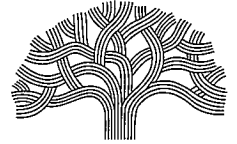


CITY OF OAKLAND



DALZIEL BUILDING • 250 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA, SUITE 3315 • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612-2032

Community and Economic Development Agency
Planning & Zoning Services Division

(510) 238-3941
FAX (510) 238-6538
TDD (510) 238-3254

NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (DEIR) ON THE LAKE MERRITT STATION AREA PLAN

The Department of Planning, Building and Neighborhood Preservation is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan, as identified below, and is requesting comments on the scope and content of the DEIR. The DEIR will address the potential physical and environmental effects of the Project for each of the environmental topics outlined in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City has **not** prepared an Initial Study. Under CEQA, a Lead Agency may proceed directly with EIR preparation without an Initial Study if it is clear that an EIR will be required. The City has made such a determination for this project.

The City of Oakland is the Lead Agency for the Project and is the public agency with the greatest responsibility for approving the Project or carrying it out. This notice is being sent to Responsible Agencies and other interested parties. Responsible Agencies are those public agencies, besides the City of Oakland, that also have a role in approving or carrying out the Project. When the DEIR is published, it will be sent to all Responsible Agencies and to others who indicate that they would like to receive a copy.

Responses to this NOP and any questions or comments should be directed in writing to: Ed Manasse, Strategic Planning Manager, City of Oakland, Community and Economic Development Agency, 250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 3315, Oakland, CA 94612; 510-238-7733 (phone); 510-238-6538 (fax); or e-mailed to emanasse@oaklandnet.com. Comments on the NOP must be received at the above mailing or e-mail address **by 4:00 p.m. April 1, 2012**. Please reference case numbers **ZS11225, ER110017** in all correspondence. In addition, comments may be provided at the EIR Scoping Session Public Hearings to be held before the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the City Planning Commission. Comments should focus on discussing possible impacts on the physical environment, ways in which potential adverse effects might be minimized, and alternatives to the project in light of the EIR's purpose to provide useful and accurate information about such factors.

EIR SCOPING SESSION PUBLIC HEARINGS:

(1) The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board

Monday March 12, 2012

6:00 p.m.

Oakland City Hall, Hearing Room 1

1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza

(2) City Planning Commission

Wednesday March 21, 2012

6:00 p.m.

Oakland City Hall, Hearing Room 1

1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza

PROJECT TITLE: Lake Merritt Station Area Plan

PROJECT LOCATION: The Lake Merritt Station Planning Area is located in the heart of Oakland, part of the urban center of the San Francisco Bay Area. The Planning Area is surrounded by a variety of neighborhoods and destinations, including Downtown Oakland, Lake Merritt, the Jack London District, the Lakeside Apartment District, Old Oakland; and the Oakland Estuary and City of Alameda are located to the south. The Planning Area's context is shown in Figure 1.

The Lake Merritt Station Planning Area encompasses approximately 315 acres, and is generally bound by 14th Street to the north, I-880 to the south, Broadway and Franklin Street to the west, and 4th and 5th Avenue to the east. The Planning Area includes the Lake Merritt Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Station, Oakland Chinatown business and residential districts, Laney College and Peralta Community College District Administration facilities, the Oakland Public Library, the Oakland Museum of California, the Alameda County Courthouse and other County offices, the building currently occupied by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the Lake Merritt Channel, and a portion of the East Lake district. The planning area boundary is shown in Figure 2.

PROJECT SPONSOR: City of Oakland

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The City of Oakland, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), and the Peralta Community College District, through a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), have come together to prepare a Station Area Plan for the general half mile area surrounding the Lake Merritt BART Station. The Lake Merritt Station Area functions as a significant citywide and regional center, with various existing hubs of activity, as described above. The Planning Area includes many diverse residents, students, employees and business owners. The Planning Area also includes several historic properties and districts, including those designated by the City of Oakland as being Areas of Primary Importance (API); Areas of Secondary Importance (ASI); properties individually rated A, B, C, or D; and Landmark Properties.

