



Lake Merritt Station Area Plan

Stakeholder Interview Report

May 2010

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May 2010

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I Introduction

The City of Oakland, BART and the Peralta Community College District, through a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, have come together to prepare a Station Area Plan for roughly ½-mile area around the Lake Merritt BART Station. The Plan will consider land use, urban design, economic vitality, circulation improvements, and streetscape, parks and public spaces. It will identify actions the City and the other public agencies should take to improve the area, and establish regulations for development on private property. The project also involves the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Plan. To supplement the input from staff, council members, and workshops for the public, interviews were conducted with participants representing a broad range of local interests including: public agencies, institutions, business groups, community groups, residents, social service organizations, and local and regional governments. The list of the participants is included in Section 1.4.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Stakeholder interviews were held over a two-day period on December 7th and 9th, 2009. Staff interviews were held on November 18th and 19th, and December 3rd. Participants were interviewed individually or in groups, in sessions generally lasting about one hour. A total of 50 stakeholders participated, including 18 City staff. Participants were provided with a brief summary of the project and were asked a variety of questions developed to address the specific interests of each group, which served as starting points for conversation. In all cases, questions asked interviewees to identify what they thought were the major issues and concerns in the area, the greatest assets of the area, and their top priorities for change. This report summarizes the input gathered through the interviews; it is likely that additional stakeholder outreach will occur as the project progresses.

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2 Common Themes

EXPANDED CHINATOWN ROLE AND PRESENCE

The role of Chinatown in the Planning Area and in the planning process is crucial to the success of the Plan. Chinatown is the primary residential and business community in the Planning Area, and an existing vibrant neighborhood asset. The historic role and area of Chinatown was a key theme in the stakeholder interviews, particularly in terms of connecting Chinatown to other areas of the Planning Area, and specifically addressing the blocks bound by Madison, 9th, Fallon and 8th streets, that were originally part of Chinatown and used for BART when the rail line was built. The loss of these blocks remains a sore point for the Chinatown community.

From the perspective of institutional uses such as Laney College, the County of Alameda, and the Oakland Museum of California, Chinatown is a vibrant commercial center, particularly as a place to go for lunch and shopping.

Specific Participants' Suggestions

Character, identity, and scope

- Preserve the character and identity of the Chinatown community.
- Expand Chinatown, in terms of commercial and residential uses, to be consistent with the historic reach of Chinatown. Provide more opportunities for recreational and cultural space, and retail and commercial services. Current impediments to expansion include institutional competition for space and market restrictions.
- Ensure that the blocks between Jackson, Fallon, 9th and 8th streets (BART and Madison Square) are designed and developed to benefit the Chinatown community
- The three blocks bound by Jackson, 9th, Fallon, and 8th streets could be tied together as a hub for the community and a gateway to Chinatown. Example projects would include open space and community recreation centers.
- It is particularly important to carefully consider how publicly-owned blocks could be used to best serve the surrounding community. The amenity value for community could be huge and should not be left up to developers.
- Recognize that cities and communities evolve over time, but also recognize that there is a need to serve an Asian base, and that the services that are available will determine in part who lives there. For instance, whether or not Asian elderly will continue to want to locate in Chinatown will depend on amenities, cultural resources in the area, and safety of the area.

Transit

- Identify the Lake Merritt BART Station as the Chinatown Station: Redesign the station to reflect Chinatown and rename “Lake Merritt” to “Oakland Chinatown.”
- Establish the BART Station entrance as a gateway to the Chinatown neighborhood; add a sense of arrival to Chinatown in the design of the entry and exit.
- Create a new entrance to BART Station closer to Chinatown at Madison Street.
- AC transit lines currently connect along Broadway and 12th Street at edge of Chinatown; could move lines into Chinatown to better service ridership by being closer to Chinatown and BART station.
- Create a multimodal hub at the BART Station.

Streetscape

- Improve infrastructure that supports the community and that would incentivize building, such as installing traffic lights and improving pedestrian amenities.
- Design streetscape in the Planning Area to reflect the culture and heritage of Oakland Chinatown. For instance, use street trees, such as Ginkos or a similar culturally significant species, to identify the district.
- Continue Chinatown Revitalization street intersection design, including timed streetlights, diagonal street crossing, and unique markers identifying Chinatown as a district.
- Create strong, unique street elements that identify the neighborhood and particularly the three-block site as a multimodal transit center and gateway to the neighborhood.

Development

- Plan should include strategic land development that would allow tax increment flow from redevelopment go towards expanding Chinatown.
- Provide incentives to market-rate developers to create preferred mix of uses, such as retail space that accommodates small businesses in affordable spaces.
- Support economic vitality in Chinatown and accommodate one of strongest retail districts with some of the highest lease rates in Oakland.
- Develop dense, large, mixed-use development near transit, to make the area vibrant like Hong Kong. Density is part of what Chinatown is.

ENHANCED SAFETY

Safety was a major concern among most stakeholder groups, and mentioned as a reason that people refrain from using the area in several ways, most notably including accessing BART, using Madison Park, and walking at night. Two types of safety issues were discussed: crime and pedestrian safety. Generally, better lighting and pedestrian improvements were suggested as means of improving both safety issues.

Specific Participants' Suggestions

Crime

Several stakeholders knew people that had been mugged or attacked in the area and were therefore afraid to walk in the area at night. Many stakeholders mentioned that people would walk in groups and/ or escort women after dark. The County of Alameda, for instance, has a very low BART usage rate largely due to people's reluctance to walk to the station, despite that the County offices are only 3-5 blocks away from the BART Station. The County has started a shuttle that connects to both Lake Merritt BART station and the 12th Street BART station in order to attempt to increase ridership and Laney College has an escort service to the parking lot and bus stations. Chinatown advocates expressed concern that older Chinese residents were specifically at risk due being considered 'easy targets.' Many stakeholders specifically noted that the presence of homeless people throughout the area contributed to the area feeling unsafe. For instance, there are serious issues of feeling safe under freeway, in part due to homeless encampments under freeway. Dumping is also an issue on both sides of the freeway. Suggestions for addressing crime include:

- Provide better lighting.
- Recreation areas need an added sense of ownership through services and programs.
- Extend vibrant areas into areas that feel unsafe. The Chinatown core feels safer because it has vitality and a mix of uses.
- Provide more patrolling of area and additional police protection at night.

Pedestrian Safety

Concerns regarding pedestrian safety focused on poor lighting, unsafe crossings, and bad traffic. Of particular concern is traffic from the City of Alameda, as discussed at greater length in the traffic section below. Specific suggestions addressing pedestrian safety include:

- For pedestrian safety and to increase connectivity between areas of Laney College property, change 7th Street to one lane (from two) to slow traffic, or ideally, close 7th Street entirely in order to have a contiguous campus. If 7th Street were closed, people would either use freeway or 10th/ 12th or Embarcadero as primary roads. Closure of 7th Street would fit well with Measure DD proposals; the overall vision for Measure DD and for Laney College does not fit well with arterial 7th Street.
- At minimum add another 7th Street crossing along the estuary.

