Draft Land Use Proposals

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Overview

• Land use vs. zoning
• Land use planning as a way to address specific issues
• Designations and proposals with comparison to Oakland 2025
• Specific areas
• Next steps
Next Steps

• **Tonight:** Walk through the draft land use proposals and get input on all aspects of it to inform next version and also Zoning Code work.

• **Zoning Code Development:** Staff will start to develop draft language to implement goals and ideas planning process has identified. We’ll come back to the Steering Committee or broader community with any questions or areas where further input is needed before we have a full draft zoning proposal to review. We will also need to conduct focus groups and research to support this work (e.g., Workforce Development Bonus, Community Reinvestment Fund, open space requirements).

• **Draft Strategy Review:** Weekly one-hour work sessions in November and December to get through the strategies where Steering Committee members have an interest in discussion. Individual review of other materials.
Land Use vs. Zoning

Land use

• Reflects the desired future development pattern for an area.
• Consider land use maps are a geographic expression of goals for an area.
• Neighborhood Plans are adopted into the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning

• One tool for implementing the land use map / goals.
• Regulates what uses are allowed on publicly and privately owned parcels.
• Sets design and development requirements.
• Future Zoning amendments should implement the land use plan for the area.
What Problems Are We Trying to Solve?

Top goals for land use strategies from Summer 2020 Open House, Action Teams, and broader public engagement:

• **Housing:** Affordable, healthy, well-designed, and sustainable housing. Specific groups: African-Americans, seniors, students, families, LGBTQ+.

• **Jobs:** More jobs for people with lower levels of educational attainment and more training and apprenticeship opportunities to get into those roles. Specific groups: African-Americans, immigrants, women.

• **Open space / livability:** More parks, community gardens, street trees, and areas where people can connect such as community centers.
Problems to Solve: Housing

• Housing is unaffordable for long-term residents and students. Oakland has lost a significant portion of its long-term residents in recent decades, particularly Black or African-American residents.

• A major cause of this displacement in Oakland is the student demand for housing close to campus and lack of on-campus housing. This has created a market for conversion of single-family homes to multi-unit housing. Homes now have market values closer to apartment buildings, which is too high for most people interested in purchasing a home in Oakland.

• Zoning in these areas has been used as a tool to prevent this activity by making it illegal. Enforcement has never been sufficient to maintain single-family uses. The result is that students are living illegally in poorly converted and maintained homes with little recourse to deal with unsafe and unhealthy conditions.
Problems to Solve: Housing

• Although operating like apartment buildings, these homes have no on-site managers and no one to resolve complaints by adjacent residents. They also externalize student gatherings, parties, trash issues, and noise onto front and back yard areas and the sidewalks where they are a greater nuisance to adjacent residents.

• Recently, the market has responded to this demand with new buildings on Fifth and Forbes Avenues and Craig Street that many feel are unaffordable for most students. There is great concern that if market rate housing replaces the homes in Central Oakland that students can afford, the students will be displaced and the market for home conversions for student uses will continue to spread into Oakland and surrounding areas leading to further displacement.

• Remaining long-term residents are concerned that if something isn’t done to reverse this trend soon, there will be no long-term residents left. Some are resigned to the notion that nothing can be done.
What Can We Do: Housing

• Affordability for long-term residents is directly linked to affordability for students. You have to address both. We’ll need both land use and program tools.

• **Mandatory inclusionary zoning:** require all buildings providing 20 or more units to meet established criteria for affordability based on Area Median Income.

• **Affordable dorm and apartment housing for students near campus:** redevelopment in Central Oakland needs to provide affordable, healthy, and sustainable options for students, and mitigate the negative externalities of parking, trash, parties, noise, etc.

• **Preserve and expand housing options for long-term residents:** existing and new housing needs to be designed and priced to serve the needs of seniors, young professionals, and families. We should consider proactive approach to Missing Middle Housing.

• **Bring back community serving amenities:** services, shops, open spaces, and improved streets are needed to serve and grow the base of long-term residents.
Housing Proposals

Land use categories to address these issues:

- **Higher Density Residential**: address the high demand student housing in Central Oakland by allowing new mid-rise apartment buildings that are attractive and affordable to students while providing community benefits. Most apartments would be available to all lower income renters, but some may be restricted to students.

- **Medium Density Residential** and **Mixed-Use** areas: address need for mixed-income apartment and condo buildings in desirable locations on commercial streets, on transit, and next to lower scale residential areas. Provide needed amenities including grocery stores, open space, services, and accessible housing for aging in place.

