th St	Public Realm
Harrison St	7th St	N/A	Public Realm
Alice St	6th St	10th St	Corridor
Madison St	5th St	17th St	Corridor
Kaiser Rooftop Gardens	Harrison St	Thomas L Berkley Way	Public Realm
Fallon St	8th St	10th	Public Realm

Project Description	
	Improve the Jack London waterfront with better lighting, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and open space amenities; Identified as part of the "Green Loop" Path.
	Continue pedestrian, bicycle, and public realm improvements from the Jack London Waterfront along Water Street
	Convert 9th into a plaza street.
	Transform 9th Street to include context sensitive infill and safer street design. 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
	Transform 10th Street into a shared street
	Create a linear park on 10th and Alice Street as a public space.
	Convert into a plaza street/pedestrian mall, include no left turn from Broadway onto 13th St
	Sidewalk and parking enhancement; improvements include widening sidewalks; adding street trees, bulbouts, and parklets, and incorporating green infrastructure.
	Integrate locally-created public art work (in wayfinding, transit signs, bus shelters, benches along the street, trash cans, street lights, banners, etc.) that celebrates the BAMBD and integrate plaques and signage into the streetscape to reinforce the Black Arts District.
	Extend Lake Merritt's "Necklace of Lights" along 14th Street from Oak Street to Broadway
	Transform 15th Street into a shared street
	Improvements include widening sidewalks; improving streetscape, lighting, and wayfinding; and incorporating outdoor seating.
	Implement streetscape improvements and traffic calming.
	Improve the connection/intersection on 18th Street as it transitions to 19th Street. A mid-block plaza would add connectivity and open space.
	Implement streetscape improvements and traffic calming.
	Transform 22nd Street into a shared space.
	Construct a new pedestrian paseo
	Construct a new pedestrian paseo
	See description in Chapter 5.
	See description in Chapter 5.
	Continue pedestrian, bicycle, and public realm improvements from the Jack London Waterfront along Clay Street
	Enhance Bishop Begin Plaza by adding additional streetscape, green infrastructure, and landscaping; providing lighting for better visibility; improving connection between plazas on either side of 21st Street.
	Convert into a plaza street
	Convert into a plaza street
	Long-term: Provide pedestrian access through the Convention Center if renovated/redeveloped
	Opportunity for a pavement-to-parks conversion
	Convert into a plaza street
	Create a linear park that is central to the Jack London District and keeping with the urban/industrial character of the District.
	Opportunity for pavement to plaza conversion at the 7th and Harrison Slip Lane (SE corner)
	Enhance as a pedestrian and bicycle connection between Lincoln Square Park and Chinese Garden Park
	Enhance pedestrian connection through Chinatown to connect to Lake Merritt Office District
	Improve pedestrian connection to Kaiser Rooftop Gardens
	Implement "Festival Street" (shared street concept from Lake Merritt Station Area Plan)





# *b*

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This appendix provides guidance for identified “Focus Areas”. These focus areas are geographic areas in downtown which, due to their strategic locations and existing mix and intensity of land uses, offer catalytic development opportunities. The selected Focus Areas are not the only areas in downtown that are anticipated to change, but they are areas where near-term decisions are needed about the direction of future development. Many of the identified focus areas are in the Jack London District because it is the only remaining part of downtown that has not been rezoned in recent years.

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## Focus Areas

Focus areas were selected based on: where the zoning and general plan could be updated in exchange for community-desired benefits; where land use changes are needed to direct market forces to achieve the desired future condition; where there is significant public land; where infrastructure investment could offer improved connections and access; where there are buildings with historic significance; and/or where there are numerous vacant or underutilized parcels.

Options considered for each focus area reflect the different, and sometimes opposing, visions about character and intensity heard over the course of the DOSP process that could help meet community goals. Recommended focus area direction in the Plan's Land Use Framework seeks to balance all of the community's goals. For example, housing is a serious need – if not the community's primary need. However, if the "housing-first" option were chosen for all the focus areas, this could limit the City's ability to meet the future employment needs of Oakland residents.

Further details and analysis of options considered for each focus area can be found in the Plan Options Report (<https://www.oaklandca.gov/documents/plan-options-report>).

