



Office of the City Manager

WORKSESSION

February 4, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Timothy Burroughs, Director, Planning and Development Department

Subject: Adeline Corridor Specific Planning Process Update

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide City Council with an update about the community-driven planning process for the Adeline Corridor area – an area that has a rich history of cultural and economic diversity and political activism, and that also is facing acute challenges, such as displacement and gentrification.

Funded by a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), this four-year planning process has now resulted in publication of a draft Specific Plan (henceforth “Draft Plan”). The Draft Plan articulates a vision and specific goals and actions for the Adeline Corridor. Staff has also prepared draft amendments to the General Plan and zoning ordinance that would advance the goals of the Plan, all of which are evaluated in an associated environmental impact report (EIR). All documents are available for public review at www.cityofberkeley.info/adelinecorridor.

These documents are currently being reviewed by a subcommittee of the Planning Commission, to facilitate the full Commission’s deliberation on a recommendation for Council consideration, anticipated in late spring/summer 2020. Having an adopted Plan and EIR will mark the culmination of a multi-year planning process that was informed by many community members and partner organizations. An adopted Plan will also put the City in a better position to apply for grants and to secure other funding to implement Plan recommendations, including improvements to local infrastructure, anti-displacement policies and programs, and additional investment in invaluable community assets and institutions, among other recommendations.

During the planning process, several key topics continue to emerge from community feedback:

- Preserving existing housing and creating new housing at all affordability levels, in particular at extremely low-income and very low-income levels;
- Developing a community preference policy to prioritize existing residents, those most vulnerable to displacement, and those who have already been displaced;

- Placing a priority on using public land for affordable housing and other community benefits;
- Supporting long-standing community institutions and assets such as the Berkeley Flea Market, community-serving non-profits, and future institutions such as the African American Holistic Resource Center;
- Creating new parks and other community gathering spaces;
- Increasing the safety of the street and repurposing right-of-way for parks, people, bikes and transit; and
- Ensuring accountability and transparency in how the Plan gets implemented.

The Draft Plan puts forth a framework to address these areas of focus in eight chapters, consisting of:

- The Introduction chapter (Chapter 1) that provides context about Plan Area conditions, the purpose of the document, and the community engagement process;
- The Vision and Planning Framework chapter (Chapter 2) provides the long-term vision, brief historical context, goals and planning framework for the Plan Area;
- Five chapters focusing on land use, housing affordability, economic opportunity, transportation and public space (Chapters 3 through 7) that each include an overarching goal and related policies and strategies; and
- The Implementation Chapter (Chapter 8) outlines implementation measures or “next steps” to achieve the long-term vision of the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan.

Adoption of General Plan and zoning amendments that implement Draft Plan goals and policies will be considered concurrently with adoption of the Draft Plan. This will include a new General Plan land use classification (the Adeline Corridor Mixed Use classification) and a new zoning district, the Commercial Adeline Corridor (C-AC) District.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Adeline Corridor Specific Plan is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing our goals to:

- Create affordable housing and housing support services for our most vulnerable community members;
- Champion and demonstrate social and racial equity;
- Be a global leader in addressing climate change, advancing environmental justice, and protecting the environment.

The Draft Plan and its Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) were made available for public review on May 17, 2019.¹ The Draft Plan reflects input gathered at dozens of

¹ An overview the Draft Plan, DEIR and associated draft General Plan and zoning concepts can be found in a staff report for the June 5, 2019 Planning Commission meeting:

community meetings and workshops held since the planning process kicked off in 2015. All comments about the Draft Plan and DEIR which were received during the public comment period are reproduced in their entirety in the Response to Comments document of the Final EIR.² Most of the comments were about the Draft Plan rather than the DEIR.³