- **Lower density residential**: maintain these areas as places for people who want to live in homes, multiplexes, and lower scale apartments/condos. Inclusionary Zoning mandates will largely miss this scale, but community land trusts, cooperatives, accessory dwelling units, and other programs should tackle affordability and provide routes to ownership.
Proposed Housing

Higher Density Residential (Inclusionary Zoning)

Goal: Provide healthy, attractive, and affordable rental housing, particularly for students, in multifamily buildings that reduce negative externalities of student living.

Character: Mixture of restored historic homes and modern apartment buildings that provide open space, parking, and green street features.

Height: 3 stories without bonus. Affordable housing bonus up to 7-8 stories.

Urban design considerations: Require "green buffers" where new taller buildings are adjacent to smaller homes. Require publicly accessible and functional open spaces (e.g., playgrounds, community gardens, exercise areas) – could be met by green buffers. Require upper floor setbacks above 3 stories.

Mixed uses: Allow neighborhood-serving commercial uses on the ground floor of buildings along Atwood Street and McKee Place.

Programming: University programming to support students, further reduce negative externalities. Integrate community land trusts and cooperatives into projects.
Proposed Housing

Medium Density Residential (Inclusionary Zoning)

Goal: Provide well designed rental and condo options for long-term residents and graduate students.

Character: Historic and new multifamily buildings with homes interspersed.

Height: 4-5 stories with no bonus potential.

Urban design considerations: Reconsider how building and open spaces are regulated to allow missing middle options. Community desire for building design and shared spaces that can help return community-mindedness to the area.

Mixed uses: Allow neighborhood-serving commercial uses on the ground floor of buildings along Bates and Semple Streets.

Programming: Focus on generating a sense of community cohesion among long- and short-term residents through efforts like community gardens, recreational activities, etc. Integrate affordability into structures wherever possible through programs like community land trusts, vouchers, accessory dwelling units for existing homes.
Proposed Housing

Lower Density Residential

Goal: Provide diversity of affordable housing options for long-term residents. Particularly seniors, young professionals, families. Improve comfort and sustainability of structures.

Character: Houses, multiplexes, cottage apartments, and 3-4 story residential buildings. Many of these typologies are historic, but no longer allowed by current Zoning.

Height: 3 stories / 30 ft with no bonus potential.

Urban design considerations: Reconsider how building and open spaces are regulated on sites to allow missing middle options.

Mixed uses: Allow small scale (e.g., 5,000 sf) commercial uses on ground floors of buildings, but apply approval criteria.

Programming: Anti-displacement initiatives such as permanently affordable housing, community land trust, housing cooperatives, and grants/loans for home maintenance. Note: Given scale, Inclusionary Zoning unlikely to affect development here.
Examples

Housing: Lower Density Residential
Strategy: Shift Student Rental Market

The goal for Oakland 2025’s housing plan is to preserve Oakland’s single family housing districts in portions of South, West and Central Oakland by shifting the student rental market back to the Fifth-Forbes and Uptown Corridors. Accomplishing this requires several strategies, including:

1. Shaping market demand to allow potential home-owners to compete in Oakland’s single-family residential market.
2. Increasing multifamily rental supply in targeted areas in Oakland.

Students desire housing closer to the Oakland’s core business district. Increasing rental units in this area will provide a much needed relief valve in terms of the total number of residential apartment units and the associated stresses that student rentals have placed on existing residential areas, especially in terms of single family unit conversions, code violations, and parking. It also provides units closer to institutions and universities.

While demand for rental housing in Oakland is so strong that it will not relieve all the pressure on the residential markets, new high-quality rental units will provide working professionals and families with viable housing options—something currently in short supply in Oakland. Risk is lower with these unit types coming to market first. It gives developers and the market a chance to experiment and validate assumptions, to determine what works out and what amenities are needed. As demand stabilizes, developers will be able to develop the for-sale market products.
Strategy: New Housing Markets

The Oakland 2025 planning process identified several areas for new multifamily housing development:

1. The core business district along Forbes Avenue
2. Fifth Avenue hillside toward the Birmingham Bridge
3. Semple/Zulema/Boulevard of the Allies
4. Centre/Craig, with potential tie to transit oriented development

To achieve the target goal of increasing the number of workers living in Oakland by 7%, approximately 1,500 additional housing units will need to be added to Oakland’s housing stock. Focusing increased density in core areas will support existing densities elsewhere.

