

BALBOA RESERVOIR STUDY
JANUARY 21, 2015 PUBLIC MEETING



The event: City staff hosted a public meeting at Lick-Wilmerding High School to inform and solicit advice from the public about the proposed *Public Land for Housing* development on PUC-owned property on the Balboa Reservoir.

Attendance: The meeting was well-attended, with over 100 participants. Participants included members of neighborhood associations, advocacy groups and political parties, as well as many non-affiliated members of the public.

What we learned: Many diverse views were represented, and City staff did not ask participants to reach any formal consensus. However, several positions were expressed by a significant number of participants:

1. Open space as part of the project would be a valuable asset for the neighborhood.
2. The project should help keep the City livable with significant housing at affordable and market rates for families, workforce and students.
3. Traffic and parking impacts are of serious concern. They should be studied carefully, minimized and managed effectively.
4. Improvements to Muni service are needed, as well as improvements to pedestrian and bicycle routes connecting Ocean Avenue, City College, and the Balboa Park BART station.
5. The project should be a good neighbor to City College, and in particular to a potential Performing Arts and Education Center (PAEC) on the CCSF Campus.

Meeting activities

Participants and City staff at the meeting engaged in a series of activities to facilitate discussion of the project, to inform participants about relevant issues, and to collect advice from participants:

1. The meeting opened with a period where participants walked freely between maps and charts illustrating the development site, nearby transportation and open space amenities, and potential project impacts and ways they could be addressed. City staff members were present at each map and chart to answer participants' questions. Participants were invited to write their own additions on all maps and charts, and many did so. These comments were collected and recorded.
2. During this period, participants were also invited to write short phrases on index cards expressing their vision for the project and the neighborhood's future, and to post the cards on a public display. These comments were collected and recorded.
3. A short PowerPoint presentation was then given by Mike Martin of the Office of Economic and Workforce Development and Jeremy Shaw of the Planning Department. The presentation discussed San Francisco's housing needs, the goals of the Public Land for Housing program, and the goals of the current meeting.
4. Participants were then organized into discussion groups of about ten people, with City staff members facilitating discussion at each group. To record participants' preferences and to guide discussion, participants were invited to complete a survey about what priorities they felt should guide the development of the project site. (Survey results are shown in **Appendix A**.) City staff members also took notes on the discussion, which were collected and recorded.
5. After this period of discussion, one member from each group reported back to all participants what topics the group had discussed, and points of agreement and disagreement over those topics.
6. Finally, City staff explained next steps for the Balboa Reservoir study, including additional public outreach and the Request for Development Proposals (RFP). Many participants remained after the end and engaged in further conversations about the project with each other and with City staff.

Information collected

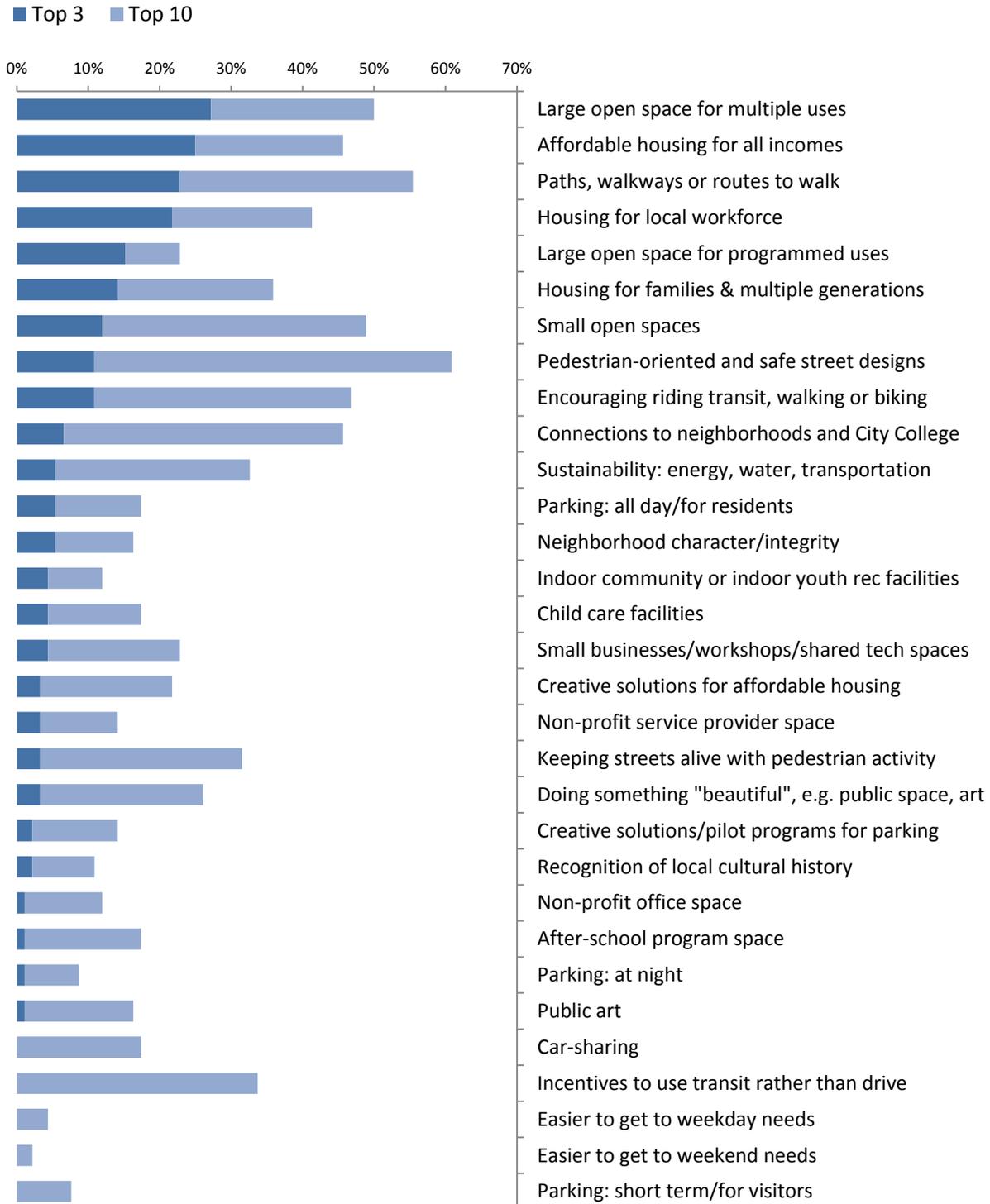
Key takeaways from the advice collected from meeting participants are presented above under 'What we learned'. More detailed results of the survey that participants were invited to complete are shown in **Appendix A**. The notes written by participants on maps, charts and index cards represent a wide variety of ideas and interests. A word cloud shows some of the most common themes in **Appendix B**.