The Planning Commission's Adeline Corridor Specific Plan Subcommittee has been meeting since May 2019 to provide additional input on the Draft Plan and to prepare a recommendation to the Planning Commission, which will consider that work and forward its own recommendation to the City Council (anticipated in late spring/summer 2020). City Council will consider adopting the Final Plan, General Plan and zoning ordinance amendments, and certifying the EIR. Having an adopted Plan and EIR will put the City in a better position to apply for grants and to secure other funding to implement Plan recommendations.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, the City of Berkeley began a community planning process to develop a long-range plan for the area along Adeline Street and a section of South Shattuck Avenue from Dwight Way to Derby Street (**Attachment 1**). Forty-four percent of the 86-acre Plan Area is public right-of-way (e.g., streets and sidewalks) used for multiple modes of transportation and parking, including the Ashby BART station. The remaining land area consists of private commercial and residential parcels, and other public/civic uses. The effort is funded by a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) with the focus on transit-oriented development that reflects community values, providing affordable housing and job growth, improving circulation and public space, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Draft Plan reflects input gathered at dozens of community meetings and workshops (**Attachment 2**). It includes a community vision for the future, identifying priorities, goals, policies and actions for the Adeline Corridor area which recognize its rich history of cultural and economic diversity and political activism, and its current acute challenges, such as displacement. As noted in the Draft Plan (May 2019), trends in race

https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_Commissions/Commission_for_Planning/2019-6-5_PC_Linked%20Agenda.pdf

² The Response to Comments Document of the Final EIR is available on the City's website:

<https://www.cityofberkeley.info/AdelineCorridor/>. Print copies are available for public review at the City of Berkeley Planning and Development Department and at the following locations: the Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch Library (1901 Russell St.), the Central Library (2090 Kittredge St.) and the Judge Henry Ramsey Jr. South Berkeley Senior Center (2939 Ellis St.).

³ Comments that pertain to the EIR are addressed in the Response to Comments Document of the Final EIR, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Comments about the Draft Plan were grouped by category/topic and addressed in a separate staff memorandum presented to the Planning Commission Adeline Corridor Subcommittee at its December 12, 2019 meeting. Available online at:

https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Level_3_-_Commissions/Commission_for_Planning/2019-12-12_PCAdeline_Item%20I%20-%20C.pdf

and ethnicity, income, home prices and rents over the last several decades indicate that the process of gentrification and displacement are well underway. The Bay Area as a whole is building far less housing, especially low and moderate income housing, than needed to keep up with job growth. The clear and unavoidable result of this shortage is higher housing prices and the displacement of lower and moderate income residents, including many members of the African-American community in and around the Plan Area.

The Plan provides a roadmap for City officials, decision-makers and the community for the long-term growth of the Plan Area. The Plan's Vision Statement expresses the desired outcome from implementation of the Plan:

“Over the next 20 years, the Adeline Corridor will become a national model for equitable development. Existing affordable housing will be conserved, while new affordable and market rate housing for a range of income levels will be added. The Corridor will provide local economic opportunity through independent businesses, community non-profits, arts organizations, community markets, and an array of merchants and service providers. It will feature public spaces that are walkable, bikeable, green, and accessible to persons of all ages and abilities. It will be the center of a healthy community that cares for its most vulnerable residents, cherishes its elders, nurtures its youth, and welcomes households of all types. It will be a place where the people, places and institutions that have made South Berkeley what it is today are not only recognized---but celebrated. It will be a place where all people can thrive.”

Five key areas of focus emerged from the community feedback that informed the five broad, interrelated Draft Plan goals summarized below:

- Preserve the unique character and cultural legacy of the Adeline Corridor, sustaining the community as a place where all people can live, work, play, learn, worship, dine, and thrive.
- Foster economic opportunity for South Berkeley residents and businesses by facilitating job training and workforce development, active community spaces, and a thriving environment for commerce along the Adeline Street /South Shattuck Corridor.
- Promote equitable access to housing by producing new affordable housing, preserving existing affordable housing, and preventing displacement.
- Provide safe, equitable transportation options that meet the mobility needs of all residents, regardless of age, means and abilities, and that further the attainment of the City's greenhouse gas reduction goals.

- Provide safe, sustainable, healthy and inclusive public spaces that encourage social interaction, provide opportunities for recreation and environmental health, and support active community life in South Berkeley.