The type of housing units which will be most market receptive over the coming ten years, whether rental or for-sale, will have the following characteristics:

- Although one- and two-bedroom units will likely have the strongest demand, at least 25 percent of all new units (rental and for-sale, each) should contain three bedrooms.
- Units should be 800 to 1,400 square feet in size, with an average two-bedroom unit comprising 1,100 square feet.
- Energy-efficient appliances and building systems will be a must, particularly for improved marketability.
- Close proximity (within a five minute walk) to public space amenities, convenience retail and dining
- Close proximity (within a five minute walk) to public transit or a large employment center
Housing Proposals vs. Oakland 2025

Similarities:

• Recognition that student housing needs must be met through new buildings close to campus where student demand is the highest and impacts to long-term residents the lowest.

• Goal to reduce student rental pressure on homes and apartments in areas east of Dawson and South of the Boulevard.

• Both proposals push for dense transit-oriented development along major corridors and neighborhood serving commercial along McKee Place, Bates Street, and the Zulema Park area.

Differences:

• Oakland 2025 focuses new student housing on specific streets, this approach focuses on a geographic area of Central Oakland closest to campus.

• New proposals would not expand student housing on the Fifth and Forbes Avenue corridor in order to grow and diversify job opportunities and workforce development programming.
Discussion

• Do we feel we the land use and program strategies are adequately addressing housing needs?

• Should the land use strategy be more proactive for the Lower Density Residential areas or is it better to focus on programs to overcome existing issues in these areas (e.g., community land trust, cooperatives, etc.)?

• More to come on the Coltart Avenue and Halket Street area.
Proposed Innovation District

High Density Employment

**Goal:** Support life sciences, healthcare, and other sectors that provide jobs available to a greater variety of workers and educational levels and also benefit from locating in Oakland.

**Character:** New research and development buildings that add publicly accessible open space, active ground floor spaces, varied community services and amenities.

**Height:** 5 stories without bonus. Workforce development bonus up to 15 stories.

**Urban design considerations:** Require 20 ft sidewalk on Fifth and Forbes Avenues, publicly accessible and functional open spaces (e.g., playgrounds, community gardens, exercise areas), "green buffers" where adjacent to smaller buildings, upper floor setbacks above 5 stories. No skybridges over Fifth and Forbes Avenues.

**Mixed uses:** Prohibit or limit residential to affordable housing. All other uses are allowed. Student housing allowed on campuses.

**Programming:** Workforce development, cultural programs (arts, museums, etc.), community services.
Examples

Innovation District: High Density Employment
Forbes at Semple
Scenarios A & B

Passage to Fifth

16'-20' setback adding space for street trees, seating

Public plaza

Parking

Image from Forbes Avenue and Meyran Avenue Workshop
Scenario B (120' height)
Public realm

Image from Forbes Avenue and Meyran Avenue Workshop
Sennott-Fresco
Scenario B (8-9 stories)

Image from Forbes Avenue and Meyran Avenue Workshop
Sennott-Fresco
Scenario B (6-7 stories)

Image from Forbes Avenue and Meyran Avenue Workshop
Sennott-Fresco
Scenario B (4-5 stories)

Tree-lined walk

Wider sidewalk & trees along Meyran

Wider sidewalk & trees at Fresco
Discussion

• Is there more that we want to achieve with the ground floor(s) of these buildings in terms of community benefits?

• Do we feel that green buffers and stepped down building heights are a good solution to dealing with the edges of this district?

• Do we want to allow affordable housing in this area or prohibit all residential uses to ensure we have more space for jobs?

• Do we feel that the Melwood Industrial Area should have the same heights as the Innovation District area on Fifth and Forbes Avenues?
Proposed Cultural District

Cultural, Academic, and Open Space Uses

Goal: Maintain building character and improve open spaces and public realm to reinforce this area as shared hub for large-scale community and cultural activities.

Character: Historic buildings from a variety of eras are preserved and/or expertly integrated into new developments and connected by pedestrian-oriented streets and open spaces. Open spaces are improved to create an interconnected system with each serving distinct community needs.

Height: Varies dramatically. Regulated by IMP with view corridors to the Cathedral of Learning typically preserved.

Urban design considerations: Additional view corridors may be worth considering to highlight buildings and improve wayfinding.

Mixed uses: Uses are predominantly academic or cultural (museums, libraries, etc.). Further integrate retail and public facing ground floor spaces (e.g., galleries, studios, services).