- Improve the I-880 under-crossings at Oak Street and Madison Street to improve transit access. Oak should be the priority, but both should be improved. This connection is essential to improve access to BART from the neighborhoods south of I-880, which was originally developed as a transit oriented neighborhood, but a lack of public improvements and unsafe access to BART have meant that the district has failed as TOD.
- Support changes recommended in Revive Chinatown.
- Calm traffic to promote safer and more pedestrian-friendly streets.

INCREASED AND BETTER PROGRAMMED OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Several stakeholders indicated that there was not enough open space or recreational facilities in the area. Lincoln Square was identified as a successful urban park that is heavily used, well programmed, and beyond its capacity. In contrast, Chinese Garden Park is considered unsafe due to traffic (see through traffic section) and Madison Square is underutilized because it is considered unsafe largely due to the homeless population that lives there. The Lake Merritt and Channel improvements are expected to have a positive impact on the area. Extension of the park connection all the way to the estuary was brought up several times as a desirable continuation of the current project. Most stakeholders agreed that there is a need for expanded recreational opportunities and open space in the Planning Area. It was noted, however, that one challenge with adding open space is then funding the ongoing maintenance of the space.

Specific Participants' Suggestions

- Reactivate and revitalize Madison Park
 - Redesign Madison Park into a festival plaza (possibly on site merged with adjacent BART block), which could then be used as a flexible and active space for multiple functions that would increase the level of activity and make it a defensible space, such as:
 - A site for the Obom festival
 - Farmers market
 - Tai chi
 - Community gardens, which would add ownership
 - Community center for seniors, youth, etc.
 - Sail structures that articulate and announce space
 - Park features could repeat throughout district to further identify
 - Community needs and would like to see more recreation and gym space.
 - Provide seating, tables for chess, and incorporate kiosks for commercial activity to complement the edge.

- Enlarge Madison Park aggregating Madison Park and adjacent BART owned block and/ or by closing Madison Street between 8th and 9th streets to auto traffic
- Possibly swap BART hardscape plaza with the City for Madison park for development
- Ideas for new open spaces:
 - Provide a community center as a part of the new open space program, especially for seniors and youth.
 - Incorporate community gardens as part of the open space program
 - Incorporate youth recreation center and/ or neighborhood center with associated gardens and playground for younger children.
 - Adjust circulation in area to have blocks that are more cohesive for open space use
 - Community needs and would like to see more recreation and gym space, for instance to accommodate the Japanese- American basketball league.
 - Add a dog park
 - Improve open space by programming with amenities such as an outdoor amphitheater, games, hardscape surfaces that can be used for Tai Chi.
- Establish park features could repeat throughout district to further identify the area
- 12th Street improvements are scheduled to start construction in April 2010, which will improve access to the Channel. Currently the Channel area is not used because not connected to anything else. Primarily used by Laney College students south of 10th Street and the homeless between 10th and 12th street near the Kaiser Convention Center. The Channel improvements are at 65% design stage.
- Extend pedestrian and bike path from Lake Merritt to the waterfront. Develop a bridge that goes up and clears railroad tracks and Embarcadero and connects the Channel to Estuary Park, the Bay Trail, and Oak to Ninth. This portion is currently not funded and will not be funded under Measure DD.
 - Consider water quality and storm water requirements, particularly along the Lake Merritt Channel and enhancing wildlife connections.
 - Increase open space in Chinatown to address the per capita lack of open space.
 - Create a youth center that would provide a safe space for youth, recreational activities for people of all ages, community meeting space, and additional space for community services.

IMPROVED TRANSIT

Various suggestions were made in terms of improving transit services and amenities. Suggestions included increasing access to transit services by adding bus routes, providing improved paratransit services, and improving bus stop amenities that improve the functionality of bus stops. A major theme was establishing a multi-modal approach. This would include improving connections between transit services (such as between use of BART and AC Transit) as well as between transit stops and major destinations (such as between Laney, Chinatown, and the BART Station).

Specific Participants' Suggestions

- Add bus service that serves south of I-880; right now only have service to Amtrak.
- Increase access to services, particularly in terms of providing paratransit.
- Transit agencies need to work more closely with community to find better transit solutions.
- Make sure that TOD amenities are provided throughout the Planning Area and bus stops are accessible (for both pedestrians and buses).
- Improve passenger drop off, bike, and pedestrian access (for instance want more secure storage for bikes so people are more likely to park them rather than bring on).
- Better integrate Laney College uses and the station, for instance by making Fallon Street a pedestrian only street.
- Increase use of alternative modes of transportation since there are limitations in accommodating cars in the area.
- Redesign Oak Street as a multi-modal center.
- Create a multi-modal station.
- Ensure that bus parking is available and sufficient spaces for stops at BART exist in final plan. There is a temptation to squeeze space for bus stops which results in queuing issues.

TRAFFIC

Several suggestions aimed at slowing the flow of traffic through the planning area with the aim of improving safety and making the area more pedestrian friendly. General infrastructure improvements, such as road repairs and improved signage and/ or signalization were also suggested. The I-880/ Broadway/ Jackson Street interchange remains a major point of concern.

Several stakeholders found that through traffic, particularly traffic moving in and out of the City of Alameda and accessing the I-880 to and from the City of Alameda was a serious concern. In particular, the soft right onto 7th Street out of the Posey Tube (which connects to the City of Alameda) and is the primary path for accessing I-880 from the Tube by a second soft right onto Jackson Street, where the freeway onramp is located. This turn is a concern in regard to pedestrian crossing, particularly due to the location of a senior center located on

Chinese Garden Park. The pedestrian traffic of seniors accessing the Center from Chinatown requires that they cross 7th Street at or near the soft right turns, where traffic is less likely to slow down or be conscious of pedestrians.

Several studies, over several years, have attempted to address freeway access from the City of Alameda that would lessen impacts to traffic and pedestrian safety in this part of Oakland, but have been unsuccessful at developing alternatives that meet both community needs and traffic engineering needs.

Localized traffic also causes concern, specifically in terms of speeding, people running red lights and congestion. Congestion is aggravated by double parking, particularly for truck deliveries in Chinatown.

Specific Participants' Suggestions

- Apply traffic calming measures.
- Close streets, such as Fallon Street near the BART Station or Madison between 8th and 9th streets, to increase pedestrian friendliness.
- Reengineer the I-880/ Broadway/ Jackson Street interchange.
- Improve signalization on Jackson. There are traffic problems on Jackson, particularly at 6th Street at rush hour the wait time can be long. Not good from a pedestrian point of view, but vehicular improvements at that intersection should be prioritized.
- Improve streets in the area, which are very rough right now; while some holes have been filled, the streets are still rough and some spots on Jackson between 8th and 9th streets were missed.
- Improve signage since existing signage is conflicting, confusing, and chaotic.
- Improve intersections at Webster, Franklin, and Harrison streets, possibly with more scramble lights.
- Make a distinction between streets that need to carry traffic and those that are more for local use and pedestrian use. For instance, east/ west corridors in the Planning Area are not used very well given the width of 10th and 7th streets.

PARKING

While some stakeholders indicated that they would like to see less parking in the Planning Area as part of a transit oriented neighborhood, others expressed desire for additional parking in the area.