Existing physical environmental issues in the project area include, but are not limited to, air pollution and noise associated with the I-880 freeway and major arterials; air pollution from toxic air contaminants; substandard infrastructure, including roads and utilities; and soil and groundwater contamination associated with previous uses in the project area, including approximately twenty seven (27) properties identified on the California Environmental Protection Agency's Cortese List.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Lake Merritt Station Area Plan will be a 25-year planning document, with a planning horizon to the year 2035. The Plan will build on extensive community feedback to articulate a roadmap for future transit-oriented development, continued revitalization and economic growth, and community enhancements in the Station Area.

The Plan will include land use changes that seek to reduce the barriers to increased transit use from both the immediate area and surrounding neighborhoods; and to create an activity core around a rejuvenated Lake Merritt BART station. Simultaneously, the Plan will reinforce and integrate the cultural and recreational resources that make this transit station unique. The Plan will look at ways in which streets, open spaces, and other infrastructure in the area can be improved, and will establish regulations for development projects that further the area's vitality and safety. The Plan will contain policies addressing a wide range of topics, including:

- Land Use;
- Building Design Standards and Guidelines;
- Open Space and Recreational Facilities;
- Streetscape Design, Character, and Improvements;
- Cultural and Historic Preservation;
- Circulation, Access, and Parking (including BART Access Improvements);
- Community Resources, including an Affordable Housing Strategy;
- Economic Development;
- Utilities and Public Services;
- Infrastructure Financing and Phasing; and
- Implementation.

The Plan will consist of written text, maps, and diagrams that express how the Lake Merritt Station Planning Area should develop into the future, and will identify key actions the City and other entities should take to improve the Planning Area. The Plan will cover land use, development density, circulation and infrastructure, and have legal authority as a regulatory document. It will contain elements required of Specific Plans, such as:

- The distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan;
- The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan;
- Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable; and
- A program of implementation measures, including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out the proposed improvements.

For more information on the project, please visit the project website at <http://www.business2oakland.com/lakemerrittsap>.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:

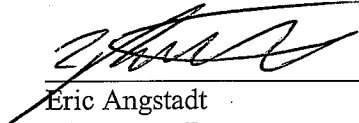
It is anticipated that the proposed project would likely result in significant environmental effects to the following: Noise, Energy, Greenhouse Gases and Global Climate Change, Air Quality, and Transportation and Traffic. It is further anticipated that the project could potentially result in significant environmental effects to the following: Land Use and Housing, Public Services, Parks and Recreation, Cultural and Historic Resources, Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Geology and Soils, Utilities and Service Systems, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Hydrology and Water Quality. All of the above environmental factors will be analyzed in the EIR.

The Project has no potential for any impact on the following environmental factors. As a result, these environmental factors will not be the subject of study in this EIR: agriculture and forestry

(there are no agricultural and forest land resources in the Planning Area), and mineral resources
(there are no mineral resources in the Planning Area).

The Draft EIR will also examine a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project, including the CEQA-mandated No Project Alternative, and other potential alternatives that may be capable or reducing or avoiding potential environmental effects.

March 1st, 2012
File Number - ZS11225,
ER110017


Eric Angstadt
Director, Department of Planning, Building and
Neighborhood Preservation
Environmental Review Officer

Attachments:

Figure 1: Planning Area Context

Figure 2: Planning Boundary.