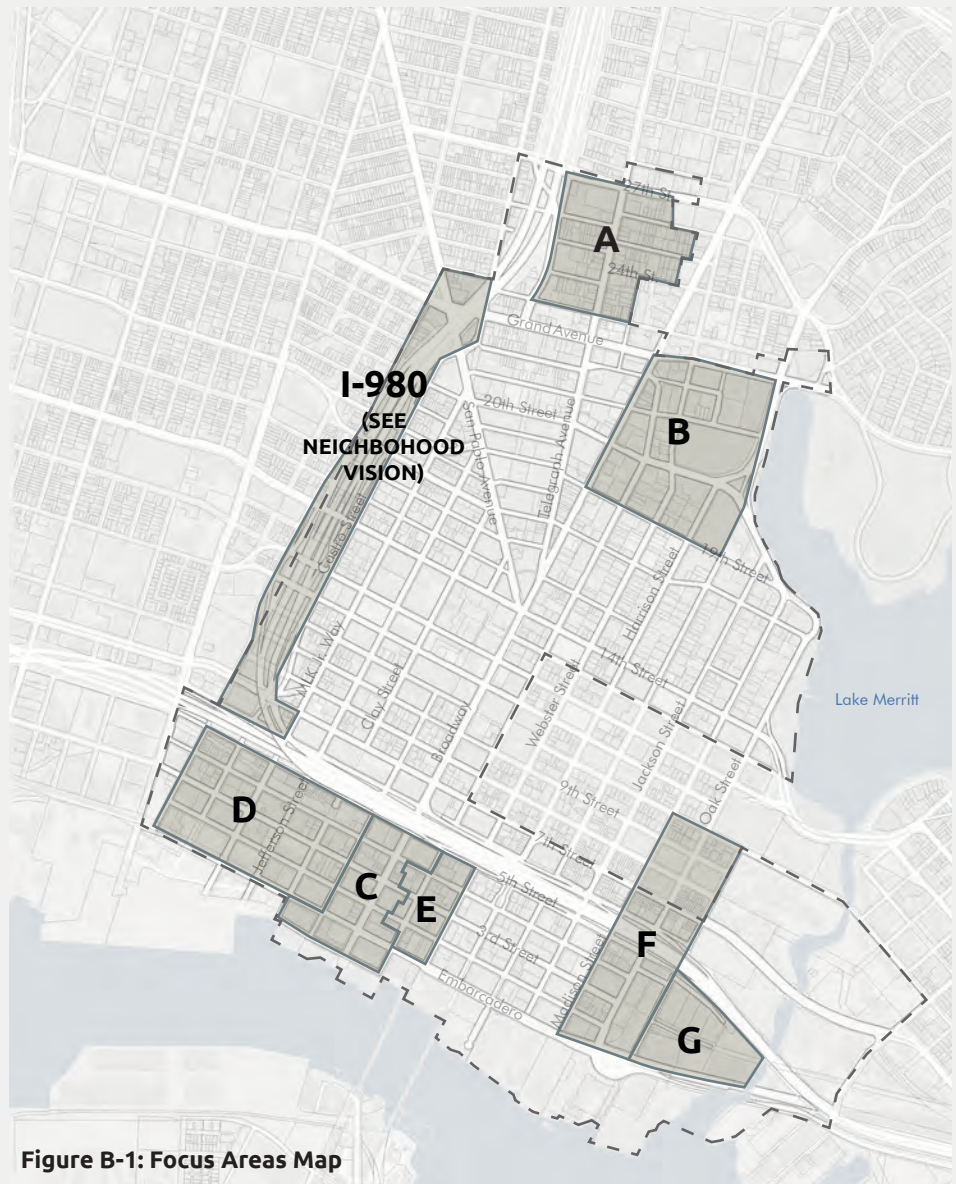


Figure B-1: Focus Areas Map

## Art + Garage District

The Art + Garage District is a historic industrial and auto repair area. Typical conditions include commercial uses, long blocks, 1-2 story building heights, and a 45' height limit. Many of the historic buildings have been converted to art galleries.

**Vulnerable Populations:** Lower income artists and makers are being priced out, including artists of color, the Korean population, as well as other multi-ethnic businesses in the surrounding KONO neighborhood.

