



Hilltop Horizon Specific Plan – Advisory Committee Meeting #2

Facilitator: Environmental Science Associates (City of Richmond consultants)

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Date: Thursday, 10/26/23, 11:00 am – 12:15 pm

Purpose of the Advisory Committee: The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to act as a sounding board to provide guidance, feedback, and recommendations throughout the planning process.

Meeting Objectives:

1. Provide an overview of the progression of the concept alternatives.
2. Gain feedback on key plan components to develop a preferred land use vision.

Advisory Committee (AC) Participants

Below is a summary of Advisory Committee members who participated in the meeting. Representatives from other or the same organizations, agencies, and City departments who were not able to participate are not shown.

Name	Organization
Carissa Lee	AC Transit
Armondo Hodge	West County Wastewater
Doug Giffin	Campus LLC
Bhavin Khatri	Hilltop District Neighborhood Council
Lori Hart	Parchester Village Neighborhood Council
Coire Reilly	West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee
Arto Rinteela	Fairmede Hilltop Neighborhood Council / Richmond Neighborhood Coordinating Council / West County Wastewater
Leah Greenblat	West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee
Matt Kelly	Contra Costa Transportation Authority
May Vang	Aspire Richmond

Nannette Beacham	City of Richmond, Economic Development
Sean Morley	Signature Development Group
Kate Eppler	Richmond Public Library
Eric Zell	Prologis representative
Eric Munson	City of Richmond, Fire Department
Robert Armijo	City of Richmond, Public Works Department
Samidha Thakral	Prologis
Libby Tyler	City of San Pablo
Tom Quaglia	Signature Development Group
Kyle Lam	City of Richmond, City Manager's Office
Michael Ghielmetti	Signature Development Group
Ms. Wilson*	*Contact and affiliation to be confirmed
Total AC Attendees:	22

Staff/Consultant Participants

Name	Organization
City of Richmond Staff	
Hector Rojas	City of Richmond, Planning Department
Consultants	
Beverly Choi	Environmental Science Associates
Stephanie Cadena	Environmental Science Associates
Ethan Wynacht	Environmental Science Associates
Dan Dameron	Environmental Science Associates
Steven Johnson	Environmental Science Associates
Stephanie Hagar	BAE Urban Economics
Woody Hanson	SITELAB
Total Staff/Consultant Participants:	8

Agenda

1. Project Recap
2. Concept Alternatives
3. Next Steps
4. Questions

Poll Questions and Results

The following are the outputs from the poll questions raised during the meeting. The number of responses received for each poll selection, the poll results in percent format, and any additional feedback that may have been provided through the Zoom Chat function are presented below.

Poll #1a: Tell us who you are	Responses
A. I live in Richmond	4
B. I work in Richmond	5
C. I own a business and/or commercial property in Richmond	1
D. My residence or business/commercial property is in the Hilltop area	2
E. I represent a public agency (city, county district, agency)	9
F. I represent a community group/organization	4
G. None of these apply	1
Poll #1b: Have you participated in a City-led Hilltop Horizon Specific Plan meeting/activity (Hilltop Horizon stakeholder interviews, Hilltop Horizon Advisory Committee Meeting #1, Hilltop Horizon Community Workshop #1, Hilltop Horizon community survey)?	Responses
A. Yes	9
B. No	2
C. I don't know	3
Poll #1c: How quickly do you want to see change in the Hilltop Horizon plan area?	Responses
A. 0-5 years	7
B. 6-10 years	2

C. 11-20 years

D. 20+ years

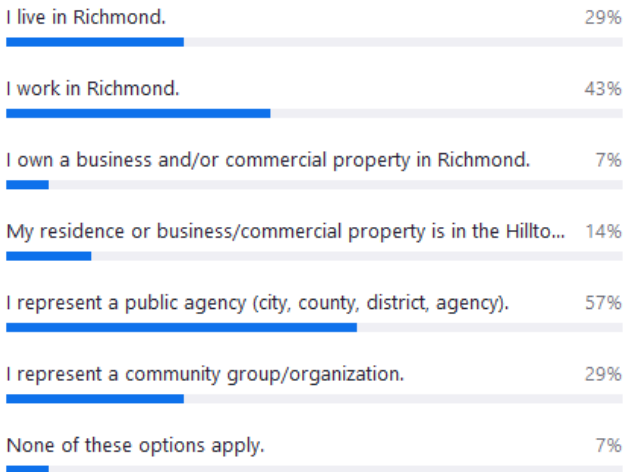
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E. I do not want to see change in the Hilltop plan area.