Several stakeholders indicated that there was not enough parking in the Planning Area, and that there is serious competition for existing parking. In particular, the County and Laney College indicated that while they would like to rely more on transit rather than having people drive in, given the needs of their visitors and students, having available parking is essential.

Also, Chinatown businesses need their customers to have easy access to their shops. However, there was also a repeated sentiment that parking should not be a focus of future planning in the area, and that planning for transit and incentivizing other modes should take precedence.

Specific Participants' Suggestions

- Less parking is better: incentivize less parking for rental units that are near BART.
- Would like to see parking lots under freeway managed by City rather than Caltrans and have managed more professionally.
- Reduced parking requirements, with possibility of using Easy Pass as a tradeoff.
- Need more parking that is free after 6:00 p.m. for local businesses.
- Pursue policies to make parking more rational rather than just creating more.

HOUSING

Several stakeholders discussed the addition of residential units to the Planning Area, and in particular high density housing. Some stakeholders prioritized affordable housing while others felt that market rate housing should be the priority. However, generally stakeholders agreed that additional housing would add vibrancy to the area and help meet several other goals, such as increasing the consumer base in the area, increasing BART ridership, increase the tax base, increasing options for student housing, and increase opportunities for affordable housing. It was generally suggested that new housing be part of mixed-use developments, so that retail or other active uses could be at the ground floor. There was some concern from the County that high density housing would add to the parking demand in the area, and so would only be supportive of more housing if parking was provided on-site.

Specific Participants' Suggestions

- Promote infill and high density housing, especially because the area is already served by extensive bus and BART service.
- Promote mixed uses, such as providing retail or other active uses at the ground floor of residential buildings.
- Promote multigenerational development with strong youth focus to attract students and younger families.
- Put the tallest buildings and highest density by Laney College.
- Develop housing for Peralta students and faculty that would want to live closer to campus.
- Incentivize development of affordable housing, require a percent of units to be affordable, or use direct public funding for affordable housing. Encourage and increase affordable housing as area grows, especially around BART.

- Develop mixed-use housing that benefits very low income people earning \$30,000 - \$50,000/ year, not \$70,000 since it is impossible to earn that much in Chinatown.
- Ensure that existing affordable housing is not displaced and that new housing attracts young families.
- Develop high density market rate housing that will benefit the area by bringing income and revenue to area. Will also increase the tax base and bring people with more money to shop and bring in income for city to thereby fund infrastructure improvements.

THE UNDERUSED AREAS AND APPROACHES TO ADDING VITALITY

Many stakeholders found that the area between the business core of Chinatown and the Lake Merritt BART Station is largely an underutilized area in that there are few active uses (such as retail or restaurants) and minimal foot traffic, making the area feel unsafe. To address underused areas, several approaches to add vitality were suggested, and most stakeholders associated vitality with increased safety. Increased retail activity, improved pedestrian landscaping and amenities, and better connections in order to add vitality and add a sense of safety were a few common suggestions. Several of the approaches to adding vitality and addressing the 'underused areas are listed below.

Specific Participants' Suggestions

Activating Corridors

Streetscape

- Improve the streetscape in order to improve walkability and add identity in that area.
- Add pedestrian scaled lighting.
- Add more trees.
- Focus streetscape embellishments to 8th Street since it is south facing street, include generous plazas, sidewalk cafes, and more natural landscaping. Double row of trees.
- Close Madison Street between 8th and 9th streets and/ or Fallon between 8th and 9th streets.
- Design streetscape to reflect culture and heritage of Oakland Chinatown.
- Establish a theme of culture and history on 9th Street and nature and environment on 8th Street.
- Consider diagonal circulation on block bounded by Madison, 8th, Oak, and 9th streets with a new BART entrance in the center.
- Add dynamic, distinctive, permanent, attractive signage. Use Old Oakland as an example.
- Professor at CCA interested in creating signage in station that would direct people to the Oakland Museum of California.

- Promote an urban forest idea, but with careful design such that it would not create places for people to hide.

Active Uses

- More retail, restaurants, and residential uses, as well as colorful signage could add to vibrancy.
- Attract more activity in evenings, since now it is very quiet after business hours when the county offices are closed.
- Add residential uses, galleries and retail amongst the institutional uses.
- Establish a night market; 10th Street as a potential site.
- Encourage the Chinatown commercial core to grow organically into areas where there isn't much now.
- Art openings would be a good active use- could showcase student art.
- Add street life in the form of more commercial activity, residences facing the streets, and increased street lighting.
- Add sculpture garden as an extension of the Oakland Museum of California's garden along the Kaiser Convention Center parking lot to invite people from along Lake Merritt toward the Oakland Museum of California.
- Add retail and commercial uses along key corridors where currently lacking, such as Oak, 8th, and 9th streets.
- Make Station area more like the Rockridge BART station area—vibrant, with a continuous row of small businesses and restaurants to Link BART station to retail area. Other good examples in Oakland include Grand and Piedmont avenues.
- Would like to see a little retail village that is somewhat robust and included basic services such as drugstores or bookstores.

Connecting Destinations

- Make clear connections between destinations in the area, to add vibrancy and build on the existing assets.
- Connect Chinatown with public institutions such as Laney College Community and BART by activating the streets and redesigning streets to be safer. For instance, activate corridors by including student-oriented retail along 8th and 9th streets and housing for students and young families.
- Enliven Oak Street corridor to increase safety between BART all the way to courthouse and make the connection more attractive.

- Add interpretive walks to establish connections to the Oakland Museum of California:
 - Link Lake Merritt the Oakland Museum of California through science and nature walk to natural sciences exhibits at the Oakland Museum of California.
 - Link Chinatown to the Oakland Museum of California through history walk that provides interpretation of local history and leads people to history and art exhibits at the Oakland Museum of California.
 - Direct walks along Oak or Fallon streets to help activate streets.
- Improve the connection between the Oakland Museum of California and BART.

Establish a Vision and Identity for the Area

- Several stakeholders mentioned the importance of establishing a clear vision for the area so that property owners and businesses could know what to expect. If owners can see a benefit from making changes, they will make it happen. Part of why some people are not building now is because they think there might be something else around the corner.
- To activate the area need to make it more of a destination and create a definable district. The area immediately around the BART Station is big enough area that needs to have its own defined district or neighborhood identity.
- Create a destination cultural district with the Oakland Museum of California, library, Laney College, Chinatown. Could add theatres, retail, housing, and renovate Kaiser Convention Center to complete a thematic character that identifies as a special part of Oakland
- The Oakland Museum of California can be an anchor tenant for the area, as the biggest institution and a site for public activity and entertainment.
- Define the neighborhood/ district with characteristic and consistent architectural elements.
- Integrate art and history and foster/ enhance/ maintain/ encourage arts and cultural resources since they add vibrancy.
- Preserve historic buildings. The balance between new high density development and historic preservation could create interesting juxtaposition in getting contemporary buildings that can fit with historic fabric.
- The Lake Merritt BART Station itself should be identified and differentiated as being a specific station.
- Right now the name of the station does not actually represent the area. BART has a process that would allow a name change to occur, which would be part of a larger branding exercise that would be based on the vision established for the area through stakeholders input. Would also identify color palette etc that would be compatible with BART branding.

