



Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division
1947 Center Street
Berkeley CA 94704

Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meetings #3A and 3B Summary

Ashby + North Berkeley BART Zoning and Development Parameters

Date + Time: October 14 and 20, 2020 at 6 pm

Location: Online via Zoom Webinar virtual meeting

The third Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting was held over two meetings. The summary below represents both these meetings.

Agenda

Meeting 3A: October 15, 2020

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Updates and Process Overview
3. Financial Feasibility Exercise
 - a. Building Height and Affordable Housing
 - b. Higher Levels of Affordable Housing
 - c. Open Space, Infrastructure and Parking
4. Small Group Exercise + Report Back
5. Next Steps
6. Public Comment

Meeting 3B: October 20, 2020

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Crafting “Vision and Priorities” Language
 - a. Affordable Housing
 - b. Pubic + Civic Space
3. Small Group Discussion + Report Back
4. Next Steps
5. Public Comment

Attendance

There were 13 out of 15 CAG members in attendance as well as over 70 members from the public for Meeting 3A. At Meeting 3B, all members of the CAG were present along with approximately 35 members from the public. The following members of the project team (City, BART and consultants) made presentations or helped answer questions during the meetings:

City

- Alisa Shen - Principal Planner
- Jordan Klein - Planning and Development Director

BART

- Abby Thorne-Lyman - TOD Manager



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Consultants

- Karen Murray - Van Meter
Williams Pollack (VMWP)
- Dave Javid - Plan to Place
- Rick Jacobus - Street Level
Advisors

MEETING SUMMARY

The purpose of the third CAG meeting was to provide an overview and understanding of project economics and feasibility, and to gather input from CAG members to craft statements for their *Vision and Priorities* document/deliverable related to the Affordable Housing and Public + Civic Space topics. The following notes summarize the main agenda items, presentation and discussion.

3A: Updates and Process Overview

Alisa Shen provided an overview of the project, updates on the process, and a timeline of outreach activities to date. Below are the key themes from the CAG discussion that followed:

- Provide the updated timeline for deliverables and CAG responsibilities to the CAG
- Confirm that the project team will coordinate with and gather input from absent CAG members

3A: Financial Feasibility Exercise

Rick Jacobus presented an overview of project economics followed by a presentation about how project feasibility relates to the following topics: *Building Heights and Affordability*, *Maximized Affordability*, and *Open Space, Infrastructure, and Parking*. During the presentations, the CAG was provided an opportunity to submit comments, questions, or ideas through a virtual platform. The following is a brief summary of the key themes that came out of that discussion and input:

- **Building Heights and Affordability**
 - Maximize height to maximize affordable housing
 - Find alternatives to market rate housing
 - Ownership isn't a factor, but perhaps should be to address inequities and help build wealth
- **Maximized Affordability**
 - Focus on the number of units over the percentage, or a mixture of the two
 - Reduce the timeline for affordable housing, waiting 25+ years is not acceptable. Though others expressed that waiting is ok.
 - Move forward with a bond measure for affordable housing funding
- **Open Space, Infrastructure, and Parking**
 - Consider market rate housing as a funding source of last resort
 - Strive for affordable housing and a desirable infrastructure



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- Create room for infrastructure, beyond the baseline, to be built in time as funding come in, including open space and shared spaces
- Explore more alternative transportation options to support commuters who drive and to reduce the need for parking

3A: Small Group Exercise + Report Back

Following the financial feasibility presentation, the CAG (and public) were split into three virtual breakout rooms to further discuss the following three topics: *Building Heights and Affordability; Maximized Affordability;* and *Open Space, Infrastructure, and Parking*. Given that it was a CAG meeting, the discussion was limited to CAG members, while meeting participants observed. There was time committed to public comment later in the meeting. Questions that were raised by the CAG in Meeting 3A were addressed at Meeting 3B and in the Padlet platform (*see the Appendix for responses to questions*).

3A: Homework Assignment

CAG members were given a “homework” assignment to complete between Meetings 3A and 3B in preparation for the CAG Meeting 3B discussion around what language to include in their *Vision and Priorities* document. See the Appendix for a summary of responses to that assignment.

3B: Crafting Vision and Priorities Language

At CAG Meeting 3B, held on October 20, 2020, the project team provided a recap of the prior meeting and a summary of themes from the CAG homework assignment (*see the Appendix for more details about the input received*). The CAG had an opportunity to provide additional input before moving into the small group discussion, below is a summary of those comments.

