

Community Equity Council Meeting

March 28th, 2023

Facilitator: Majeid Crawford

Councilmembers In-Person: Majeid Crawford, Tiffany Carter, Masha Hakimi, Mary Travis-Allen, and Anni Chung

Councilmembers Online: Ben Wong, Delano Seymour, and William Ortiz

Councilmembers Absent: Raquel, Lara Kiswani

Staff: Oscar Grande, Rich Hillis, Miriam Chion

1. Opening

Majeid, as the facilitator, opened the meeting. William read the statement acknowledging that the Equity Council's work is done on unceded Ramaytush Ohlone lands. Majeid also gave an acknowledgement of Women's History Month and the start of Ramadhan while going over community guidelines.

2. 2023 Focus Area Exercise

Staff opened the conversation about the council's yearly workplan with a guiding question – **what should the Equity Council's focus areas of 2023 be?**

Before facilitating a discussion for councilmembers, Oscar delivered a list of projects that staff is working on across all divisions requested by Councilmember Majeid. Additionally, he shared key department resources, tools, and other large scale development projects. The exercise aimed to increase the council's understanding of the department's scope of work and to identify potential projects for the 2023 Equity Council workplan.

The councilmembers were asked to select 1-2 projects that stood out and reflect on:

- Who does this project, program, policy impact?
- What types of racial equity change will this bring about?
- Who has decision making authority to approve/pass/enact?

Discussion

Given the exercise councilmembers posed several lines of inquiry and themes in their discussion.

To effectively identify a focus area, Planning staff must provide precise guidance on the projects that the council can feasibly impact within a reasonable timeframe – Councilmembers clearly and repeatedly expressed concerns around the scale of their governance and impact on certain project types. It is extremely important for members to work on projects that are meaningful, impactful to their respective communities, and where results can be seen in real time. The exercise did not capture those concerns. Therefore, to better understand which projects the Council may have the most impact on, with the help of staff, members ranked each project on the scale of:

- 1 – the department has larger influence on the project outcome
- 2 – the department has some influence, but can not influence the entire project outcome
- 3 – the department has little to no influence on the project outcome
- ★ – councilmembers flagged for interests, questions, or concerns

The workplan list with rankings is as follows:

Community Specific Projects:

- Building Permits: 3
- Cannabis: 2 ★
- Mill’s Act Program: 3
- Citywide Survey: 1
- Historic Context Statements: 1
- Historic Preservation: 1

Overall Department:

- Housing Element: ★
- Department Budget: 2
- Building Permits: 3
- Cannabis: 2 ★
- Mill’s Act Program: 3
- Citywide Survey: 1
- Historic Context Statements: 1
- Historic Preservation: 1

Environmental Planning Division:

- General Plan: 1
- Downtown Recovery: ★
- SE Resilience Model: 1

- Hiring/Promotion: 2
- Land Use: 2

Current Planning Division:

- Building Permits: 3
- Cannabis: 2
- Mill’s Act Program: 3
- Citywide Survey: 1
- Historic Context Statements: 1
- Historic Preservation: 1

Citywide Planning Division:

- Shared Spaces: 1
- Transportation: 1
- GG Greenway: 1
- Freeway Assess: 1

Community Equity Planning Division:

- Equity Plan: 1
- Equity Impact Analysis: 1
- Planning Code: 1
- Affordable Housing Funding: 2
- Comms And Community: 1

Upon completing the exercise, council members have a better understanding of the department’s workplan by division and how much discretion the department has over each listed project.

Challenges arose in determining a yearly focus given each member’s different community representations, needs, and priorities. A Councilmember highlighted the need to address how the Council will choose a focus area when each member represents diverse communities with distinct needs and priorities. As each member brings unique skillsets and perspectives to the council, there was a suggestion to establish sub-groups or committees in the future to better represent the diversity of interests and levels of capacities within the council.

Council members expressed concerns about understanding the scope of the Equity Council. A councilmember emphasized the ambiguous usage of "we" by Planning staff in project completion references. Council members were unsure whether they were included in the "we" and in what capacity they could impact project outcomes. Therefore, a clear understanding of whether the council's role is solely to consult Planning staff or to work in partnership towards project completion must be established after selecting a focus area.

3. Updates

Affordable Housing Leadership Group

The Affordable Housing Leadership Group has been established with leaders across different sectors to consult the department on affordable housing funding, acquisition, and development strategies.

Community Engagement Fellowships

Three Community Engagement Fellows will be joining the department in May. The fellows are from the Black and American Indian communities. Once a week they will be working with the department in partnership with community-based organizations to build capacity and assist with community engagement efforts in equity communities.

Rezoning in Well Resourced Neighborhoods

The rezoning effort that implements an action in the housing element is progressing. If the Council wants further updates this can be brought back for discussion.

4. Closing

Majeid closed the meeting and reminded council members that the next Equity Council meeting will take place on April 25th, 2023 at the La Cocina Municipal Marketplace. The April Equity Council meeting will be establishing a clear focus and mapping out the year based on the selected focus.