**Why Consider Changing?** Possibility of achieving affordable arts and cultural space in return for incentives to developers who want to build higher or include residential units; Improve walkability; Concern that higher-rent uses are displacing artists.

**Proposed Development Form:** The Land Use Framework seeks to balance the potential benefits of increased development potential (to produce affordable housing and art/maker space) with preserving character, especially on 25th Street. Mixed-use Flex areas permit new residential uses with flexible ground floors along 24th and 26th; historic buildings and existing uses/heights are retained along 25th Street. Heights of up to 6 stories are focused at the district perimeter, with no change in height limit along 25th Street. Implementation of an art/cultural overlay zone can introduce additional restrictions and incentives within the district. Benefits of this approach include affordable art and maker space; increase in housing supply; and added value from development intensity captured for community-desired benefits.

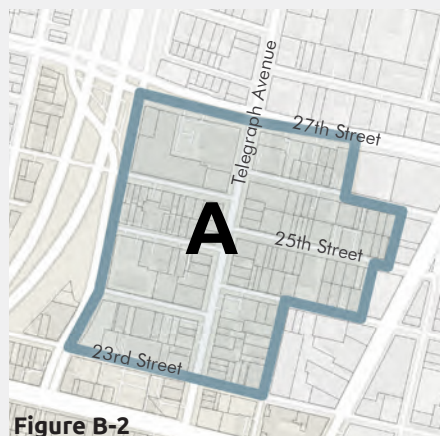


Figure B-2

### Focus Area A: Art + Garage District

*Option 1: Preserve existing height and land use restrictions, limit other uses that may conflict with art/maker space*



*Option 2: Allow increased heights in some areas in exchange for pre-defined community benefits, implement art overlay*

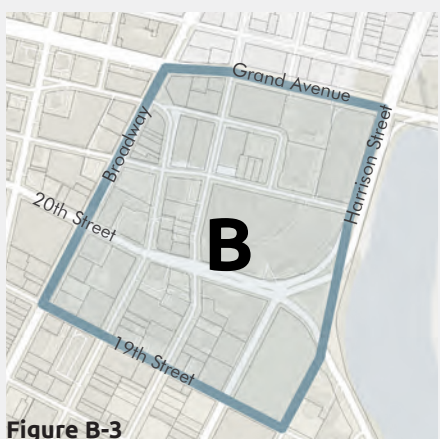


Figure B-3

### Focus Area B: Lake Merritt Office

*Option 1: Continue to allow residential in the entire office core*



*Option 2: Designate "office priority" sites or require office uses*

## Lake Merritt Office District

Close to Lake Merritt, this district of mid- and high-rise office buildings is close to transit. Pressure for residential development is threatening to reduce opportunity sites for additional office space.

**Vulnerable Populations:** Downtown Oakland's office-based nonprofits serving diverse communities are being displaced by rising rents and low office vacancies.

**Why Consider Changing?** Intensify uses near the 19th Street BART Station; Protect office sites from the housing development market; Expand downtown as a jobs, innovation, and revenue center.

**Proposed Development Form:** The Land Use Framework seeks to balance the need for adequate future for office space (which can produce jobs and tax revenues), with market demands for residential. Figure P-6 locates Office Priority Sites near BART stations within the Mixed-use Downtown Core Character area. Zoning updates can require new development that face these street frontages to include a designated percentage of office space. The designated corridors include opportunity sites in the Lake Merritt Office District. Benefits of this approach include an increased supply of commercial office space to support Oakland as a local and regional jobs center; leverages investment the City has made to improve Harrison and 20th Streets; and ongoing commercial tax revenues to support City services.

## Jack London District

### LOWER BROADWAY (SOUTH OF 880 FREEWAY)

The Lower Broadway activity node in Jack London supports surrounding commercial, residential and industrial uses, serves as a gateway between downtown and the Estuary Waterfront, and contains Oakland's earliest buildings.

**Vulnerable Populations:** None identified specifically for this area.

**Why Consider Changing?** Development pressure exists to increase intensity and add more residential development; Zoning has not been updated to be consistent with the General Plan; An auto-oriented public realm, inactive uses and the Broadway/I-880 overpass disconnects pedestrians.