Reopen the Kaiser Convention Center

There was a general consensus that the Kaiser Convention Center is a resource that should be restored and used to activate the area and bring people to the area. It was noted that it used to draw large crowds, which would then shop in Chinatown. The Kaiser Convention Center was seen as an opportunity to add to an arts and cultural resources district. Right now it attracts homeless people and is not secured. The library has expressed using the Kaiser Convention Center, as has Laney College.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development was discussed from several angles, primarily in terms of adding successful businesses to the Planning Area, particularly in extending the Chinatown commercial core towards the BART station and in providing services closer to Laney College and the County offices. In addition, it is important to many stakeholders to ensure that job opportunities exist, both in terms of residents having access to relevant training and having job opportunities within the Planning Area.

Specific Participants' Suggestions

Business success

Most stakeholders identified need to both support local businesses and ensure that new businesses are established in the area. While most stakeholders felt there was demand for additional businesses, business success was a concern.

- Preserve and increase the vitality of small businesses, particularly in and expanding out of Chinatown. Improving safety and providing improved infrastructure and streetscaping were identified as priorities in meeting this goal. Also encouraging high density and mixed income housing that would increase the number of residents that would shop in the area was suggested.
- Expand the Chinatown business center to the three key blocks bounded by Jackson, 9th, Fallon and 8th streets.
- Improve commerce infrastructure for medium- and small-sized businesses and mixed-use buildings, such as by improving the streets, increasing safety, and providing more parking. Now people don't always want to return because it is hard to park, the streets are bad, and it feels unsafe. The visible homeless population may turn people away and make it less safe to walk, especially at night.
- Reduce the restrictions applied by City or other organizations.
- Improve access to and sale of healthy food.
- Envision Oakland as an international City—think big for the area.
- Partner with the Port of Oakland to develop a trade center, which could be a very vibrant concentration of businesses.

Jobs

- BART interested in serving downtown Oakland as a job center due to capacity issues in serving San Francisco. Consider the Planning Area as a potential job center.
- Attract businesses to area that increase the number of jobs in the area.
- Ensure that job opportunities benefit immigrants.
- Provide job training for new technologies.
- Provide job training in Mandarin and Cantonese for New Green Technology jobs at Laney College.

Sales Tax Base

In particular the Chinatown Chamber of Commerce and local business owners were concerned with developing a strong business base that would contribute to the tax base in order to fund local improvements and neighborhood amenities. They would promote the addition of market rate housing that would add to the local tax base and bring in a customer base that would support local businesses.

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3 Stakeholder Perspectives – Goals and Concerns

CHINATOWN COALITION AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

Chinatown Coalition

“Chinatown acts as a core for the Asian community in the Bay Area for accessing services, shopping, and community.”

“Chinatown is a key strength in Oakland”

“Those were all Chinatown blocks. There is a moral and political obligation for the public to give them back to Chinatown”

“We need to set up system to ensure that what goes on those blocks enhances the Chinatown community and is approved by the Chinatown community”

The Chinatown Coalition is an ad hoc group that includes Asian Health Services (AHS), East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC), Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), Oakland Asian Cultural Center, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, the Chinatown Oral History Project, the Buddhist Church of Oakland and other interested members of the community. It is open to participation based on level of interest. Over a year ago AHS was contracted to conduct community outreach since in the past the community was not engaged at a level that included businesses, residents, services, etc. The Lake Merritt Station Area planning process has an advantage in that it is starting with community engagement and feedback and a focus for community. The stakeholder interview with this group included a presentation of their outreach process and results.

A major concern of the Chinatown Coalition is the way in which Chinatown is framed within the planning process, how involved the community is in the process, and how the outcomes of the planning process can best serve the Chinatown community. The history of Chinatown and the role of the existing Chinese and Asian community in and immediately surrounding the Planning Area, including not only the resident and visiting population but also businesses and services, are extremely important to understanding the area.

Long after the three blocks bounded by Jackson, 9th, Fallon and 8th streets were claimed for BART, there remains a sense of loss, and the Chinatown Coalition sees the development of these blocks as one of the focal points of the planning effort. While Madison Park is currently used by the Chinatown community, primarily for tai chi, it is not considered a safe place that is optimally used because there is no community ownership of the park and it is extensively used by the homeless. The blocks that are currently owned by BART have a particular historical importance to the Chinatown community, as neighborhood blocks that were taken by eminent domain in the 1960s, and the Coalition is passionate about reclaiming those blocks. There is a sentiment in the community that BART has a moral and political obligation to give the blocks

back to Chinatown, and therefore, the Station Area Plan must set up a system to ensure that what goes on those blocks enhances the Chinatown community and is approved by the Chinatown community.

The community engagement process undertaken by Asian Health Services, the Chinatown Coalition, and Asian Pacific Environmental Network resulted in nine key principles to guide development and several specific proposals and ideas for the area, and most specifically for the blocks bound by Jackson, 9th, Fallon and 8th streets. The specific proposals and ideas are included below. Other issues and specific suggestions made by the Coalition are incorporated into the discussion in Section 1.2.

The nine principles for the area are:

1. **Public Safety.** Create safe public spaces; promote safer streets; improve community police services; and include violence prevention programs and policies.
2. **Jobs.** Increase the number of good jobs that match the community profile; provide a job-training center in the neighborhood and partner with local institutions to establish effective programs.
3. **Housing.** Prevent the loss of existing affordable rental (including senior) housing; prevent involuntary displacement of residents due to housing costs or redevelopment activity; develop new rental and for sale housing within the project area for individuals and families of all sizes and all income levels (from extremity low to above moderate); promote healthful homes that are environmentally friendly and that incorporate green building methods.
4. **Community Facilities and Open Space.** Preserve and improve existing parks and recreation centers; ensure access to parks and open space for youth and seniors; increase the number of safe parks and open spaces available to the community; establish a community garden; create a multi-use recreational facility for serve both youth and seniors; build new neighborhood parks for cultural activities; promote library programs for youth, families, and seniors; ensure adequate capacity of school and recreation facilities.
5. **Businesses.** Promote new grocery stores, farmers markets and restaurants that sell nutritious and affordable food and that generate new jobs; attract new businesses, including needed banks, pharmacies, and book stores; extend Chinatown business uses in the direction of the Lake Merritt BART Station to expand and reinforce existing businesses.
6. **Transportation.** Preserve and strengthen public transit and neighborhood walkability; reduce truck and car traffic; expand modes of transportation serving the neighborhood; ensure pedestrian safety with improved sidewalks and intersection crossings; ensure compatibility of pedestrians, cyclists, and autos with street improvements that reduce traffic volume and speed; improve parking serving Chinatown and the BART station.
7. **Cultural Preservation.** Ensure that public services and spaces proposed preserve and reflect the cultural history and aspects of Chinatown's historic geography.
8. **Community Engagement.** Ensure opportunities for effective community participation by Chinatown residents and organizations in the further development of the Specific Plan; enable the community to monitor implementation of the Specific Plan.

9. **Health.** Improve air quality; increase health and medical services available to the community; clean up air, soil and water contamination; reduce noise levels; ensure the cleanliness of public outdoor places; provide public bathrooms and trash containers; and conduct anti-litter campaigns.

Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)

APEN works with low-income immigrant population in the Bay Area, primarily in Chinatown on affordable housing and community environmental health issues. Its main objective is building the power of low-income Asian-Pacific immigrant communities. It currently has two organizing projects, one in Richmond for the refuge community and one that is PAO, or Power in Asians Organizing, which is its main project in Oakland. Its work includes: campaigning around affordable housing issues; economic and environmental justice issues; maintaining cultural integrity; ensuring that green jobs at living wages are created for community and green building practices are followed; and making sure that residents are not victims of gentrification and that existing residents receive environmental, economic benefits of new development.

Members are concerned with climate change and think that the Station Area Plan should do something to help reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in Oakland. Since we are in an economic downturn, they see it as a good time to show how it is possible to reduce CO₂ and show how nonprofits can work together to improve quality of life and the street environment while providing green jobs and green affordable housing. New buildings, for instance, should use non-toxic materials, have solar panels, and reuse water. The plan has the potential to become a model of how environmental justice organizations can work with nonprofits and the chamber of commerce to create something.

Of particular concern to APEN also are the three blocks bounded by Jackson, 9th, Fallon and 8th streets, which are related culturally and historically with Chinese immigrants. These blocks are also important because they lead in and out of Chinatown, and are therefore also important to the region. The Chinatown area is important to the larger community because in this area can assess language easily, get services, people can send kids to school there, there are ESL classes, and there are places to do Tai Chi. It is important that the new plan must keep those things.

East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC)

EBALDC is a 34-year old organization community development corporation that develops affordable housing and community facilities with integrated services focused on tenants and neighborhood residents, with emphasis on Asian and Pacific Islander communities and the diverse low-income populations of the East Bay. EBALDC currently has 13 properties across Oakland, four of which are in the Planning Area. The Asian Resource Center was its first development on Webster, Harrison, and 9th streets, which now houses its office, as well as a gallery and several other non-profits there with the idea of bringing together social services into a one-stop shop. The Center creates a focal point for services, and has been a strong force as an incubator for services.

Family Bridges

The mission of Family Bridges is to serve the most vulnerable members of the Asian community, especially the seniors and non-English speaking population. Recently it has also started providing childcare. It serves about 10,000 unduplicated clients, from all over Alameda and Contra Costa counties, with services ranging from providing information over the phone to regular on-site services. Services are available in a multi-lingual setting, in Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, and Spanish.

Currently, Family Bridges operates out of several sites in the Planning Area, including the senior center at Chinese Garden, a site at Lincoln Park, two sites at Hotel Oakland, and the Lake Merritt Childcare Center. It is always looking for opportunities to expand operations and serve larger population. Eventually it wants to expand services to include long-term care and would like to provide multiple services at a single site.

Asian Health Services (AHS)

“The plan should ensure no displacement of existing affordable housing, and that new housing attracts young families”

“Safety happens by extending vitality.”

AHS is a 35-year old health services organization that sees about 90,000 medical visits a year and about 10,000 dental visits a year. Its programs are designed for special populations that have trouble accessing healthcare for various reasons, including language barriers, insurance, and cultural reasons. About 80% of its clientele is from the City of Oakland, primarily from Chinatown and the East 18th Street area. About 70% of patients are Chinese and 10-12% are Vietnamese. 70% of clientele is under the poverty level and 98% are within 200% of poverty level. Only about 10% are commercially insured.

The main office is at 8th and Webster streets and the bulk of services are provided there, including a pediatric clinic on the 1st floor and general clinic on the 2nd floor. AHS also has a 7,000 square foot adult facility in Hotel Oakland for senior residents and an adult medical clinic and dental clinic on 9th and Webster. There is also a dental clinic opening in Alameda. There is a new development at East 18th and Lakeshore that will be a full scope medical clinic and would expand into 3rd floor if the site works well. It has also been determined that there is a need for another space in Chinatown and AHS is currently looking for a site.

Buddhist Church

“Madison Park could be front lawn for church”

The Buddhist Church was established in 1901, the current Temple was built in 1927, and the Temple was moved to its current site in 1950, due to the construction of I-880. The building is currently rated as an A on the local historic inventory, and has an application submitted to become a State landmark. Over the next year the Church plans to restore some architectural elements to preserve it has and is evaluating other facilities on site.

The Church has about 380 individual members (about 225 families), and many people that attend events and services that are not formally members. Oakland is a vibrant temple and offers services primarily in Japanese and English, and is increasingly English based. Sunday morning is the biggest weekly draw with 60-200 people depending on the week. Memorial services are typically twice on Saturdays. In addition, the Church hosts several events including the Fathers Day church bazaar with food, games for kids, and raffles; and Obon which is held the first weekend in August as a cultural event, including dancing, food, cultural demonstrations, music, taiko drums, flowers, martial arts. For Obon, which easily draws around 500 people, the Church closes Jackson between 8th and 9th streets.

Youth Services

Several services are designed specifically to serve youth in the Planning Area. A primary interest of these groups is ensuring that youth have access to services and a place to spend time socializing in safe spaces. A specific goal that would aid youth services would be the creation of a youth center that would provide a safe place for young people to spend time, provide recreational amenities for all ages, and provide a space for community meetings and services.

Concerns and Major Issues for Chinatown Service Providers

- The future of the blocks bound by Jackson, 9th, Fallon and 8th streets (BART and Madison Square).
- Chinatown has lost ground over time and reclaiming area is important to the community.
- There has been a lack of planning for infrastructure for the community (such as that there is not enough space for recreation, schools, shopping, or health facilities). Therefore, there is a concern regarding what the City is doing for planning for infrastructure for growth in area and Asian population in general. Culture and ethnicity are intrinsic to the nature of place, and need to embrace as an asset in the planning process.
- City has not planned for Chinatown as a neighborhood, but has planned for institutional uses and Jack London Square, which have crowded Chinatown's growth and cut off parts of what Chinatown used to be.
- Extremely important that other stakeholders understand value generated by Chinatown, and that Chinatown is a key strength in Oakland and regionally.
- Health issues in the area as a result of traffic and air quality issues are a big concern. PM 10 and diesel are already tied to negative health impacts and ongoing studies are finding other impacts. Freeway and arterial roadways are an issue in the Planning Area and health impacts in area will most likely be shown to be significant. In Chinatown the issue is complicated the limitations in addressing the existing units.
- Crime
 - Muggings and robberies, particularly victimizing the elderly, have occurred in the Planning Area.