Figure 1

Lake Merritt Station
Area Plan:
Planning Area Context

 BART Station
 BART
 City Park
 Planning Area
 Railroad (Amtrak & Freight)

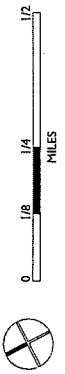
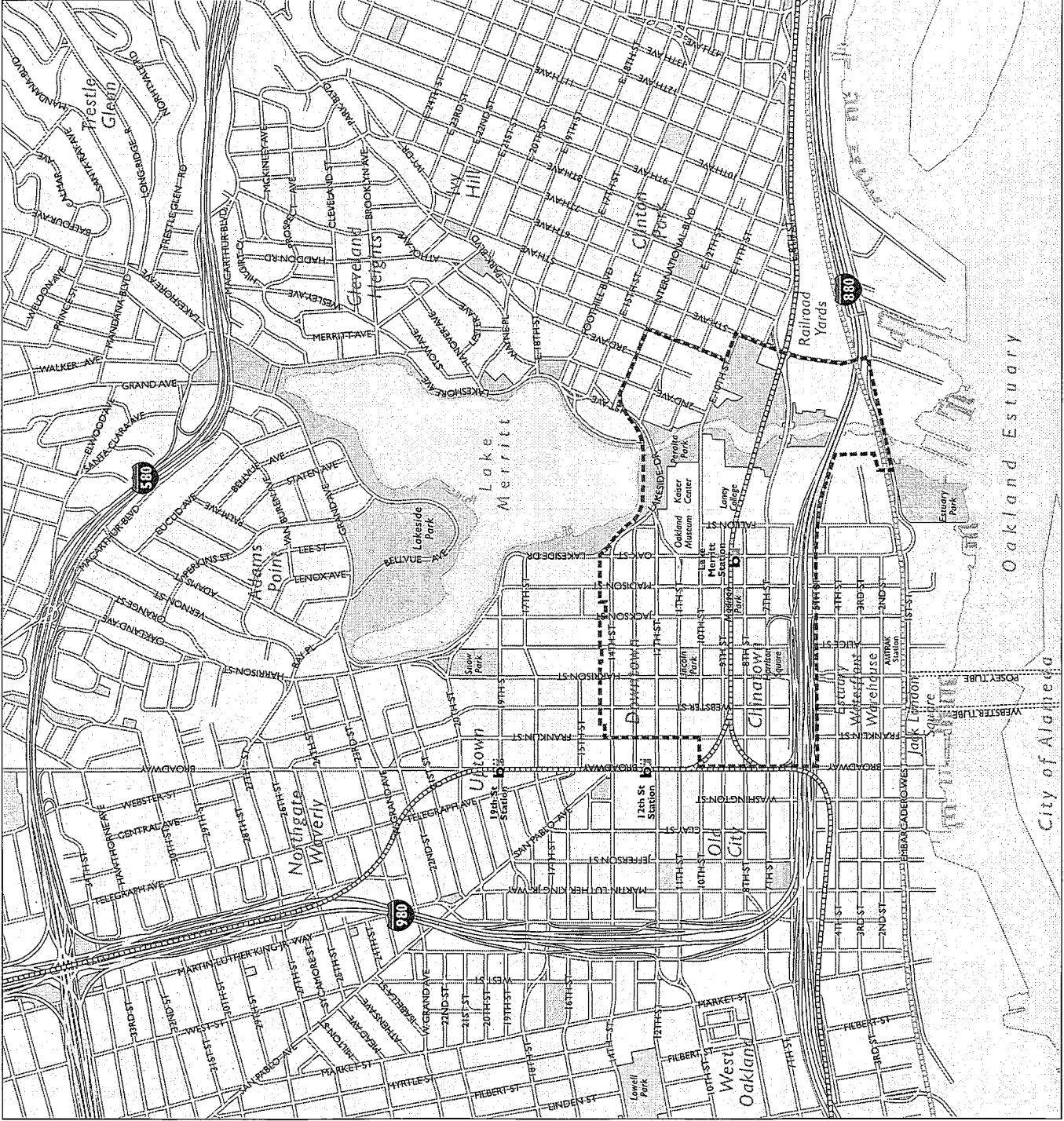


Figure 2

Lake Merritt Station
Area Plan:
Planning Area Boundary

-  BART Station Entrance
-  Park
-  Planning Area
-  Railroad