The Draft Plan carefully balances aspirational goals and policies with realistic and implementable strategies and actions. The overarching principle of social and racial equity informed the planning process and the development of Draft Plan recommendations. This has resulted in a focus on ensuring that benefits of new development and other Plan policies prioritize the existing community and enhance existing community institutions.

While no single land use plan can adequately protect neighborhood residents from the impact of the regional housing shortage, the Draft Plan commits to aggressive strategies and actions tailored for both privately owned land and public land, where public agencies have greater ability to prioritize income-restricted affordable housing. The Draft Plan includes a number of policies and actions that reflect and respond to community concerns about gentrification and displacement, which are highlighted below. Without these tailored policies and actions, the regional trends would continue to worsen. Specifically, the Draft Plan:

- Establishes an ambitious goal of at least 50% of all new housing units to be deed-restricted affordable housing serving a range of income levels (i.e., extremely low, very low, low and moderate income);
- Prioritizes public land for new affordable housing and includes a specific policy outlining development parameters, including desired community benefits, and community/stakeholder engagement for the Ashby BART station area (Policy 3.7);
- Establishes new zoning regulations that include an on-site affordable housing incentive that ties increases in density, floor area ratio, and height to the provision of increments of on-site affordable housing;
- Prioritizes development of policies to allow existing tenants and non-profit organizations a right of first offer and a right of first refusal for certain residential properties that are on the market, as well as policies to give preference for new affordable units (i.e. inclusionary Below Market Rate units and/or publicly subsidized units) to current residents or those who have previously been displaced from the neighborhood; and
- Focuses on policies and actions to support existing and future community assets and institutions, including the Berkeley Flea Market, the Juneteenth Festival and the creation of a future African American Holistic Resource Center.

The Draft Plan also includes a conceptual redesign of the roadway that repurposes sections of the public right-of-way to improve safety and mobility, as well as create opportunities for improved streetscape (e.g., street trees, lighting, bus shelters, benches etc.) and new plaza and open space.

The final chapter of the Draft Plan (Chapter 8) outlines preliminary implementation measures to fulfill the long-term vision of the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan. Given the importance, urgency, and complexity of some of the recommended projects and programs, and unknown changes that will occur over the next 20+ years in funding, laws and technological innovation, the Implementation Chapter must be considered a “living document.” It will be monitored and updated on a regular basis to reflect progress, lessons learned, changing circumstances, new opportunities, and community priorities over time. The Draft Plan stipulates that the Planning Department will provide an annual Plan Implementation Report to the City Council that will include a summary of the number of market rate and affordable units permitted, among other metrics, after Plan adoption.

Adoption of General Plan and zoning amendments that implement Draft Plan goals and policies will also be considered concurrently with adoption of the Draft Plan.⁴ This will include a new General Plan land use classification (the Adeline Corridor Mixed Use classification) and a new zoning district, the Commercial Adeline Corridor (C-AC) District. These proposed changes will:

- Incentivize greater quantities of on-site affordable housing in return for allowing specified levels of density (dwelling units/acre), floor area ratio, lot coverage, usable open space and parking;
- Simplify and clarify development standards and permit process, in order to provide more certainty for project applicants and community members;
- Facilitate uses and building design that align with the Plan vision, such as requirements for ground floor uses and minimum height, transitions to adjacent residentially zoned areas, and historic preservation; and
- Prohibit uses that do not support pedestrian-oriented commercial frontages.

In the meantime, staff and partners in the community are already making tangible progress at advancing key Plan priorities. For example, the City recently partnered with the East Bay Community Law Center to secure a grant from the Partnership for the Bay’s Future to advance the design and implementation of two policies highlighted in the Draft Plan to protect against displacement and preserve and expand affordable housing access within the local community through developing a Tenant’s Right to Purchase Act and a Local Housing Preference Policy. The City also recently secured funding from the California Department of Housing and Community Development, in addition to funding allocated by the City Council, to conduct community engagement and develop zoning that conforms to Assembly Bill 2923 for the North Berkeley and Ashby BART stations. This work will advance future redevelopment of these station