- While it is improved now, there have been gang activities at Lincoln Park; particularly between youth of junior high and high school age. Not a lot of open space, so park is heavily used by many groups.
- The homeless population living in the area can be intimidating.
- There is a need for better street lighting
- There is a need to address crime and violence in the area and ensure that there are safe public spaces to walk. Right now there is a sense that Madison Park is unsafe, in part due to homeless population. The community needs safe places to exercise, for instance there is a tai chi group but if people want to go walking there is not sufficient lighting.
- The Church does not want their reputation to be associated with instances of crime. The lack of activity and lighting make that area dangerous for members and residents.
- Pedestrian / Traffic Safety
 - Traffic coming from the tunnels connecting to the City of Alameda is dangerous—people drive too fast, even when there is a light and there is a high rate of accidents there. This is particularly problematic for the senior center, which they would consider moving but right now there is no alternative spot.
 - Poor traffic enforcement: people running red lights, there are many accidents, and people speed, particularly in front of courthouse.
 - Seniors often have mobility issues and language issues (can't read signs in English), and might not be as aware, and therefore are particularly vulnerable to fast or reckless traffic.
- Need for more community recreation and open space:
 - Need additional park space that would be usable for all ages, for instance for seniors to do tai chi and programs for kids. Lincoln Park so successful because has range of activities including lunchtime tai chi in gym and kids programs.
 - Madison Park is underused because there are homeless people there, there are only port-o-potties, it is dirty because people sleeping on benches, it is too far out of Chinatown for some Tai Chi users, the design feels unsafe, and people prefer to go to Lincoln where more people are. It does not feel safe or friendly.
 - There is a specific need for a youth center as well as a place for community meetings and services.
- Access
 - Area needs improved mobility and transportation in the area, including availability of and access to services. Right now clients get to Family Bridges by range of modes including public transportation (both bus and BART), walk, some clients drive, and some use make use of fleet of vans (just for adult day seniors).
 - Generally there is not enough parking for clients or staff.

- Transit agencies have not planned for Chinatown. For instance, AC Transit requires that users have to walk to Broadway to access the bus since all timed connections are on Broadway. Another hub of connections could happen closer to Chinatown. Residents don't think level of service is sufficient coming in and out of Chinatown- in terms of frequency and location of stops.
- Residents in the East Lake corridor have to walk through the institutional landscape to access the Lake Merritt BART Station, or have to get downtown to transfer to buses that get them to their destination.
- Concern that TOD development pursued by BART could alter character and drive people out rather than enhancing what exists there and allowing community to build on itself. Any development that occurs should be related to existing community, not displace existing community.
- Concern that building heights allowed are currently out of character with existing neighborhood, though parking restrictions would prevent much significant development. Currently there is not anything taller than 8 stories in area, yet under the new zoning could have 15 -20 story building. If this type of development is to be allowed, the City needs to study impacts to traffic, schools, public services, etc.

LOCAL BUSINESSES AND PROPERTY OWNERS

"Oakland Chinatown chamber of Commerce's mission is to help support small businesses to grow and help vitality."

"What drives Chinatown is small businesses. They are the life blood of community and destination for people looking for Asian products and shopping."

"Oakland Chinatown has the potential to grow- they don't have that in San Francisco"

"Businesses need to get people to come back. People don't always want to return because it is hard to park and the streets are bad."

"In this area we can do dense, large developments near transit, like Hong Kong."

"Present to owners a vision of what the future can look like – if they can see a benefit from making changes it will happen."

The Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce has over 400 members, 25% of whom are local Chinatown merchants. Other members include large corporations such as PG&E, Clorox, and Kaiser as well as general business members throughout the city and the Port of Oakland. There is a diversity of members since the group reflects everyone with an interest in the area. The Oakland Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce has 50-60 businesses in Chinatown.

Chinatown is a financial hub and one of the busiest areas of Oakland, with at least 20,000 people coming to Chinatown on weekends. A retail study of districts in Oakland, entitled

Oakland Retail Enhancement Strategy, was completed in 2008 by Conley Consulting Group, JRDV Architects, and Strategic Economics. The Study found that Chinatown is one of strongest retail centers. There are over 500 small businesses and non-profits, family associations, churches in Chinatown. People come from all over the area to do banking, eating, shopping in Chinatown. One thing that distinguishes Oakland Chinatown is that it has room to grow, which is not true of Chinatown in San Francisco.

The Chinatown Chamber of Commerce is focused on trying to make sure their mission, to help support small businesses to grow and help vitality, is replicated in planning process. They see it as crucial that small businesses continue to be part of community and continue to bring vitality to the area. Planning in the area must take into account the commercial interests and small businesses as they are a local driver in bringing vitality and jobs to the area.

Concerns and Major Issues

- **Competition:** Asian malls in the suburbs mean that people don't have to come to Oakland Chinatown to shop anymore. The suburban malls don't have crime and have free parking so now businesses in Chinatown are hurting. In past when someone moved out there was always someone ready to move in and new business opening up but now there are some vacant spaces.
- **Crime:** Right now there are not enough police on street. The area needs to be safe to draw visitors and businesses.
- **Parking:** need more parking that is free after 6:00 p.m. Increasing ticketing is not good for business.
- **Restrictions:** Right now there are too many restrictions, which make it difficult to build or run a business. Too much paperwork, reporting, requirements. Need a pro-business city. For instance, last March/April when the City was doing downtown re-zoning, 125 property owners came out against height and density limits.
- **Lack of opportunities:** Currently opportunities for new commerce are limited because all retail frontage is already filled up. As opportunities open up, people would fill up.

PERALTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

"People have been mugged in the area which is big concern. Right now female students are escorted to parking lot at night."

The District has a Facilities Master Plan for the Peralta Community College District, but it has not been entirely accepted by the board. For Laney College the main exterior wouldn't change much except for the athletic fields. There is money going into athletic fields for new facilities and new bleachers and a new parking lot with 95 spaces to go with the field house. The field house project is 80% designed but taking longer than hoped; it is a design to build project so will move faster now. Classroom remodeling and a lot of bring up to code, including compliance with ADA.

The District has looked at the Kaiser Convention Center in terms of acquiring from the City and using for educational purposes and events as part of goal of hosting more public events and integrating more into the community. There are now ongoing negotiations for what could be a win- win scenario. Part of negotiation would include use of the Kaiser Convention Center parking lot.

Staff and students are sensitive regarding possibility of taking away land, particularly the parking lot. The administration buildings are old and somewhat deteriorated and the board would like to find a different configuration. In the past they have discussed allowing development above the administrative offices and to have the offices rebuilt, but there is concern regarding the stability of the land.

The parking lot is for students and faculty and is maxed out. Part of reason Peralta decided to have an easy-pass for bus was to address the parking shortage but it is not that effective since 80% of students work and don't have time to take the bus. The peak hours at the school are from 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m., during which time the parking lot is full and overflows to the streets.

The student population at Laney College is about 15,000; there are about 400 faculty, and more if adjuncts are counted. The average age of students is 31; 80-90% of students work; 18% of student body intend to transfer as a goal; 16% already have a degree; 1/3 of students technical-not transferring- going for certificate or AA degree as goal. Most students come by bus or BART to Laney College but many students drive.

Peralta College district service area goes from San Leandro to balance of Alameda County; Laney College serves a population base of 650,000. Peralta has 4 colleges and 67% of students that complete a 3 year program (associates) will attend 3 of 4 colleges, so while a student may be registered at Laney College as their main college, they may take classes at other schools based on class needs and availability. In reality, because the colleges serve single service area, it should be one college with several branches but funding does not make it attractive to consolidate.

There are several programs between the District and Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) that will become stronger as time goes on. Right now only 15% of students coming out of OUSD are prepared for post-secondary education. Currently the District has programs in high schools, but plan to add elementary/ middle school programs to start building awareness at a young age that everyone can go to college. The District also uses summer school programs to try to help bridge the academic gap.