- Provide details on the transition from market rate housing to commercial
- Consider optimizing housing by reducing ground floor amenities at North Berkeley. At Ashby, could a portion of the Flea Market use ground floor interior spaces?
- Clarify predicted project finances, including construction costs, property taxes, and funding for non-profit developers
- Clarify affordability levels, specifically “moderate income”
- Provide information on residential rents city-wide
- Clarify the elements of the *Vision and Priorities* document

3B: Small Group Discussion

The CAG (and public) was split into three breakout rooms to discuss the Vision and Priority Statements that were derived from input received from the CAG. The three groups were divided by the following: *Ashby Affordable Housing, North Berkeley Affordable Housing,* and *Ashby and North Berkeley Public + Civic Space*. Given that it was a CAG meeting, the discussion



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was limited to CAG members, while meeting participants observed. There was time committed to public comment later in the meeting.

Below are the Vision and Priorities statements that CAG members were asked to provide input and share their general preferences about. The CAG also added additional statements during the small group discussions (those statements are in italics) (*see the Appendix for more details of the input received*):

1. Ashby Affordable Housing

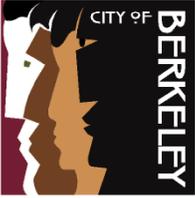
- A. Maximize affordable housing
- B. Strive to achieve 100% affordable housing
- C. Include at least 450 units of affordable housing (mix of 30%/50%/80% AMI) + 25-50% moderate
- D. Create small parcels and maximize affordable housing based on available funds (x% of City housing money)
- E. 50% income restricted at both stations, not less than 250 units for very low income and formerly homeless
- F. Preference for local residents/displaced residents
- G. *Maximize the number of affordable housing units*
- H. *Aim to complete construction by 2030*
- I. *Select a nonprofit master developer who will maximize affordable housing*
- J. *Identify another \$x million in local affordable housing funding from a combination of sources by 2025*
- K. *Invite private and institutional investors to fund equitable development at Ashby BART*

2. North Berkeley Affordable Housing

- A. Maximize affordable housing consistent with neighborhood context (Ideally 4 stories)
- B. Maximize the height to maximize affordability (up to 8 stories)
- C. Maximize affordable housing as soon as possible
- D. Maximize affordable housing based on city funding (Y%)
- E. Include at least 425 affordable units + 25-50% moderate
- F. 50% income restricted at both stations, not less than 250 units for very low income and formerly homeless
- G. Strive for 100% affordable housing
- H. *Range of Home Sizes so not all 1 br or 2 br*

3. Ashby Public + Civic Space

- A. Provide a public plaza/gathering space on the BART site
- B. Repurpose adjacent streets for public space
- C. Combine space from Adeline street and BART site for plaza
- D. Prioritize the Berkeley Community Flea Market



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- E. Prioritize indoor community space
 - F. Include affordable retail, nonprofit and arts on ground floor
 - G. Include public green space/Design with nature
- 4. North Berkeley Public + Civic Space**
- A. Create protected bikeway connecting Ohlone Greenway
 - B. No need to create new public amenities (other than greenway)
 - C. Design site so Greenway is the 'Main Address'

Next Steps

Prior to public comment for each meeting, the project team discussed future engagement opportunities including an opportunity to email or mail additional comments through October 30 and office hours (October 26th and 28th) and the next CAG meeting planned in December.

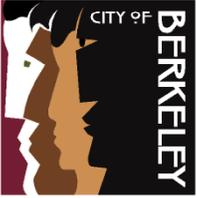
Public Comments

The following are notes from the public comments received from the approximately 30 meeting participants who provided comments.

- Expand on the idea that public land should be used for public good, in particular, BART's role in giving the land back to the community
- Maximize affordable housing with minimum market rate (if any) at a range of affordability, including moderate income
- Focus on equity and accomplish this through local hiring
- Focus on the choice of housing, building heights, funding, and timeline
- Provide examples of zoning and how it will be factored into the process
- Consider context of the neighborhoods and provide this while presenting on all issues
- Focus on who is not at the table and invite low income or highly affected communities to these engagements
- Encourage developer to contribute to community amenities and benefits, including education costs in communities
- Elaborate on EIR and AB2923
- Build on a faster timeline
- Diversify approach to the project
- Provide an opportunity to hear public comments collected outside the meetings

Adjournment

The meetings adjourned at 9:20pm and 8:45pm. Additional comments are accepted through October 30th by email and mail.



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For more information, please visit: www.cityofberkeley.info/bartplanning.