**Proposed Development Form:** The Land Use Framework balances community desires for increased activity, more housing, and preserving historic sites. Lower Broadway can provide a bustling connection between the estuary waterfront and the central core of downtown. Greater permitted building heights can be applied with a fine-grained approach to reduce impacts to historic properties.

Benefits of this approach include increased residential density to increase housing supply; increased activity to support businesses, safety, and walkability; and added value from increased development potential to be captured for community-desired benefits.

### THIRD STREET (WEST OF BROADWAY)

Third Street, West of Broadway, is a light industrial area with one- to two-story historic industrial and warehouse buildings.

**Vulnerable Populations:** Small businesses and businesses of color located in the area are more vulnerable to displacement if rents rise under development pressure.

**Why Consider Changing?** Pressure to build housing in proximity to the waterfront; Zoning has not been updated to be consistent with the General Plan; Support the creation of Jack London Maker District.

**Proposed Development Form:** The Land Use Framework seeks to balance retaining industry and associated blue-collar, entry and middle-wage jobs with providing needed housing. Height limits for the 3rd Street corridor are reduced (current zoning has no height limit); and the corridor is given a Flex or Light Industry designation to retain jobs and industry. Mixed-use buildings with flexible use ground floors and upper-story residences and greater heights are permitted along 5th Street and along Embarcadero.

Benefits of this approach include new residential development to increase housing supply; retaining some blue-collar jobs; and added value from increased development potential to be captured for community-desired benefits.

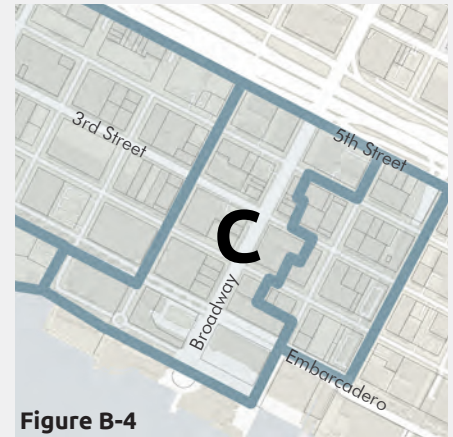


Figure B-4

#### Focus Area C: Lower Broadway

*Option 1: Revise General Plan and Zoning to reduce allowed building intensity*

*Option 2: Increase intensity to strengthen activity node*

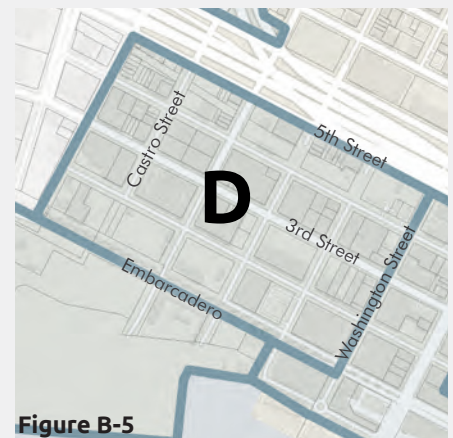


Figure B-5

#### Focus Area D: Third Street

*Option 1: Revise General Plan and Zoning to maintain existing industrial character*

*Option 2: Revise General Plan and Zoning to maintain 3rd Street corridor's existing industrial character, allow housing at periphery*



## Jack London District

### PRODUCE MARKET

The historic, single-story wholesale produce market operates between midnight and 6am. New residential development is occurring at the edges of the district; conflicts due to noise and truck activity have been reported.

**Vulnerable Populations:** Immigrants and people of color who own or work at existing produce-related businesses.

**Why Consider Changing?** Increasing conflicts between the Produce Market and new residential uses; Changes in the produce industry (need for loading docks, refrigerated facilities); Need for additional housing.

**Proposed Development Form:** The Land Use Framework proposes to retain the Produce Market, giving the area a Flex Industry designation and reducing height limits (current zoning has no height limit). The historic market is a large contributor to the identity of the Jack London district; in addition to potential loss of jobs and businesses, removing or drastically altering the physical environment here would permanently cause a loss of local character and distinctiveness. Plan goals for increased affordable housing choices are recommended to be prioritized in other areas.

Benefits of this approach include maintaining historic character and use; retaining blue collar jobs for Oakland workers and their families; and it does not cause disruptions to current businesses.