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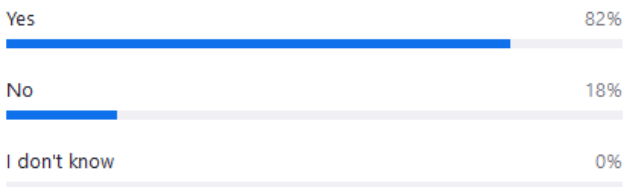
Poll #1

1. Please tell us who you are. Select all that apply. (Multiple Choice)



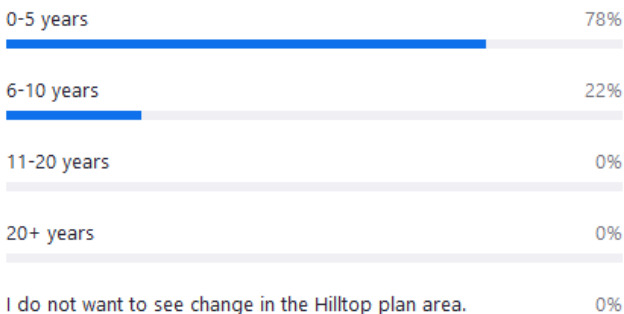
You did not answer this question

2. Have you participated in a City-led Hilltop Horizon Specific Plan meeting/activity (Hilltop Horizon stakeholder interviews, Hilltop Horizon Advisory Committee Meeting #1, Hilltop Horizon Community Workshop #1, Hilltop Horizon community survey)? Please make one selection. (Single Choice)



You did not answer this question

3. How quickly do you want to see change in the Hilltop Horizon plan area? Please make one selection. (Single Choice)



Poll #2: Do you generally agree with these planning drivers as priority project goals? **Responses**

A. Yes	10
B. No	0

Feedback Provided in the Chat Function:

- Senior resources and housing.
- I'd like to see more emphasis on using transit and alternative transportation modes getting to/from and around the site.

Poll #2

1. Do you generally agree with these planning drivers as priority project goals? Please make one selection.
(Single Choice)



Poll #3: Which employment use would be the least desirable in the Hilltop plan area? **Responses**

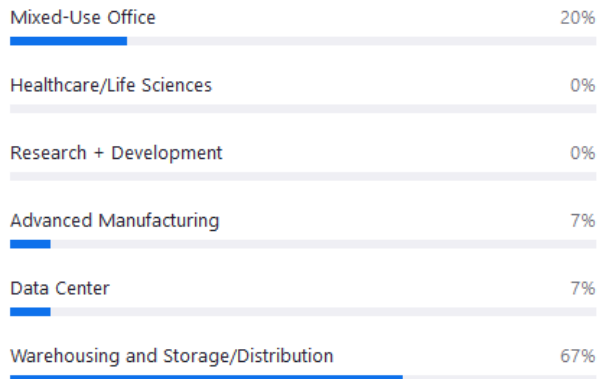
A. Mixed-use Office	3
B. Healthcare/Life Sciences	0
C. Research + Development	0
D. Advanced Manufacturing	1
E. Data Center	1
F. Warehousing and Storage/Distribution	10

Feedback Provided in the Chat Function:

- This question has been asked many times, it's no secret that distribution isn't desired here.

Poll#3: Employment

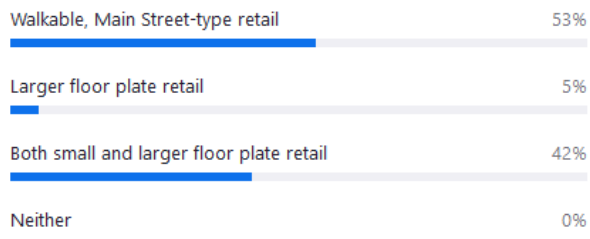
1. Which employment use would be the least desirable in the Hilltop plan area? Please make one selection. (Single Choice)



Poll #4: What style of new retail development is most desirable for the Hilltop plan area?	Responses
A. Walkable, Main Street-type retail	10
B. Larger floor plate retail	1
C. Both small and larger floor plate retail	8
D. Neither	0

Poll #4: Retail

1. What style of new retail development is most desirable for the Hilltop plan area? Please make one selection. (Single Choice)



You did not answer this question

Poll #5a: Would you support a reduction to these density standards at the mall site in the Hilltop plan area in order to spur residential development and other types of development in the plan area? Responses

A. Yes	10
B. No	5
C. I don't know	1

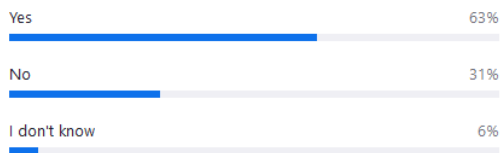
Poll #5b: Would you support an increase to this density standard at remaining parcels in the Hilltop plan area in order to spur residential development and other types of development in the plan area? Responses

A. Yes	10
B. No	4
C. I don't know	1

Poll #5: Housing

1. The current allowable residential density at the mall site (CM-5) is 40 dwelling units/acre (minimum) to 135 dwelling units/acre (maximum).

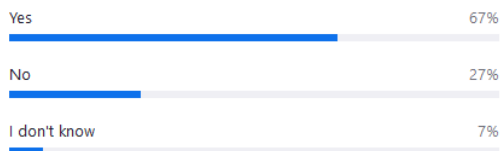
Would you support a reduction to these density standards at the mall site in the Hilltop plan area in order to spur residential development and other types of development in the plan area? Please make one selection. (Single Choice)



You did not answer this question

2. The current allowable residential density in the remaining plan area (CR) is up to 50 dwelling units/acre (maximum).

Would you support an increase to this density standard at remaining parcels in the Hilltop plan area in order to spur residential development and other types of development in the plan area? Please make one selection. (Single Choice)



Discussion

Feedback was solicited from the Advisory Committee on the following topics:

- Employment;
- Retail, and;
- Housing.

