

## **Advisory Council Meeting Summary DRAFT**

**September 28, 2021, 5:30-7:30 p.m.**

Council Members Present in person at 49<sup>th</sup> South Van Ness: Majeid Crawford, Norma Garcia, Oscar Grande, Lara Kiswani, Raquel Redondiez, Del Seymour, Mary Travis-Allen, Ben Wong, Malcolm Yeung.

Council Members Present online: Tiffany Carter

Council Members Absent: None

City Staff Present: Tameeka Bennett, Miriam Chion, Claudia Flores, Rich Hillis (Planning Director), Maia Small.

Facilitator: Raquel Redondiez

Topic: This meeting was focused on the review of the Planning Budget and the potential changes to address Equity Council priorities on issues and strategies.

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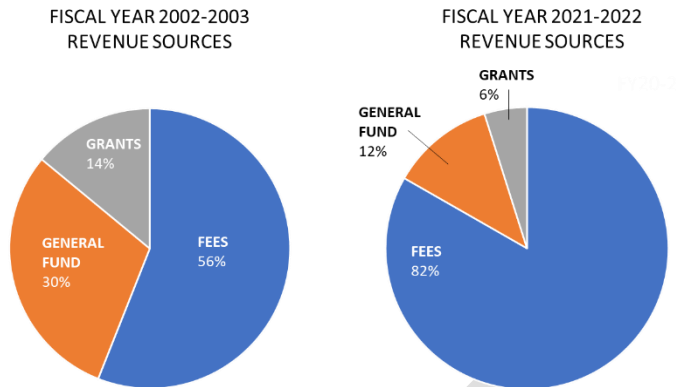
### **1. Opening**

Raquel welcomed Equity Council members to the first in-person meeting. Raquel asked Mary to read the acknowledgement of the Ramaytush Ohlone Land. Raquel reviewed the common ground and agenda. She then invited attendees to enjoy the Pilipino food from Mestiza and explained the challenges encountered by this restaurant to survive the pandemic shutdown.

### **2. Presentation of the Planning Department Budget**

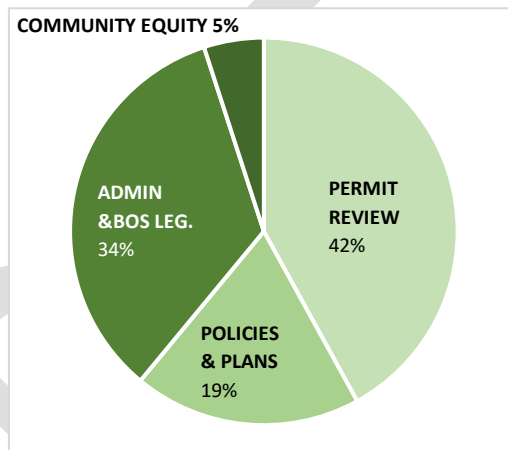
Rich provided an overview of the budget revenues and expenditures:

- Fees are paid by developers or property owners for permit review; development impact fees; or collected from other agencies for Planning staff work
- City's General Fund is comprised of property, sales, payroll, and other taxes collected by the City and County
- Grants are from regional agencies, other government entities



Rich and Miriam reviewed the allocation of Planning resources by major areas of work:

FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 EXPENDITURE BY WORK PROGRAM



## LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Substantial share of Planning Department work relying on fees: Several concerns were raised about the scale of the change in the reliance from fees over the past 20 years, as a share and as a total. Questions were also raised about the constraints created by the fee structure on expenditure, given that those resources must be spent primarily on permit processing. The location of projects in the Eastern Neighborhoods over the past 10 years was a substantial issue. Major concerns were raised about the ability of the Planning Department to allocate funding community and neighborhood planning.

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

### Integrated Community Strategies Group

- **Equity in a healthy neighborhood:** What does equity look like in a healthy neighborhood? How can the City allocate resources, build the capacity, and develop integrated strategies that can be implemented?

