

Community Equity Council Meeting

January 25, 2022

Council Members Present (online): Majeid Crawford, Tiffany Carter, Mahsa Hakimi, Ben Wong, Raquel Redondiez, Mary Travis-Allen, Del Seymour

Council Members Absent: Malcolm Yeung, Lara Kiswani, Norma Garcia

City Staff Present: Rich Hillis (Planning Director), Eric Shaw (Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development Director), Miriam Chion, Claudia Flores, Maia Small, Kamene Ogidi, Megan Calpin

Facilitator: Mahsa Hakimi

1. Opening

Mahsa welcomed the Equity Council to the virtual meeting. Council members read the land acknowledgement naming the Council's work on unceded Ramaytush Ohlone lands and Mahsa read a recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s radical legacy. Mahsa asked the Council about what the pandemic has allowed them to practice or learn.

2. Updates on Key Actions

Mahsa provided updates on key actions, including the release of the Equity Council Strategies on the website ready for sharing with networks and the oral histories project, which collects the stories of Equity Council members. Mary presented on filling the empty Equity Council position.

Sharing Equity Council Strategies with communities: A Council member suggested that in addition to the website, community meetings are hosted to present all 15 strategies featured on the website.

3. Budget Discussion

SF Planning Rich Hillis and Megan Calpin, presented the Planning Department Proposed Budget, including how the Equity Council Strategies were incorporated and the use of the Budget Equity Assessment Tool, which identifies the work programs and contracts centered on equity. The proposed FY 2022-24 work program and budget will be first approved by the Planning Commission in February ([document](#) presented at Commission), and then submitted to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors for their final approval by June.

Impacts of the pandemic: The pandemic-induced stalled development, which resulted in a decline in fee revenues in the first year of the pandemic, revenues declined by \$10M and may decrease by about \$8M this year.

Resources for community engagement: Despite the reduction in Planning revenues and in response of the Equity Council requests, the budget includes \$1.5 million for community engagement over two years. Equity Council members noted that increased capacity-building within neighborhoods with limited resources, specifically American Indian communities, should be a priority.

Clarifying equity criteria: Equity Council members wanted to understand how the equity tool evaluates and ensures accountability to equity work within work programs and contracts. Work programs, projects, and contracts are evaluated according to the budget tool's three primary criteria which include equity priority issue areas like housing, equity geographies, and equity populations.

Transparency and access to contracts: Equity Council members wanted to understand how contractors are held accountable to equity work in their scope. Qualifying language is being added to contracts including, for example, whether the contractor can speak the languages of communities being engaged. Planning is working on establishing larger contracts with community partners who are already work within equity geographies, work with equity populations, or work in equity priority issue areas. Planning is also working to identify ways that partners can hold larger contracts and acknowledged that contracting with community organizations continues to be a logistical challenge and a burden for those organizations. Council members that have experienced the contracting process with Planning emphasized the challenge.

Ensure priority of targeted communities: Equity Council members noted that equity geographies as identified in the Budget Equity Assessment Tool might be too broad, and that the tool should ensure a focus on marginalized communities within neighborhoods. Council members also identified the term "tool" as language that obscures and alienates community members, preferring that a project or process is more clearly described.

Equity in environmental analysis: Equity Council members were concerned that, according to the Budget Equity Assessment tool, environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) does not address social and racial equity, though many projects that go through CEQA review impact communities of color. Planning staff explained that while CEQA cannot include social and racial impacts in its analysis, plans can and must. For example, the Housing Element under development addresses racial and social equity beyond CEQA's legal constraints.

4. Housing Discussion

Planning staff, Maia Small, provided an overview of key goals and priorities of the [Housing Element](#) Draft 2. MOHCD Director Eric Shaw provided an overview of the current housing programs and priorities.

Addressing the stigma and othering of Black middle-class residents: Equity Council members discussed the lack of housing for the Black middle-class, and how it reflects racial class stigmas associated with the Black population. Specifically, that affordable housing has become synonymous with housing for

American Indian, Black, and other communities of color. Because of this stigma, discrimination and othering are experiences shared by Black residents in well-resourced neighborhoods.

Director Shaw shared that the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) recognizes the importance of a welcoming environment when building affordable housing in well-resource areas.

Prioritizing Housing Element implementation: Equity Council members discussed the scope and efficacy of the Housing Element as a mechanism to address housing injustice. It is important to Council members that the Housing Element be implemented and that inter-departmental coordination between departments like MOHCD and planning occur to realize equitable housing programs and plans.

Director Hillis responded that community guidance and the participation of other departments in shaping the Housing Element are critical as other departments would implement the plan. Director Shaw shared that the Housing Element is a guidance for subsequent policies and practices alongside other MOHCD systems and practices.

Ensuring community investments are aligned with housing: Equity Council members highlighted the need of community investments to meet housing needs for American Indian, Black, and other communities of color. Community investments in infrastructure, businesses and services allowed communities to stay in the city and thrive. Equity Council members were critical of a "checklist" approach to implementing housing investments. Despite the fulfillment of "checklists" of varied programs and projects, there is ongoing displacement of American Indian, Black, and other communities of color. City agencies need to pay attention to the specific community investments in each community and in each neighborhood.

Director Shaw shared that MOHCD is thinking holistically about how programs are engaged through the One MOHCD Strategy. MOHCD is building more on the West side of the city as well as investing in additional community infrastructure on the East side to support new housing.

Expanding anti-displacement strategies: While Equity Council members recognized Director Shaw's inheritance of a legacy of institutional racism and displacement, the Council were interested in MOHCD's anti-displacement strategies and equitable investments.

Director Shaw shared that while MOHCD has targeted communities, they are focusing on addressing structural issues by creating housing opportunities, working on housing stabilization, and neighborhood preference. And, that response time is an important consideration in the delivery of housing, as there are 11,000 units in the [affordable housing pipeline](#). Director Hillis shared that the Housing Element helps Planning focus on developing projects that are community-specific.

Continuing the interagency conversation: Council members requested a follow up with both MOHCD and Planning directors to discuss progress on housing policies and investments to meet the needs of the American Indian, Black, and Communities of Color.

5. Closing

Mahsa announced the next Council meeting on February 22, 2022 at 9am, and closed the meeting.