This section includes both verbal feedback as well as written feedback submitted in the Zoom Chat by Advisory Committee members. The feedback was collected first as written notes during the meeting. Each point below represents a perspective shared by members of the Committee. Following the feedback, a summary of the key takeaways is provided for each topic.

Employment

- The community has been asked many times if we would like to see a distribution center on this site and the answer has been no.
- Warehousing and industrial are not a good use of the site.
- We should look at the highest and best uses for this site: housing and mixed use.
- Warehousing and storage/distribution are lower uses and would result in the underutilization of the site.
- It is a bit insulting to see that warehousing and storage/distribution is still being included as a potential land use. The community has repeatedly expressed that they are opposed to warehousing.
- If development of the site is contingent on the inclusion of a warehousing component, that should be made clear. That way the community can provide input that takes into account a potential balance between desired community uses and warehousing and logistics uses.
- New trips on the highways surrounding the area should come from housing, not a distribution center.
- The area needs to have more retail and parks so that people do not have to leave the community to access these amenities.
- This is an opportunity for West County to create a space that is great to live in.
- Consider uses that promote a "15-minute city" concept, focusing on the accessibility of amenities within a short distance.
- Current transit ridership trends show that many people in the Richmond Hilltop area are working from home. The feasibility of office use is questionable considering these trends.
- Recent ridership data shows people take mostly local trips. AC Transit is looking to create local trips for quality-of-life uses such grocery stores and healthcare services.
- A library branch would be a favorable use.
- Would like to have a library included.
- The area would benefit from a senior center with park and open space.
- We would love to see a Police Station or substation.

- Would rather have Richmond Police Department headquarters being here than a library.

Summary of Feedback Received:

Several participants expressed opposition to having warehousing, storage, logistics, and distribution uses in the plan area. There was strong support for enhancing quality of life and complementary uses that can activate and bring more amenities to the site.

Retail

- Large floor plate retail can be implemented in a creative way that makes the mall site a destination while also incorporating neighborhood retail uses.
- The concern with street-type retail is that it will be developed and not leased.
- Having a walkable and livable community is most important.
- This region lacks exciting retail environments. Emeryville is a good retail example.
- Mixing large floor plate retail and main street style retail can help support smaller retailers.
- There is community interest in having a Costco at the site.
- Using the site for big box stores would be an undesirable outcome, instead, it would be nice to have a destination that is worth walking to.
- The way that you support retail and small businesses is by providing housing near those uses.
- Would like to see a Lowe's included.

Summary of Feedback Received:

While some opposed having large floor plate retail in the plan area, there was general acceptance for accommodating a mix of large- and small-scale retail that could meet daily needs and create an active destination for all users - a destination with multi-modal access and supported by a critical mass of new potential residents in the plan area.

Housing Density: Parcels Designated as Commercial Mixed-Use, Activity Center (CM-5)

- The mall area should be as dense as possible. Would not like to see the development of new single-family homes.
- Do not want to see high rise residential buildings but do want a mix of housing.
- Would like to see the density reduced quite a bit.
- Do not want a lot of high density housing as that may jeopardize the quality of life in the community.
- Want to see a good quality of life for people who live here, with senior centers, grocers, and healthcare.
- If shopping and retail are included, residential could be placed on top of those uses.

- Support having higher density around dedicated transportation facilities, such as the new transit center being proposed near Hilltop.
- It will take years to get this area fully built out. Such a large redevelopment site should consider a BART extension.
- BART extension studies show this scenario is not a possibility.
- 22 dwelling units per acre looks good.

Summary of Feedback Received:

While perspectives related to reduced densities in the CM-5 zone (or generally the mall site) varied among participants, there was general support for a development that would include a mix of housing at various densities. Nearly two-thirds of the Committee members would be open to reducing the density requirement at the mall site.

Housing Density: Parcels Designated as Regional Commercial (CR)

- Would like to maintain the quality of life for existing residents. If we do put in amenities, they should be supportive of quality of life such as: healthcare, grocery stores, senior centers and retail. Including these amenities will help maintain quality of life for existing residents while making the area a good place to live for new residents.
- AC transit has a long history of serving the site and would like to continue serving the site.
- It is important to ensure that there is access to public transportation when increasing density in an area.
- Denser housing should be located near transit centers.
- While a new BART station would be desirable, an extension to the Hilltop plan area is likely not realistic.
- With any large increase in population there should be an increase to police, fire, and public transportation.
- Each of the various density levels presented look doable, just need to mix it up.
- Richmond will not support a BART extension from El Cerrito Del Norte, only the Richmond Station.

Summary of Feedback Received:

Committee members expressed their support for higher density development on parcels designated as Regional Commercial, provided that community amenities to maintain the quality of life for current and future residents and users are included, along with access to public transportation.