



Hilltop Horizon Specific Plan – Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

The City of Richmond and Environmental Science Associates (ESA), the City’s consultants, facilitated a series of virtual stakeholder interviews in Summer 2022 to engage key stakeholders in one on one or small-group sessions to gain feedback regarding the Hilltop Horizon Specific Plan project. This document summarizes the takeaways from these interviews.

Attendees

Date/Time	Stakeholder Interview Group	Attendees
June 29, 2022 10:30 – 11:30 am	Education/Faith-based/Social Services/Community Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus LLC • Hilltop Community Church 	3
June 29, 2022 1:00 – 2:00 pm	Neighborhood Leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hilltop District Neighborhood Council • Richmond Neighborhood Coordinating Council • Hilltop Green Neighborhood Council • Fairmede-Hilltop Neighborhood Council 	4
June 29, 2022 2:30 – 3:30 pm	Property Owners/Businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No attendees 	0
June 29, 2022 4:00 – 5:00 pm	Transit Agencies & Utility Companies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WestCAT • AC Transit • West County Wastewater District • West Contra Costa County Transportation Advisory Committee • BART 	7
July 20, 2022 11:00 – 12:00 pm	Makeup Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prologis • Contra Costa County Public Health • Summit Tamalpais • West Contra Costa County Unified School District • West Contra Costa County Council of Business & Industries • West County Wastewater District • Hilltop District Neighborhood Council • Hilltop Green Neighborhood Council • Fairmede-Hilltop Neighborhood Council 	8
July 8, 2022 10:00 – 10:30 pm and 1:30 – 2:00 pm	City of Richmond City Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Councilmembers 	2
July 20, 2022 2:00 – 3:00 pm	City of Richmond Planning Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Commissioners 	2
July 26, 2022 12:00 – 1:00 pm	City of Richmond Planning Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Commissioner 	1
August 10, 2022 10:00 – 11:00 am	City of Richmond Design Review Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Review Boardmembers 	3

	Total	30
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Interview Outline

The following general and select supplemental questions were posed to stakeholders during the interviews.

General Questions

- What is lacking in the community (uses, services, amenities, etc.)?
- Imagine you lived next to the Plan Area. When looking out the window to the Plan Area, what do you want to see, hear, and smell? What do you NOT want to see, hear, or smell?
- Who should the project be catered towards: residents, visitors, employees, others?
- What are the biggest opportunities that the project team should focus on? What are the biggest challenges?
- What development should be prioritized in Phase 1 of the project?

Supplemental Questions

- How do the opportunities in the Plan Area resonate, if any, with the community needs specifically expressed by your affiliation?
- What do you suggest are the most effective ways to reach the community for input on this project?
- What types of project day and nighttime activities are desirable in the Plan Area? Are there any associated concerns?
- How do you see planned infrastructure improvements that may be in the pipeline benefiting or conflicting with the Plan Area?
- What are the long-term plans for improving service in the Plan Area?

Major Themes

The interviews revealed common themes across different stakeholder groups about the needs and priorities of the community. These are generally described, below.

- **Major Challenges.** Stakeholders across the different groups generally agreed on major challenges and concerns to the project, including housing need, safety and security (including police and crime), lack of healthy food options, transit connections, Measure U, economically feasible uses, and adverse effects as a result of industrial uses.
- **Housing.** Stakeholders identified housing as a major need, especially low-income and affordable housing. Stakeholders expressed the need and desire for multiple-story, high-rise, and high-density housing developments that provide views of the Bay and help to meet housing needs. One stakeholder said, “the more of it that you can put in, the better.”
- **Foods and Shops.** Grocery stores, markets, and restaurants are lacking in the community and stakeholders would like to see diverse, healthy food options.

- **Community Identity, Culture, and Gathering Spaces.** Stakeholders expressed the importance of maintaining a community gathering space/center. The mall site has previously served as a gathering area and residents are concerned of this taken away without being replaced or improved. Stakeholders would like to see gathering spaces with community events, live music, diversity in foods, shops, and businesses, sports amenities, recreation programs, and more parks and trees. Stakeholders want residents, children, and visitors to be prioritized, and for the project to, “bring people out to enjoy the city.”
- **Community Safety.** Safety was identified as a major concern across all stakeholder groups. Stakeholders indicated high crime rates, concern for active commuters and children, speed of vehicles within the Plan Area, vandalism, car safety, theft, and homelessness. Stakeholders would like to see intentional designs that discourage crime and improve safety, including lighting, cameras, open spaces, increased patrolling, and traffic calming measures.
- **Roadways and Connectivity.** Stakeholders expressed the need for an improved street system that is safe and provides connections to transit, bike and pedestrian trails. Stakeholders generally described the current circular road as a “nuisance”. Stakeholders would like to see enforcement of speed limits, street redesign for walkability and connectivity, traffic-calming measures, less surface parking, complete sidewalks, and connections to BART and other transit systems.
- **Separated and Green Industrial.** The potential negative impacts typically associated with industrial uses are generally not desired; however, stakeholders acknowledged their benefits to the economy and employment. Stakeholders expressed that industrial uses should be separated and buffered from residential and social gathering areas, and limit noise, smells, and pollution. Stakeholders are concerned about warehouses taking over the space and for industrial uses being prioritized, or at the forefront of development. Stakeholders do not want to see or hear large trucks, “honking horns”, have heavy truck traffic near residential and schools, or smell exhaust fumes/chemicals. Stakeholders commented that industrial uses can serve as the “economic engine” and subsidize other uses that the community really wants/needs.
- **Economic and Workforce Opportunities.** Stakeholders would like to see new job opportunities for the local community, from new commercial and industrial uses. Stakeholders would like for Richmond to be a more active participant in the innovation community, in which the Bay Area is a world leader in.
- **Build Up.** Stakeholders expressed the need for building up and making use of vertical space for housing, businesses, and parking that provide views of Richmond’s unique and scenic views. Stakeholders would like to see vertical buildings and multiple-story housing developments, with innovative architecture and designs.