⁴ Draft General Plan and zoning amendments were introduced at the 11/21/19 PC Adeline Corridor Subcommittee meeting and continue to be under discussion. Materials are available on the Planning Commission website under the 11/21/19 Subcommittee meeting at: https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/Commissions/Archive_Pages/Planning/Commissions__Planning_Commission_Archive_Page_2008-2016.aspx

area parking lots into much needed housing and other community uses. Staff in the Planning, Public Works, and Parks Departments are also already collaborating to identify potential sources of funds for increased investment in South Berkeley's public infrastructure and green space, including a recent collaboration with local non-profit housing developers to obtain a funding award from the State's Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities program.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Draft Plan is consistent with the Climate Action Plan and other City sustainability goals in several ways. For example, the Draft Plan would advance transit-oriented development along the active Adeline Corridor. The Draft Plan also promotes investment in infrastructure that will result in safe, equitable transportation options that meet the mobility needs of all residents.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

City staff are working closely with the Planning Commission's Adeline Corridor Specific Plan Subcommittee to identify revisions to the Draft Plan and to prepare a recommendation for the full Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will then consider the Draft Plan, associated General Plan and Zoning Amendments, and certification of the Environmental Impact Report and will make a recommendation for City Council consideration.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Implementation of the Plan will require additional resources for program design and implementation, infrastructure investment, and other services. Staff is already in the process of securing grant dollars to advance implementation of key Plan recommendations, such as zoning and community engagement related to the Ashby BART Station, further development of Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act and Local Preference policies, and grants for active transportation infrastructure projects. Adoption of the Plan will make the City and partners more competitive for grant dollars.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

- 1: Plan Area Map
- 2: Summary of Planning Process and Community Engagement

Figure 1-2 Plan Area



Attachment 2: Summary of Planning Process and Community Engagement

VISIONING AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

Introductory Community Forum (January 31, 2015). The Community Forum hosted by then-Mayor Tom Bates and then-District 3 Councilmember Max Anderson, was intended to introduce the project scope, City, and consultant staff and to solicit community ideas about the best way to outreach to the community prior to starting the planning process.

Adeline Community IDEA Centers (April – June 2015). The “IDEA Center” provided a unique and convenient opportunity for community members to participate in the planning process. Over 500 people dropped-in during this 3-month period to learn about the Adeline Corridor Plan process; share input on community goals related to affordable housing, local jobs, historic preservation, transportation, and other topics; and discuss ideas and priorities for physical improvements to the corridor such as streetscape design, public art, pedestrian safety, and improved connectivity. City and consultant staff were available at the Firehouse Art Collective (3192 Adeline Street) for 2 weekdays per week and on five Saturdays at different locations within the Plan Area during the visioning phase of the planning process in April – June 2015.

Pop-Up Event and Walking/Bike Tours (June 13, 2015). The primary goal of the “pop-up” event was to collect public input on how to better use public spaces along Adeline and South Shattuck and check out temporary “pop-up” ideas for the future of the Adeline/South Shattuck corridor. By transforming a normally quiet sidewalk area into a bustling public plaza complete with food, music, live art, and community activities, the 150+ event participants were able to experience and envision potential changes within their community. The event also included two walking tours and one biking tour for community members to share their thoughts on the pedestrian and cyclist experience along the Adeline/South Shattuck corridor. Over 50 community members participated in the three tours.

Community Workshop: Existing Conditions and Visioning (August 31, 2015). The visioning workshop presented members of the community with an opportunity to review and discuss the ideas emerging from community feedback collected to-date and the data in the Existing Conditions Report. The workshop also provided a large-scale forum for residents and community members to work collectively to develop a clear vision for the character of the corridor.

Surveys. City staff and consultants, in partnership with the community, conducted several surveys to help collect information about needs and opportunities. Surveys conducted included: Community Opportunities and Needs Survey (April – June 2015 – 1,118 responses); Business Survey (April/May 2015 – 102 responses out of 340 mailings – 30% response rate); Flea Market Vendor Survey (December 2015 – Feb. 2016 – 41 responses); Shopper/Employee/Business Owner Transportation Intercept Survey (May – June 2017).