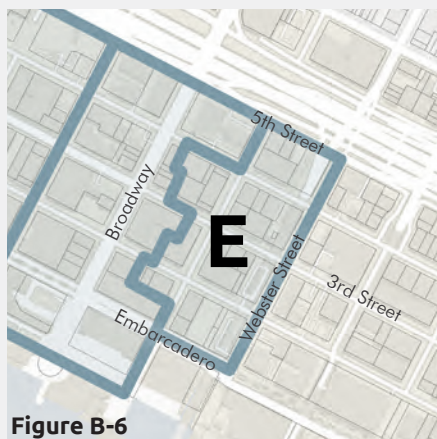


Figure B-6

#### Focus Area E: Produce Market

Option 1: Retain produce market, discourage conflicting uses

Option 2: Retain produce market, allow residential development

Option 3: Relocate produce market, allow mixed-use development

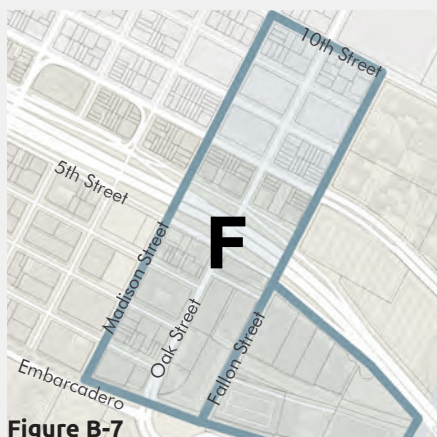


Figure B-7

#### Focus Area F: Oak Street

Option 1: Revise General Plan to maintain existing industrial character

Option 2: Change zoning to conform to areas 'mixed use' General Plan designation, increase intensity toward BART

### OAK STREET (SOUTH OF 10TH)

Oak Street connects the east end of Jack London with the Lake Merritt BART Station. The area has a mix of auto-oriented low-rise industrial, residential and office uses, with a few vacant lots as well as retail/restaurant uses.

**Vulnerable Populations:** People of color throughout Oakland who require blue-collar, entry and middle-wage jobs.

**Why Consider Changing?** Opportunity to better connect Jack London and the Estuary waterfront with Lake Merritt BART; Possibility of receiving community-desired benefits in return for increasing intensity; Existing zoning has not been updated to reflect the General Plan's "Mixed Use" designation.

**Proposed Development Form:** The Land Use Framework prioritizes this corridor for mixed use jobs and residences in proximity to Lake Merritt BART. The Mixed Use Community Corridor designation and increased height/intensity along Oak Street is more consistent with the General Plan "Mixed Use" designation.

Benefits of this approach include increased housing supply near Lake Merritt BART Station; better connections between Jack London, Lake Merritt and transit, as well as between Chinatown and the waterfront. An incentive program could support community-desired benefits. In addition, new development could support Lake Merritt Channel restoration and connection.

## Jack London District

### VICTORY COURT

The Victory Court area currently includes light industrial uses, warehousing, parking, and the fire department training center near Lake Merritt Channel.

**Vulnerable Populations:** People of color throughout Oakland who require blue-collar, entry and middle-wage jobs.

**Why Consider Changing?** Opportunity to connect Brooklyn Basin, downtown, and Jack London; Possibility of receiving community-desired benefits in return for increasing intensity; Existing industrial zoning has not been updated to reflect the area's 'Mixed Use' General Plan designation.

**Proposed Development Form:** If Industrial character is prioritized in other downtown areas, this opportunity site can provide new residential options in proximity to Brooklyn Basin and the Oak Street corridor. Mixed-use Urban Residential development here can include dense new housing with connections to Lake Merritt, Estuary waterfront and BART.

Benefits of this approach include significant potential for new housing, within walking distance of the Lake Merritt BART Station; supports significant public access improvements along the Lake Merritt Channel, connecting Lake Merritt to the Estuary waterfront; and an incentive program that could support community-desired benefits.



Figure B-8

### Focus Area G: Victory Court

*Option 1: Revise General Plan and Zoning to maintain existing industrial character*

*Option 2: Change zoning to conform to 'mixed use' General Plan designation, increase intensity near Oak Street and I-880*