- **Cultural Districts:** The notion of cultural districts as stabilizing factors cannot be overstated. Many cultural district businesses made it through the crisis because of the earlier infrastructure and investment through the cultural districts. However, Cultural districts are all in different stages and have different needs. There is a lack of clarity for some of them on what the intent of the cultural districts is and what to do with the \$1 mill budget without enough capacity, technical assistance, or clear expectations and deliverables. The CHES reports provide a good baseline for needs and targets. Some of the older Cultural Districts are better organized. In the case of the Mission, a focus on cultural preservation offers a clear goal. We also have identified the value of the Cultural Districts for San Francisco. The Cultural Districts could figure out how to help each other more.
- **City funding for CBOs and city strategies:** The current funding paradigm is for CBOs to get the money from the City and do the work that the agency/RFP/contract says but without clear structure or coordination. The community needs to figure out what the strategies are. For example, when the city funds a CBO to run an afterschool program, the CBO has to figure out the city's priorities for such programs. There might be an opportunity for Cultural Districts to flip that paradigm. They can help frame and create the right model and baseline.
- **Communication and Collaboration within the City:** The City needs internal mechanisms for sharing, communication, and supporting collaboration among City staff. Designating resources for the role of "directing traffic" is critical. This collaboration would provide administrative and civic cohesion. The City could be a powerful partner in all the work that we are doing in the long-term.
- **Challenges of concentrated development:** When I see a high percent of the budget focused on project review and hyper concentration of development activity in the Eastern Neighborhoods, I understand why my staff is so busy fighting development.
- **Community clinics:** Mental health support is critical. Planning can support or collaborate with other agencies and bring other City resources.

## Wealth and Jobs Group

- **Timely development of strategies:** The pandemic flagged the substantial challenges we are confronting. The City and Planning have been doing little things but not delving into the big issues. DPH provided some temp jobs but no commitment from DPH or the City for good paying jobs. This is a key moment to define access to jobs and wealth to our communities given the scale of available commercial space. We need to develop a land use strategy that provides space access to communities. Cultural Districts could be a good platform for community investments, but it needs a careful exploration of governing structure and decision-making. We are at a crossroads. We need to have conversations on how to use space, redefine the use of the available commercial space. Need to shift from intention to resources: land use controls, assets controls, access to capital, and business assistance and mentorship.
- **Place-based strategies:** We need to place based our strategies. The link to the community experience will provide valuable stories. We need to shift from plain retail to experiences. People want a story.
- **Equity in land use controls:** We need land use controls that address equity. Equity for granting a use. Race blind controls have led to inequities in the past. Why is it so hard for communities of color to have access to business space? Only well capitalized businesses have access to land and investments. Big biz can wait long time to occupy the space. Small biz or cultural organizations

cannot. Regulations can hold cultural resources to land use. How can we use vacant small ground floors or vacant lots? Many of these spaces are kept vacant by absentee landlords. Planning hasn't put resources to address this challenge.

- **Cultural Districts:** Ground floor space has been failing. We need to transition from retail to experiencing community cultures, Chinatown. Have you seen Street Dreams in Little Havana? They provide an experience. In contrast, Third Street is open to anything. We need more controls that support the experience of the community. This is what Cultural Districts could provide. Cultural Districts could provide tight controls, provide openings for minority owned businesses. We need more staff on Cultural Districts to support the board organization, development of strategies, and provision of economic resources. Can we invest in equity in Cultural Districts? Can the community land bank in Cultural Districts?
- **Community economic development guided by communities:** What would a community-driven program look like? It wouldn't be helpful to have a cultural district or an economic development association with a governing board unable to support small biz or pressured by big biz. We should think about a governing structure where the community is guiding decisions for the community. We need to think about how to support small biz or cultural organizations. Small entrepreneurs have not been able to compete for space. They have relied on family funds. We should be very selective on uses, activities, and biz for 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for example. Can we explore the equivalent of small site acquisitions for commercial properties? For small businesses? CBOs have an inventory of affordable housing stock with commercial space that can be programmed to support small businesses. We can support social entrepreneurship
- **Successful examples today and from the past:** We have successful examples of small enterprises. We have had positive experiences in the past with Credit Union access and job security through unions. Many CBOs and social entrepreneurship like TL Municipal are doing very good work. A solid example is repurposing the Post Office for business incubators or La Cocina. Those are proven concepts.

### Community Visibility Group

- **Community Engagement in all Plans:** Budget for racial and social equity work needs to be assured. We need to identify the source of funding for community engagement.
- **Increase representation of communities of color in planning and opportunities for youth and staff of color:** (1) How can we create a pipeline of "community" planners? There needs to be a pipeline of our community members that go from public school into being planners. Strategies needs to focus on people who are coming from the community, who know the area and the families. (2) We also need an emphasis on programming for young people, beyond high-school age, with dedicated staff here and dedicated monies. (3) Can the community participate in the hiring panels? Can we review applications and be part of interview panels? What does it look like to send the announcements through community networks that are already set up like Soma Pilipinas? We also need to mitigate barriers such as the length of the application process and create apprenticeships.