Community Learning Sessions (November 2015 – April 2016). In response to community requests for more background information relating to key areas of concern/interest, City staff organized three “101 sessions” that included speakers from City departments, other public agencies, and community partners on the following topics: affordable housing, zoning and planning, and “complete streets” (planning for all modes of transportation to increase safety, access, and mobility).

Attachment 2: Summary of Planning Process and Community Engagement

DEVELOPING PLAN DIRECTION

Community Workshop: Building the Plan Together. Affirming the Community Vision, Exploring Options for Transportation/ROW and Publicly-Owned Land (May 21, 2016). The primary goals of the community workshop were to review and affirm the community vision and to discuss options to identify the community's preferred direction for transportation options and uses of both right-of-way (ROW) opportunity areas and publicly-owned sites to better serve community goals.

Re-Imagine Adeline Open House Exhibits (January/March 2017). The purpose of this event was to present refined design concepts to redesign the right-of-way based on community feedback collected over the past two years with technical studies conducted by staff and consultants. The exhibit consists of display boards and 3-dimensional models to visualize potential changes to the Adeline corridor. The exhibit was hosted at the Ed Roberts Campus at 3075 Adeline Street for two viewing periods. The first viewing period took place between January 28 and February 4, 2017 and began with a "kickoff" event including remarks from City officials. The second viewing period took place between March 25 and March 31, 2017. Additionally, a web-based version of the exhibit was created, including a video and on-line questionnaire that included the same questions presented at the exhibit itself.

Adeline Corridor Open House and Workshops. Plan Concepts (March and June 2018). Members of the public were asked to provide input about draft Plan concepts that would become the basis for preparing a draft Plan. The open house was first presented as a two-week exhibit along with four topic-specific workshops about equity, affordable housing and community benefits, redesigning the public right-of-way to improve mobility and safety and increase open space, and strategies to foster economic opportunity. The open house took place at the Ed Roberts Campus at 3075 Adeline Street from March 10 – March 23, 2018. Additionally, a web-based version of the open house exhibits was created using the City's online forum "Berkeley Considers" to give the public additional opportunities to provide input from May 17 through June 3, 2018.

Community Meeting about a Vision for the Ashby BART Station Area (August 2, 2018). Mayor Jesse Arreguin, Councilmember Ben Bartlett, and BART Director Lateefah Simon hosted a community meeting to have a deeper conversation about the long-term vision for the Ashby BART Station Area. The Mayor, Councilmember, Director Simon and City of Berkeley Planning Director Timothy Burroughs provided brief opening remarks to frame the discussion. Verbal and written community input was documented and incorporated into the Adeline Corridor Plan.

Stakeholder/Focus Group Meetings. The project team conducted meetings with numerous groups and individuals throughout the planning process, including but not limited to: the Flea Market Board and vendors; the South Berkeley Farmer's Market, the Berkeley Chapter of the NAACP, Friends of Adeline; Lorin Business Association; groups of church members and the pastors of (historically black) churches in the area; Healthy Black Families; Ed Roberts; the East Bay Center for the Blind; senior housing residents; youth groups; the Drop-In Center clients (homeless); non-profit affordable housing advocates/developers; and non-profit service providers in the area.

Attachment 2: Summary of Planning Process and Community Engagement

PLAN REVIEW AND ADOPTION¹

Planning Commission Adeline Corridor Specific Plan Subcommittee Meetings. The Planning Commission established an Adeline Corridor Specific Plan Subcommittee, which has been meeting since May 2019 review the documents and develop guidance and/or a draft recommendation for the full Planning Commission. Meetings are currently scheduled through February 2019. Agendas for the meetings are available online at the Planning Commission webpage (www.cityofberkeley.info/PC).

Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will consider its Subcommittee recommendation and prepare a recommendation from the full Commission to the City Council regarding the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan and associated General Plan and Zoning Amendments and certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Anticipated in Spring 2020.

City Council. The City Council will consider the Planning Commission's recommendation and will be the body that adopts and certifies the Final Adeline Corridor Specific Plan and associated General Plan and Zoning Amendments and certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Anticipated in Spring/Summer 2020.

¹ Additional stakeholder group and community engagement will continue throughout the Plan Review and Adoption phase.