Want more information?

For the most up-to-date information about the Balboa Reservoir Study, visit the [project website](#) or contact the project planner, Jeremy Shaw, at jeremy.shaw@sfgov.org or 415-575-9135.

Appendix A: Public amenities priorities survey

In a written survey, participants were invited to choose what public amenities and benefits for the neighborhood they would most like to see come from the proposed development. If their preference was not in the supplied list of options, they were invited to write in their own priorities. Below are the options that they were presented. The dark blue bars indicate how many people placed each item in their top three priorities, and the light blue bars indicate how many people placed each item in their top ten priorities.



Write-ins

Participants were invited to write in any priorities that were important to them, but were not found in the list. They volunteered a variety of suggestions. Most of these suggestions were chosen by only one or two people. However, one more frequent write-in – expressed in a variety of ways – was that the project should be a good neighbor to City College, in particular the potential Performing Arts and Education Center (PAEC) on neighboring property owned by City College.

Explanations of chosen priorities

Participants were also invited to write a more detailed explanation of their priorities. Here are some examples of their responses:

- I want to see coordinated and thoughtful planning between CCSF's PAEC and whatever is built on the PUC site.
- We are in a housing crisis - I support the Mayor's Public Land for Housing proposal - this property is ideal to be slated for housing - close to public transit and educational institutions.
- Putting large numbers of people in the space will exacerbate all that's not working today in the neighborhood - a developer won't fix them.
- Parking is a nightmare now. I would have permits for an address so it's easier to park.
- As a renter, I would like the opportunities to purchase or rent non-subsidized housing. I would prefer there to be more housing rather than being restricted and put in lotteries to compete for fewer units.
- We need to prioritize affordable housing for low income working families that includes access to services, including child care services.
- Minimal or no parking to encourage transit use. Maximum open space, parks, community gardens.
- I need to go into tech to afford to move out of my parents' home. Out of my young friends, only the techies could do so. BART is good. We can make high rises.
- A student farm is important because it's the perfect location, across from City College. It would be an excellent opportunity for green jobs.
- The nicest neighborhoods in the city have large open spaces (Dolores Park, Alta Plaza). Include a playground and a dog park.
- Displacement of low- and middle-income families in San Francisco can be easily amended by such a project.
- Single-family homes only - owned not rented. CCSF parking. LOW density open space.
- Open space is important because it is scarce in the neighborhood. Open space (a la Yerba Buena Gardens) should be able to co-exist with new housing given the size of the parcel.
- I frequent the local markets and businesses and I love how they make the neighborhood what is today (mix of cuisines, people etc.). Love the character of my neighborhood! I just don't want what happened to the Mission to happen here.

- As San Francisco's population grows to a projected 1 million by 2030, we need lots of new housing and more transportation options for the limited real estate that makes up our streets.
- Please respect the integrity and character of all our 1920's neighborhoods in the West of Twins Peaks area.
- Open Space that is wildlife-friendly and sustainable. Affordable housing for local workforce.
- Sell as much City government-owned land as possible to get it into productive use in the voluntary sector. Use the proceeds from sales to give cash dividends to residents, or create public amenities like parks, open space, and public recreation facilities, instead of trying to micro-manage individual projects and load them down with restrictions and fees.
- Affordable housing development can be a catalyst for broad public infrastructure investment: open space, pedestrian safety, transit, etc.
- Improving bike connections and encouraging transit, biking and walking is crucial to complement existing work (Balboa Circulation Study, Ocean Ave Corridor Design).
- Income diversity creates robust developments. Also, incorporating student housing would really help with congestion issue.
- 17 acres is a neighborhood. Should have a sense of identity, provide affordable housing for local area, a good transition between neighborhoods, and respect City College.
- SF needs more housing for young people hoping to start here. They need transit for work and fun and that makes this an attractive neighborhood. We can't ruin the area or the college, but reality needs to be faced.
- I do not want development of any kind there unless it benefits the College (another building for CCSF would be acceptable).
- I want to work and live in the City, raise children, and continue to see the City evolve as a city, not as a 'museum' of a bygone era.

