

## Community Equity Council Meeting

February 22, 2022

**Council Members Present (online):** Del Seymour, Norma Garcia, Mary Travis-Allen, Raquel Redondiez, Mahsa Hakimi, Lara Kiswani, Majeid Crawford, Ben Wong

**Council Members Absent:** Tiffany Carter, Malcolm Yeung

**City Staff Present:** Planning Director Rich Hillis, Miriam Chion, Claudia Flores, Kamene Ogidi, Andrea Nelson

**Facilitator:** Del Seymour

### 1. Opening

Del welcomed the Equity Council to the virtual meeting and a Council member read the land acknowledgement of the Council's work on unceded Ramaytush Ohlone lands. Del provided an overview of the agenda and Miriam and Director Hillis introduced the discussion topic.

### 2. Community Planning Discussion

Miriam and Director Hillis introduced the Community Planning discussion topic highlighting that while past planning was focused on growth and had significant impacts on communities, the Community Equity Division is pursuing neighborhood planning centered on community partnerships. They acknowledged that neighborhood planning in the past has enforced patterns of segregation and exclusion and that trust building would take time.

Planning staff presented on current community planning projects and related community investment priorities. The presentation covered three current community plans including Sunset Forward, the Tenderloin Community Action Plan, and the Mission Action Plan 2020. These plans were the product of different community organizing processes, highlighted issues particular to each neighborhood, and consequently called for neighborhood-specific community investments.

The presentation ended with discussion questions addressing neighborhood-specific priorities for community planning. Discussion questions asked Council members about their priority neighborhoods, collaborations, and investments for community planning, perspectives on how to integrate communities while stabilizing them, and priorities for how an unprecedented \$750k in community engagement dollars allocated to the Community Equity Division could be spent.

**Framing Language:** Some Council members shared concern over language posed in the discussion question "Will these components of a community plan support live, work, play, and pray?" Noting that "pray" could exclude a range of people, and naming that places of religious worship are overall places to

gather in community. Council members agreed to change the language to “...live, work, play, and gather.”

**Integrating & Stabilizing Communities:** Council members were jointly concerned about integrating and diversifying western neighborhood communities and also preserving communities of color through economic stabilization.

Some Council members were concerned about the predominance of community planning efforts in eastern neighborhoods with communities of color when western neighborhoods continue to be racially homogenous. Council members believe that community planning should proactively run counter to past patterns of racial and economic segregation. Consequently, community planning efforts should be focused on diversifying western neighborhoods racially and economically, despite resistance to these changes.

**Planning’s Role in Economic Stabilization:** Council members are equally concerned that community plans preserve existing communities of color specifically through economic stabilization. Council members stress Planning’s role in rectifying economic circumstances in communities of color, citing redlining and development induced displacement in areas like Geary Blvd and the Fillmore as consequences of inequitable planning interventions. Council members specifically named the Fillmore and the Bayview’s 3<sup>rd</sup> street corridor as priority targets for economic vitality.

**Rectifying Harm Through Interdepartmental Collaboration:** Planning acknowledged that harm as been done and can be reversed in part through a community-based interdepartmental approach: collaboration with MOHCD on affordable housing, changes in the Planning Code, and business development funding. The Monster in the Mission project is an example of the success of this approach. Faced with a development project strongly opposed by Mission residents, communities in the Mission advocated for a city-owned affordable housing, Planning changed the Planning Code, and OEWD/MOHCD organized the funding to allow for a city-owned development.

Considering the inter-departmental effort needed for community stabilization, Miriam suggested that OEWD be invited to a future Council meeting and Council members concurred.

**Protective Benefits of Community Planning:** Some Council members shared that community plans and community planning tools have been helpful, protecting communities in the face of development and economic challenges. A Council member named community benefit agreements while another Council member shared that implementation one of the most critical pieces of the community planning process. They shared that community planning is most successful when there is community power to drive implementation consistent with community visions for the neighborhood. Neighborhood plans ensure preservation of neighborhood-serving uses, while also allowing communities to change implementation of existing uses.

**Redistricting & Community Resourcing:** Council members are concerned about deprioritizing communities of color in the allocation of citywide resources during the redistricting process. Some Council members believe that there is ultimately a lack of sensitivity from City leaders about the needs and priorities of communities of color.

here is concern about displacement of communities of color from the city as a byproduct of redistricting. Districts with communities of color can be denser and must shed some of their population during the redistricting process, dividing communities of color and translating to fewer resources.

Some Council members would like Planning to support communities in the redistricting process by providing key data and information resources. This support would align with the Council's Integrated Community Strategies and could include information such as housing vacancy data, records of certificate of occupancy, or coordination with Cultural Districts on CHHESS strategies. Planning will check with the redistricting task force to explore opportunities for engagement, and in the meanwhile, will provide the data requested by Council members.

**Community Engagement Funding:** Council members highlighted the need for consistent and additional funding from the City to resource community planning by community based organizations. Some Council members shared that \$750k in community engagement funding was too small and asked if the amount could be increased. The \$750k in community engagement funds is an unprecedented amount allocated to a division for community engagement.

A Council member shared concern about organizations losing city funding due to contentious political positions that may run counter to that of the City.

Council members requested follow up items to support their prioritization of the \$750k community engagement funding. Director Hillis agreed to provide a list of priority actions for how the \$750k in community engagement funds could be spent and share this list with the Council for review. Council members also requested that Planning perform an assessment of current community partners – including information on how these organizations are resourced and how that resourcing impacts their community engagement.

### 3. Equity Council Strategies Discussion

Planning staff presented a proposal for how Equity Council Strategies could be shared and discussed with communities. The proposal suggested that Equity Council Strategies be shared over a series of community forums hosted by community organizations during regular meeting times. And, that Planning would resource a participating community organization if they preferred to host a community forum outside of regular meeting times.

**Round of review of Equity Council Strategies:** Some council members suggested that Equity Council members take one more round of review of the strategies to incorporate any additional edits before they are shared with communities.

**Sharing Equity Council Strategies:** Some Equity Council members suggested that their community organizations or a group of Cultural Districts host the series of community forums. This will require staff support given that some Cultural Districts have limited staff capacity and limited community engagement. It would be important that city funds for community engagement come with an outline of deliverables.

Planning staff suggested that funding Cultural District staffing could establish a new pipeline toward American Indian, Black, and other communities of color grassroots leadership. Council members agreed with the suggestion that an intermediary organization be funded to provide supplemental staff to Cultural Districts for community engagement, and that Cultural Districts select the staff hired by the intermediary organization.

#### 4. Key Updates

Council members identified a strong candidate who will be applying to be on the Equity Council to replace former Council member Oscar Grande. Additionally, Council members suggested that the job posting for the Community Engagement Manager be shared with Cultural Districts. Because the Community Engagement Manager position is a substantial one, meant to bring communities into Planning, Miriam suggests that Council members share the job posting with their networks.

#### 5. Closing

Del provides closing words and adjourns the meeting. The next meeting will be held on March 22, 2022.