The District has advisory groups for various programs such as culinary arts, construction industry, welding, and media arts. They work with building trades through formal advisory groups so can convey what kind of students they are looking for, what background they need, and how to get apprenticeships and internships.

The Culinary Kitchen at Laney College wants to open a restaurant on campus called Bristol in Building by the Channel. Currently, there is a student cafeteria and restaurant and several vendors.

Concerns and Major Issues

- Sufficient parking an issue; lack of parking makes access more difficult for students.
- Concern that Oak to Ninth development will add significantly to traffic coming through on 7th Street, which is already breaks up the campus and needs to be more pedestrian friendly.
- People have been mugged in the area which is big concern. Right now female students escorted to parking lot at night and to the bus stop. Escorts usually volunteers (athletes). A particular concern at night, but really an issue at all hours. Peralta has its own security force with a budget of \$4 million; Need controlled area to reduce crime rate.
- Currently there is inadequate housing for students and faculty that would want to live closer to campus, especially for international students, out of state students, and in-state students from out of area. There are about 2,000 international students, mostly at Laney College and Berkeley City College. Many students from the central valley want to go to college in urban area and attend Peralta schools because they are a primary feeder to UC Berkeley. If additional housing units go in, they would add more activity and would support more retail. So far it has been difficult to create housing in area. Some examples of student housing could be San Mateo Community College or Greenriver in Washington. Housing is important because it offers stability for students.
- Right now there is a lack of retail and restaurants in the area, in part because of crime in the area—businesses will not establish unless there is a sense of safety. People do want places to go for various purposes. People do eat in Chinatown but realistically many students have more of a McDonalds/Burger King budget, and are unlikely to go a sit-down restaurant.

OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA

“More retail, restaurants, and colorful signage could add vibrancy to area.”

“BART is an important has a transportation hub and needs to be connected to the areas around it: when people go there they know what’s nearby and in what direction.”

The Oakland Museum of California is the 2nd largest museum in the Bay Area and largest cultural institution in East Bay, and therefore should be a place that draws people to the area. The Oakland Museum of California was getting about 160,000 visitors annually prior to their renovations, and hope to double visitors when they reopen. Visitors are primarily from the East Bay, and about 30% of visitors are school kids. Currently, 70% of guests drive and park in garage and about 30% use BART. Improving the connection between the Oakland Museum of California and BART will be crucial to get more people to use BART when accessing the Oakland Museum of California.

When the Oakland Museum of California reopens it will be changing its hours to be open until 8:00 p.m. on Thursdays and open until 7:00 p.m. on first Fridays. School kids tend to visit early in the day- 9:30 or 10:00 a.m., and are gone by early afternoon. The Oakland Museum of California wants to open up more to senior centers and other groups that could fill in the early

afternoons, ideally with group sales. It wants to keep building its audience, particularly in expanding to an evening and weekend audience, made up of families and youth/ young adults, groups for whom BART access will be important.

The Oakland Museum of California will reopen following renovations on May 1st, 2009, at which point 75% of project will be complete. The major change is the renovation of all three collection-galleries. The main impact to the neighborhood will be the relocation of the main entrance to Oak Street. Historically the Oakland Museum of California has had a minimal street presence, which this project is trying to change by adding street presence at the new main entrance. The entrance on Oak Street will feature a stainless steel canopy that extends to street and new ADA ramp. When the Oakland Museum of California reopens in May, the Art and History galleries, store, restaurant and special exhibition gallery will be open. The last phase will renovate the Natural Sciences Gallery and modify the 10th Street entrance, which will be the fieldtrip/school kids entrance. New signage will include a 20' sign/ banner-triangle sign that will be visible from BART station on the corner of Oak and 10th streets; banner signage will be added along the 10th Street façade as well as additional signage at the entrance. Banners will also be added to light poles throughout the area. The Oakland Museum of California want more signage in surrounding neighborhood since currently they don't think many nearby residents are coming in.

The restaurant at reopening will have a new operator and seat about 120 people in the 10,000 square foot space. The restaurant will also do catering for facility rentals, such as for weddings and fundraisers, and will be offering Sunday brunches, and evening cocktail hours to bring people in. Visitors don't need to pay the Oakland Museum of California entry to use the restaurant, but only entrance to restaurant is through the Oakland Museum of California entry so the restaurant is only open when the Oakland Museum of California is open. The Oakland Museum of California store is also accessible without entry fee and shares hours of operation with the Oakland Museum of California.

JACK LONDON RESIDENTS

Jack London District Association represents all interests in Jack London District, with a board mostly made up of residents and one or two business owners that live elsewhere. The Association represents the area from the freeway to the estuary and from the channel to Adeline. Development in area has slowed, and having trouble supporting businesses and filling empty space. Key issues include access to the areas on the other side of I-880.

TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATIONS

AC Transit

A few routes directly serve the Lake Merritt BART, but tend to be minor routes. With the new service one line will be eliminated (the 59) but one line will be added that connects Lake Merritt BART to West Oakland.

In the Planning Area the most important transit spine runs along 11th and 12th streets, which is the most important east/west corridor in Oakland. The proposed BRT service will run on this couplet. The four corridor BRT system, which begins construction in 2012 for an opening

in 2015, is the major change in the long range plan. 90% of the BRT plan is funded; the remaining questions are policy and alignment questions. Through the Planning Area, the BRT would be mixed flow, with a dedicated lane starting at First Avenue. In the meantime, AC Transit is cutting 8% of service and reorganization of existing lines.

Major transfer points in AC Transit system are at 14th Street and Broadway, 12th Street and Broadway, and at the uptown transit center on 20th Street. Near the lake there is boarding and alighting but minimal transferring. Major destinations for riders in the Planning Area include Laney College and Chinatown, both accessed primarily off of the 11th/ 12th street spine. System wide major destinations include Downtown, Laney College, Pill Hill (has shuttles to BART); and BART stations, especially 12th Street.

AC Transit has an Easy Pass agreement with Peralta for students, and would like to negotiate an Easy Pass agreement with Alameda County. An Easy Pass allows the employer or institution to pay a heavily discounted rate for passes, but requires purchase of passes for all employees.

Concerns and Major Issues

- Service is dependent on travel flow, which can be an issue in many parts of district, though within the Planning Area it is not a particularly major problem. However, Measure DD reconstruction of 12th Street will result in fewer lanes and additional signals. Because most lines to East Oakland go along 11th/ 12th changes to the couplet can impact a lot of routes. In worst case scenario lose enough time that it means the buses can't stay on schedule, in which case AC has to either run the service less frequently or add another line.
- There needs to be sufficient space dedicated for stops. AC Transit needs to be able to have stops in reasonable places, which can be difficult because businesses don't want stops right in front, and the City doesn't want to lose parking spaces.
- Lake Merritt BART will be the station that connects most closely to Oak to Ninth, which will need good access. The development will fund some additional bus routes and has an Eco-pass built into dues for at least five years.

BART

BART currently maintains several departments in the Planning Area, in addition to the Lake Merritt BART Station itself. The bare bones use of area by BART include the station itself, the tunnel (which goes under Laney College, the BART parking lot, the BART property, and the edge of Madison Square), the control center (which is a critical use), other subsurface uses (which they are currently planning on keeping there, but that location is not critical), parking (which they are looking for direction from this planning process). BART is also part of the condo association for the ABAG/ MTC building, which has exceeded its capacity and was unfortunately not designed to be expanded.

Most of the space being used by BART in the Planning Area is underground on the block bound by Madison, 9th, Oak and 8th streets. Currently, departments housed underground include police and customer service, neither of which have plans to expand beyond current

space. The operations control center, also located underground plans to expand up to plaza level, adding one level in addition to what is currently located underground. It is necessary for BART to keep operations in their current location due to the hardwired system, and it is a prerequisite that the center expands since the existing control center is not large enough for planned service expansions. For this expansion, BART needs to preserve an envelope that would be subsurface and one level above, about the size of the footprint of the existing fountain. The police facility is likely to stay at that site and there is a possibility of bringing the police to the street level, which might add a sense of safety to streets due to the police presence.

Remaining on block following the dismantling of the headquarters will be station entrances, an HVAC structure, pilings which will be capped to look like bollards, freight elevator, and another elevator that goes from police to concourse.

The cost to build over the BART parking lot, due to the existence of the tunnel, would be approximately \$2-5 million over typical cost. There have been proposals in past to build on parking lot and BART is open to doing joint development on parking lot block, though provision of parking would have to be addressed. Because the block with the (now dismantled) Administration Building has operations underground, there are additional considerations in terms of building on top, both in terms of structure and security. The cost to build on top of the operations block would be more than the cost to build on the parking lot block. A good use for that block might be some kind of hardscape plaza.

Concerns and Major Issues

- A major concern is the mistrust in the Chinatown community. It is a common problem since many neighborhoods were impacted when BART was built. Now in many planning efforts BART is attempting to right past wrongs.
- Shifting entrance would be problematic since logistically there might not be a physical way to bring people up at that point and the underground facilities can't be moved. Don't want to have too many entrances since it already seems as though there is enough energy there and adding entrance seems like would diffuse activates/ pedestrians rather than create vital spots.
- BART needs to develop a solution for parking demand and hopes that this planning process will inform their parking strategy for the station. The area is not seen as a good place for surface parking because it is an urban site. Want parking approach to be mutually agreed upon between the City, community, and BART.
- High density development would add riders, which is a goal for BART. Want to work with and add uses close enough that people take advantage of the transit system. Right now it is assumed that most users accessing Chinatown from BART use the 12th Street Station.
- Financial viability and revenue generation is desirable in terms of development on BART sites, however, if it makes sense in community to not develop the available sits and keep as park/ plaza, there could be value capture from other sites.

- Don't just want to assume that would be mixed use before have sense of what would work there. Promote new development that will provide eyes on street, such as by moving the police office to street level and developing high density housing.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Alameda County

The County has a draft Master Plan, but it is not ready for release yet. The Master Plan focuses on making better use of existing facilities and space, of which several offices, the courthouse, and parking existing in the Planning Area. While the County offices are generally self sufficient in area, they do run educational programs with Laney College such as an apprentice program for station area engineers and educational programs for employees to go back to school.

Concerns and Major Issues

- Parking in area has to meet the needs of jurors and other visitors. 700 spaces at the current ARCO parking structure, which will eventually come down with new development (including parking) taking its place. Parking in the ARCO lot is full every day. It is market rate for employees to park in Arco. If Laney College or Kaiser Convention Center host a large event, the county will open garage to them.
- Increase BART use. Right now only 25% of county employees take BART, despite the station being only two to four blocks away. Use of BART could be a lot higher. People don't take BART because of crime; there have been muggings in the past, especially in winter when it is dark at the end of the work day. Homeless people that live in the bushes by the Oakland Museum of California and on the plaza in front of the administration building deter people from walking in the area at night. The county recently started a shuttle to move people in the morning and afternoon peaks to BART.

City of Alameda

A key concern for the City of Alameda is how to deal with traffic in the area as development occurs. Traffic projections for the area show significant congestion in the area. Oakland city streets can't address Alameda's problems but need to make sure that there are no drastic impacts to access points. Right now the City of Alameda has four crossings onto I-880, all of which are near capacity. Due to the limited options, if there is a problem at one access point, it will impact all others. It is therefore very important to the City of Alameda that there is coordination on the EIR analysis, particularly in terms of intersections in traffic analysis.

A specific point of concern within the Planning Area is the I-880/ Broadway/ Jackson Interchange Project. The City of Alameda is using measure B to help fund some of the work, which is led by ACTIA. 16 alternatives were developed for feasibility study. The new PSR includes a couple of alternatives, which Caltrans is now reviewing. Currently there is no alternative that satisfies both the community and traffic engineering in terms of what is a feasible and acceptable project. Walkability is a concern in the community. The cost of

horseshoe alternative, which is preferred by the community, may be prohibitive, if it is possible at all.

In general, the City of Alameda is moving more towards transit options, particularly in increasing bus access. Alameda residents generally use Fruitvale or 12th Street BART stations depending on direction of travel, and AC Transit provides bus access to both stations. Bus access to BART from Alameda currently doesn't serve the Lake Merritt BART Station. The closest stop is at Harrison and 8th streets, which is not that far away, but will want something closer if becomes a bigger destination.

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4 Attendees

STAKEHOLDERS

Chinatown Coalition

Steven Terusaki

Sara Liss- Katz

Michael Lok

Sherry Hirota

Jeannie Ong

Julia Liou

Karoleen Feng

Alan Yee

Asian Pacific Environmental Network, with Residents

Amber Chan, PAO Lead Organizer

Miya Yoshitani, Associate Director

Chu Qi Li, PAO Leader

Lisa Cheng, PAO Leader

Haibo Pan, PAO Leader

East Bay Local Development Corporation

Jeremy Chi-Ming Liu

Karoleen Feng

Family Bridges

Corrine Jan

Karen Hoy

Asian Health Services

Sherry Hirota, CEO

Julia Liou, Project Manager

Buddhist Church of Oakland

Steven Terusaki, managing director

Mark Shimamoto

Youth Services

Michael Lok, National Council on Crime and Delinquency

Clifford Yee, Asian Health Services Youth Program Coordinator

H. Nhi Chau, OASES

Chen Conwick

Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce, and Commercial Property Owners

Jeannie Ong, CEO, Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce

Carl Chan, President, Oakland Chinatown Chamber Foundation

Francis Lan

Sugiarto Loni, President, Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce

Judy Chu

Phuc Tran, President/ CEO, Oakland Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce

Peralta Community College District

Dr. Sadiq Bello Ikharo, Vice-Chancellor Department of General Services

Bill Withrow, President- Board of Trustees

Oakland Museum of California

Lori Fogarty, Executive Director

Ann Dickson, Director of Marketing and Communications

Jack London Resident

Gary Knecht

AC Transit

Cory LaVigne, Manager of Service and Operations Planning

Nathan Landau

BART

Val Menottii

Tim Chan

Jeff Ordway

County of Alameda

Tim Timberlake, Portfolio Manager, General Services Agency

City of Alameda

Barry Bergman- Bike and pedestrian

Obaid Khan- Traffic Engineering

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