Programming: These areas should serve as shared space for the community and provide regular and seasonal activities that bring the varied cultures of Oakland together.
Discussion

• Does this proposal capture all of the potential benefits that this area can provide to the Oakland community?

• Are there other recommendations we want to include here for the City, Parks Conservancy, and institutions to consider with future projects, Institutional Master Plans, etc.?
Proposed Mixed Use Areas

Blvd of the Allies and North Oakland (Inclusionary Zoning)

Goal: Provide diversity of affordable housing options for long-term residents, neighborhood amenities.

Character: A vibrant mixture of buildings of different scales, styles, and uses with active ground floors and walkable streets.

Height: North Oakland: 4 stories without bonus. Affordable housing or workforce development bonus to 9 stories. Boulevard of the Allies: 4 stories without bonus. Affordable housing bonus up to 18 stories in narrow towers.

Urban design considerations: Require "green buffers" where new taller buildings are adjacent to smaller buildings. Require publicly accessible and functional open spaces (e.g., playgrounds, community gardens, exercise areas) – could be met by green buffers. Require upper floor setbacks above 4 stories.

Programming: Integrate community land trust, housing cooperatives, and public housing into development projects to establish permanent affordability. Ground floor spaces should incubate MWDBE and immigrant businesses.
Boulevard of the Allies at Halket/Zulema looking west
15-18 stories

Image from Boulevard of the Allies and Zulema Street Workshop
Site Layout B
Site redevelopment
10-18 stories

- District parking structure serving existing and new demand
- 30,000SF neighborhood grocery integrated with parking structure and/or Isaly's
- Isaly's building gains active neighborhood-serving uses at B of A frontage
- Approximately 240 housing units on Isaly's site
- Approximately 165 housing units on upper floors
- Parking deck one level above existing parking
- 40-50 housing units above retail

Image from Boulevard of the Allies and Zulema Street Workshop
Development Opportunity Areas

- Fifth/Forbes commercial core: Lower Forbes: new commercial and mixed-use residential
- Innovation Oakland infrastructure project (including wayfinding/digital information systems/district branding and identity)
- Western Gateway portal (Fifth/Forbes): Based on recommendation from Innovation Oakland specific to the Boulevard Bridge wall
- Bates/Semple neighborhood retail
- Atwood Street restaurant row
- Bouquet/Joncaire district
- Trailhead neighborhood retail/restaurant
- Boulevard neighborhood retail (Isaly's, Gulf, Auto, convenience retail)
- Craig/Centre business district
- BRT-related retail (Robinson/Children's/CMU)
- Busway/Centre mobility hub development
Jobs and MU Proposals vs. Oakland 2025

Similarities:

- Recognition of importance of mixed use and employment-oriented development along the Fifth and Forbes Ave corridor including the West Oakland Gateway area.
- Similar areas called out for infill / redevelopment at Zulema Park area.
- Similar proposals to support and grow neighborhood-serving commercial activities.

Differences:

- Oakland 2025 may not have expected as much mixed-use redevelopment along the Boulevard of the Allies as the new proposals does. New proposal includes opportunity for towers.
- No clear focus on growing and enhancing the role of the Cultural District area where the University of Pittsburgh campus meets the Carnegie Library, CMOA, Natural History Museum, CMU, Schenley Plaza, and Schenley Park.
Discussion

• North Oakland: This area is large and diverse area in terms of buildings and uses. Do we feel the land use proposal needs more detail?

• North Oakland: Does height need to be mapped for different parts of this area?

• Blvd of the Allies: Do we want to concentrate the potential for tall buildings along the Boulevard of the Allies around the Zulema Park area or apply the affordable height bonus across the entire area to allow for more affordable housing and density?

• More to come on extent of the Blvd. area east of Bates Street.
Not covered during meeting

- A series of slides was developed but not covered during the meeting because the group ran out of time.
- The Steering Committee also noted a few locations that deserved more discussion.
- As such, the original slides have been removed and will be updated and included in a future discussion.
Next Steps

• **Tonight:** Walk through the draft land use proposals and get input on all aspects of it to inform next version and also Zoning Code work.

• **Zoning Code Development:** Staff will start to develop draft language to implement goals and ideas planning process has identified. We’ll come back to the Steering Committee or broader community with any questions or areas where further input is needed before we have a full draft zoning proposal to review. We will also need to conduct focus groups and research to support this work (e.g., Workforce Development Bonus, Community Reinvestment Fund, open space requirements).

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Where can you find us?

Pittsburgh City Planning @PLANPGH @resilientPGH

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