- **Reframing narratives of communities:** We know where our equity needs in our communities are, but the real work needs to start internally within the Department. The Equity Council needs to learn about the real work being done inside the City to turn things around. We need deep repair inside the department. We don't want to travel down the same roads again with no new outcomes, the community needs to be part of the internal work. We need to ensure funding to carry the community narratives. We need to identify specific funding sources with ties to the General Fund and specific commitments. We need to identify the hardlines that staff and directors will draw in the specific funding requests.

## Housing Stability Group

- **Housing stability requires a comprehensive approach:** Wealth instability is causing the housing instability—must address this first. Government displacement and land-taking – redevelopment wealth damage must be repaired.
- **Addressing harm:** The promises of the past were not fulfilled. We need to bring resources and build capacity to stabilize the projects in Bayview and Fillmore with current residences and their families. Resources are not going to the communities that were displaced. Redevelopment stripped my whole community.
- **Challenges in Black communities:** There are no policies to undo the wealth damage and repair housing instability. Bayview had the highest home ownership, but the policies stripped us of house and land. At the same time, government policies supported neighborhoods for white households in the suburbs. Policies and investment were strategically designed to build up the wealth of the white middle class, while redlining black communities. We currently have substantial assets in the Fillmore- this is land still owned by the government to undo urban renewal. We should be able to address reparations, instead it is incarceration, or the land goes to the Warriors. We need environmental justice recognition in Bayview Hunters Point.
- **Wealth instability:** Wealth instability causes housing instability. This is foundational. We can't have equity in housing unless people can pay the same rent which comes from jobs. Even with first time home buyers, people cannot keep their house. For example, people who work at 49 S Van Ness can live wherever they want. Where are the Black people living? In a public housing project? There is no dignity in public housing. Redevelopment promised good public housing projects – and wealth building was supposed to be aligned, but then they created a crisis – by destroying what was there and then pretend to be “giving it back.” Housing should be giving wealth to those who were impacted. A good OEWD job program is critical, people feel like they can never get out of the housing project. This is critical. Welfare and food stamps don't translate into wealth opportunity.
- **Displaced communities:** Now people leave—displaced to Antioch-- and have a crisis of transportation. Commute was designed for elite- now it is flipped—the elite are in the city with the jobs and communities of color have great distances in packed freeways. And they want to introduce congestion pricing. We need a comprehensive approach to make it all work together.

- **Supporting homeownership:** People need to learn money management, to be good stewards of their money to be on ramping into home ownership. It is nice to get down payment assistance, but people who do get in have a fear of losing the house. They need support systems for resiliency, to sustain the home ownership and keep the building running. One difficult moment can result in repossessions and a downward spiral. Need a safety net.

#### **Summary of potential budget changes from the four groups:**

- Cultural Districts: Ensuring funding Cultural Districts to build capacity, help stabilize vulnerable communities and to strengthen San Francisco's cultural communities. This requires MOHCD funding.
- Interagency collaboration: Better utilize or augment resources to strengthen city agency collaboration and integration, address fragmented city strategies. Identify investments in housing stability through integration of wealth building, transportation and housing.
- Community economic strategy: Provide funding and staff to develop wealth building strategies in communities of color and low-income communities. Identify small business development strategies and community asset building within Cultural Districts and other targeted communities.
- Community Engagement in all plans: Need to clearly identify resources for the inclusion of community narratives and engagement in all plans.
- Community Equity Work: All General Fund resources should be targeted for equity work within the Planning Department. Racial and social equity work needs to be clearly defined. We need to expand resources for bringing communities of color in Planning and involving youth and children in planning practices.
- Housing Stability: Expand resources in policies, interagency coordination, and projects that provide housing stability for homeless or struggling households. Invest in vehicles that provide communities access to resources and remove financial and institutional barriers.
- Homeownership for displaced communities: identify policies, investments, and interagency collaborations to prioritize strategies that allow displaced communities to access homeownership.
- Pilot projects:
  - Community clinics that integrate access to health, housing, and jobs, including mental health services.
  - Small business incubator programs that replicate models like La Cocina.
  - Identify projects that build wealth for Black communities and other people of color, and provide a safety net.

#### **Next Steps**

- Staff to support formation of small groups
- Discussion of Planning Budget at next meeting
- Next meeting: September 28, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm