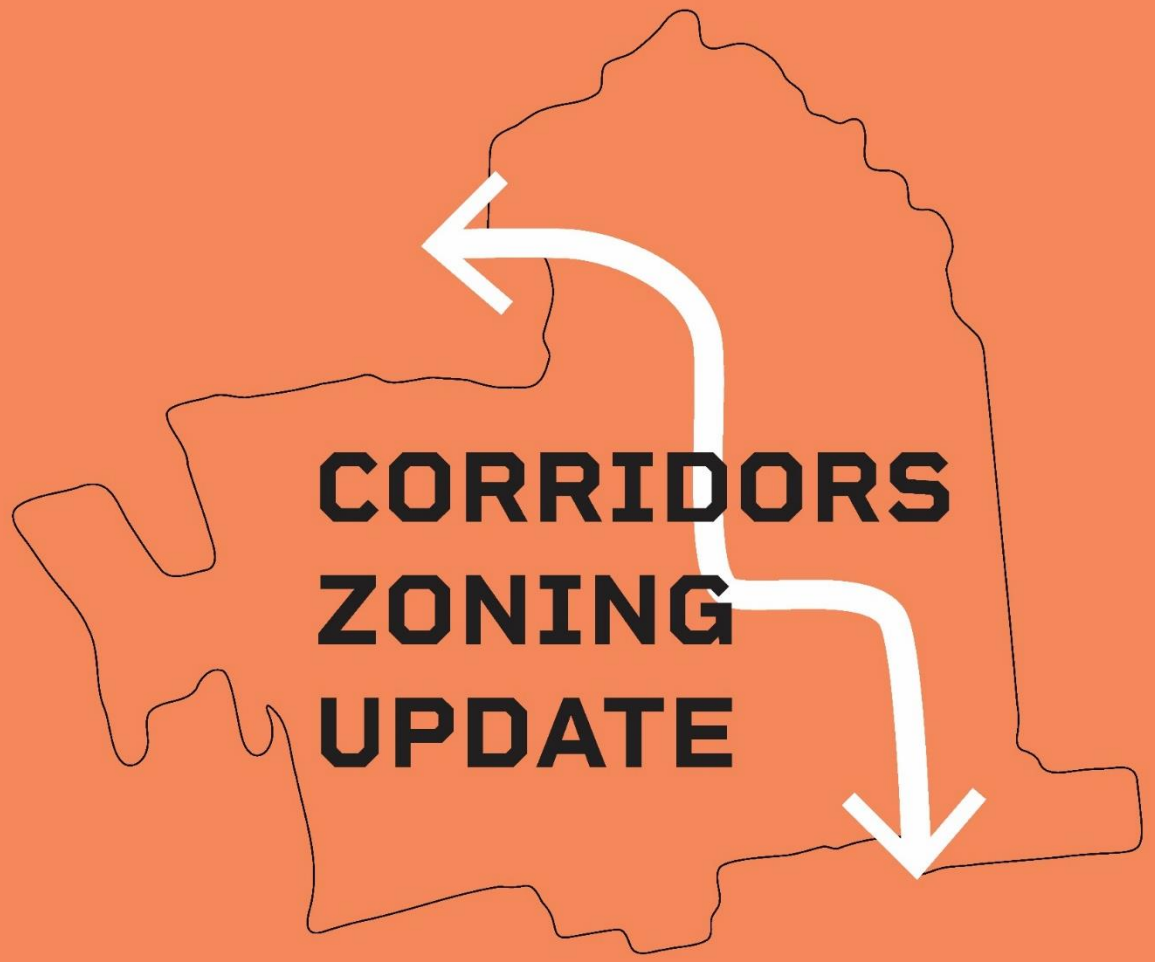


Planning Commission Study Session

September 17, 2025

Project Team

City of Berkeley

Jordan Klein, Director of Planning and Development

Anne Hersch, Land Use Planning Manager

Justin Horner, Principal Planner

Uttara Ramakrishnan, Project Manager

Design Consultant Team

Raimi + Associates
Project Lead

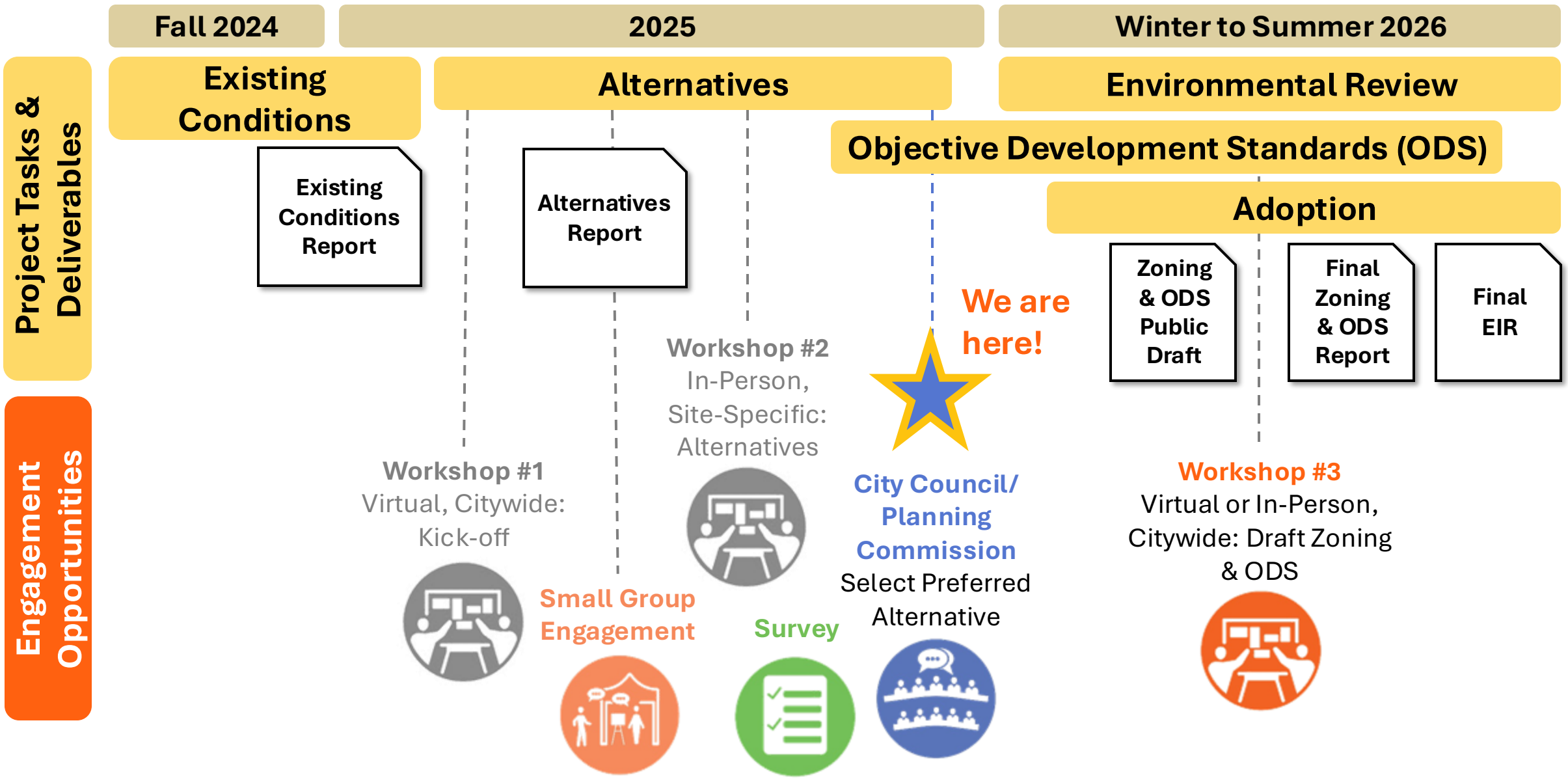
Strategic Economics
Economic Analysis

Yes Community Architects
Architectural Support

Rincon Consultants
Environmental Analysis & CEQA

Kittleson & Associates, Inc
CEQA Transportation Analysis

Plan to Place
Community Engagement


Fall 2024
2025
Winter to Summer 2026
Project Tasks & Deliverables
Existing Conditions
Alternatives
Environmental Review
Objective Development Standards (ODS)
Adoption
Existing Conditions Report
Alternatives Report
Zoning & ODS Public Draft
Final Zoning & ODS Report
Final EIR
We are here!
Engagement Opportunities
Workshop #1
Virtual, Citywide: Kick-off
Small Group Engagement
Workshop #2
In-Person, Site-Specific: Alternatives
Survey
City Council/ Planning Commission
Select Preferred Alternative
Workshop #3
Virtual or In-Person, Citywide: Draft Zoning & ODS

Community Engagement

Date	Engagement
May 1, 2025	*Community Workshop #1 (Virtual)*
August 20, 2025	*North Shattuck Community Workshop #2*
August 26, 2025	*College Avenue Community Workshop #2*
August 27, 2025	*Solano Avenue Community Workshop #2*
August 27 – October 10, 2025	**Community Survey #1**
September 17, 2025	**Planning Commission Study Session**
November 6th	City Council Study Session
February-April 2026	Planning Commission/City Council Hearings

Agenda

I. Presentation

II. Discussion Questions

- ►Clarifying Questions from Planning Commission
- ►Public Comment
- ►Additional Questions from Planning Commission
- ►Deliberation and Direction on Approach

Meeting Purpose

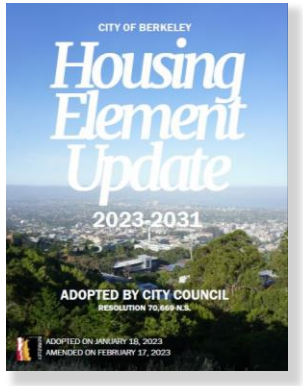
- PC to review Draft Zoning Alternatives
- Staff to receive Public Comments
- Staff to answer Planning Commissions questions
- PC to **provide input and comment on each corridor** to City Council

I. Presentation

Project Overview

Project Description

Adopt new zoning for three priority corridors, designated in the City's Housing Element 2023-31



Program 27

Increase housing opportunities along commercial and transit corridors, particularly in the **highest-resource** and **highest-income** neighborhoods

Key Project Goals

Expand Housing Capacity

Encourage development opportunities for new housing

Promote Sustainability

Align development with Berkeley's broader goals of environmental and social resilience

Foster Equity and Inclusion

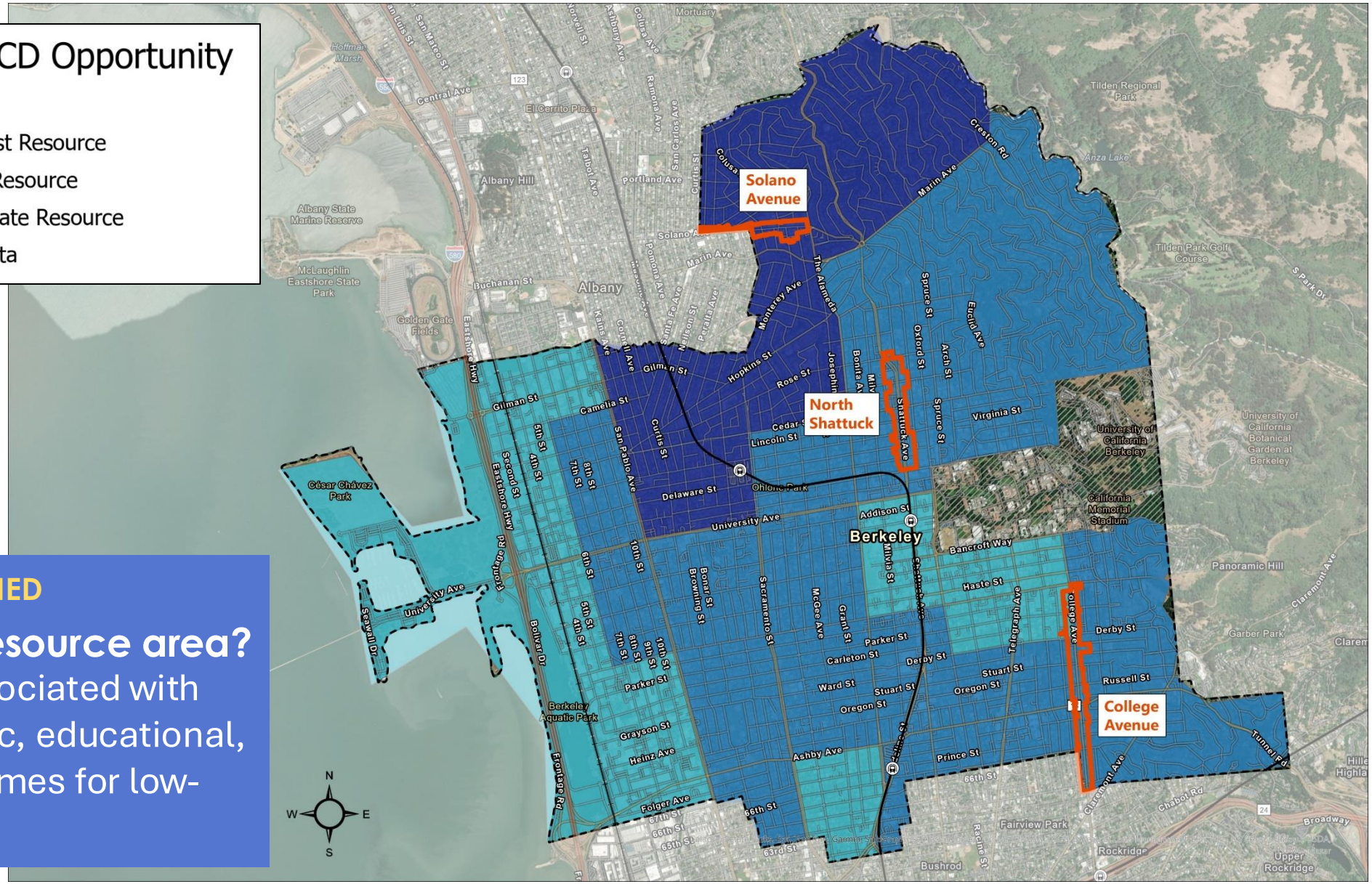
Create development standards that prioritize fairness and community benefit

Support Local Businesses

Strengthen vibrant commercial activity

- Essential Amenities
- Healthy Food
- Transit
- Bike Boulevards
- Safe Streets
- Schools
- Jobs

What is a high-resource neighborhood?

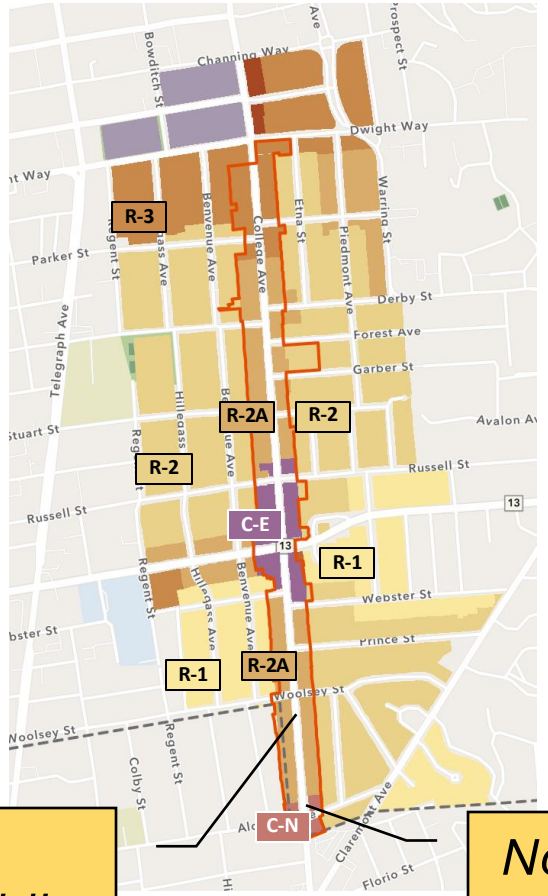


► KEY TERMS EXPLAINED

What is a High-Resource area?

- Area strongly associated with positive economic, educational, and health outcomes for low-income families

Rezoning Areas



Limited Area

- C-SO (Solano)
- C-NS (N. Shattuck)
- C-E (Elmwood)

Middle Housing

- Allow more housing in R-1, R-2 and R-2A zones

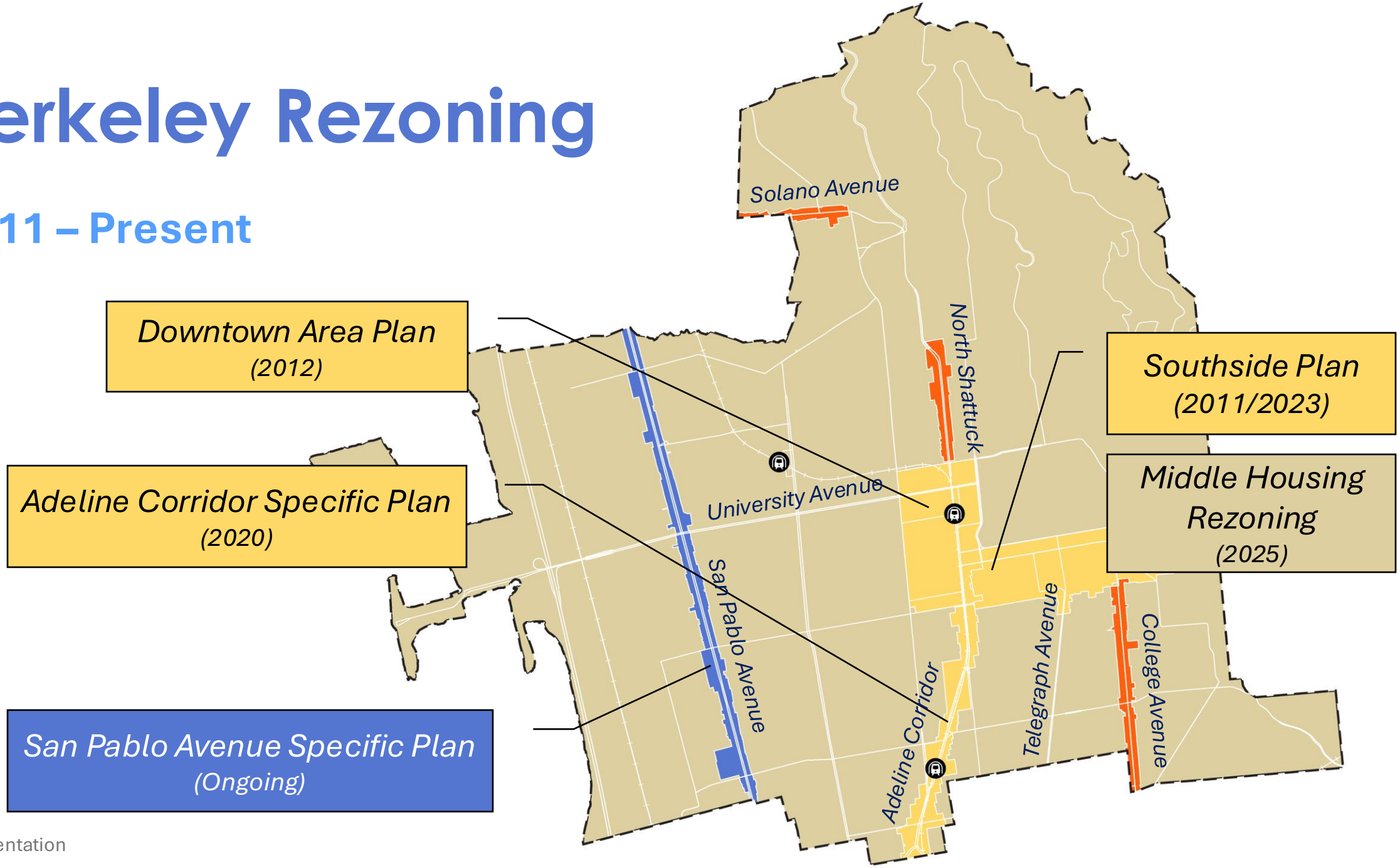
No change to C-C zoning

R-2A areas rezoned in Middle Housing project

No change to C-N zoning

Berkeley Rezoning

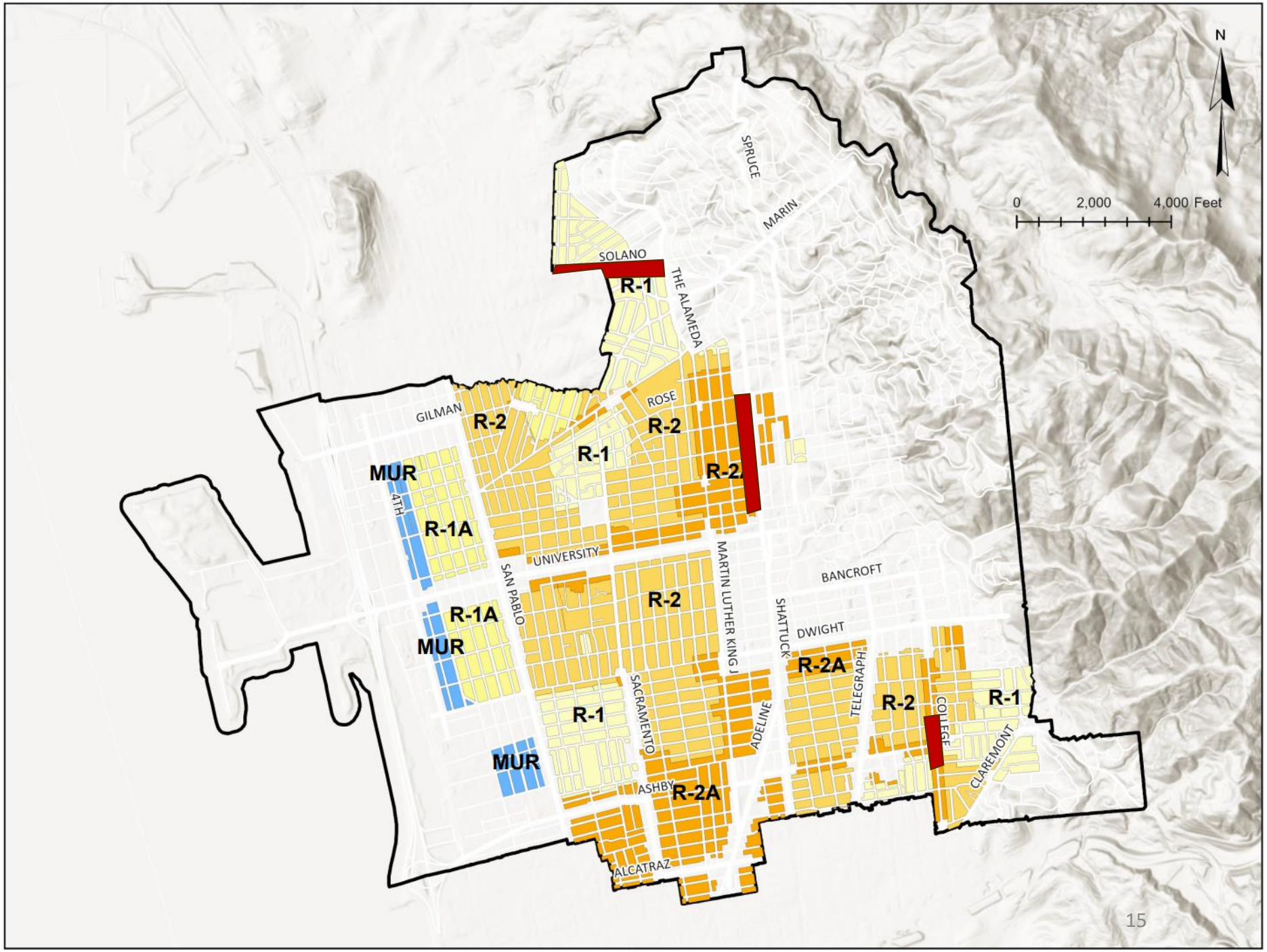
2011 – Present



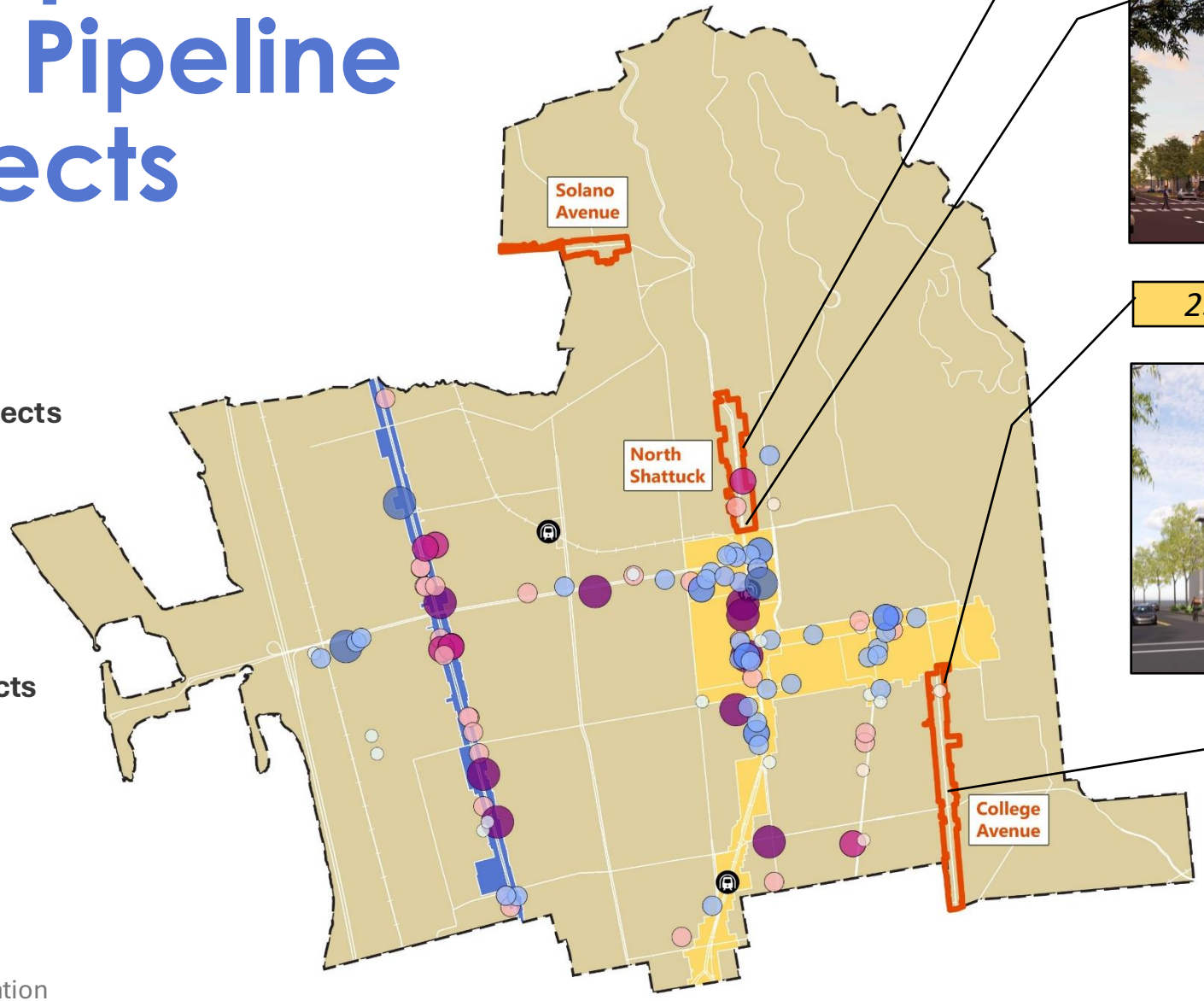
Middle Housing Rezoning

Middle Housing zoning changes increase the supply of housing in a range of sizes :

- Duplexes
- Triplexes
- Fourplexes
- Courtyard apartments



Completed and Pipeline Projects



Completed Projects
Units

- 5 - 25
- 26 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 - 331

Approved Projects
Units

- 0 - 25
- 26 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 - 326

1685 Shattuck Ave

1752 Shattuck Ave

2555 College Ave

2942 College Ave

Zoning Comparison

Maximum Allowable Number of Stories	
7/8 stories	•Downtown Core/Corridor (C-DMU)** •Telegraph Avenue, Southside Specific Plan (C-T)
6 stories	-
5 stories	•San Pablo Draft Specific Plan (C-W) (Proposed)* •Downtown Buffer (C-DMU)**
4 stories	•Adeline Corridor (C-AC), South Shattuck •**North Shattuck south of Virginia (C-C) (Existing/No Proposed Change)** •Telegraph Avenue (C-C) •University Avenue (C-U)
3 stories	•**College Avenue in Rockridge (C-N) (Existing/No Proposed Change)** •**North Shattuck (C-NS) (Existing)** •Adeline Corridor (C-AC), North and South Adeline •San Pablo Existing (C-W)* (Existing)
2 stories	•**Solano Avenue (C-SO) (Existing)** •**College Avenue (C-E) (Existing)**

Zoning Alternatives

Maximum Height

Zoning Alternatives

Alt #1: Medium Density

Solano and North Shattuck:

+ 2 stories

zoning increase over existing

College (Elmwood):

+ 1 story

zoning increase over existing

Alt #2: Higher Density

Solano and North Shattuck:

+ 3 stories

zoning increase over existing

College (Elmwood):

+ 2 stories

zoning increase over existing

Alternatives

Maximum Building Height

	Existing Zoning	Alternative #1 Medium Density	Alternative #2 Higher Density
Solano Avenue (C-SO) (85 ft wide)	**2 stories** 28 ft	**4 stories** 48 ft	**5 stories** 58 ft
With 50% Density Bonus	**3-4 stories**	**5-6 stories**	**7-8 stories**
North Shattuck (C-NS) (94 ft wide)	**3 stories** 35 ft	**5 stories** 58 ft	**6 stories** 68 ft
With 50% Density Bonus	**5-6 stories**	**7-8 stories**	**8-9 stories**
College Avenue (C-E) (60 ft wide)	**2 stories** 28 ft	**3 stories** 38 ft	**4 stories** 48 ft
With 50% Density Bonus	**3-4 stories**	**4-5 stories**	**5-6 stories**

Building Form

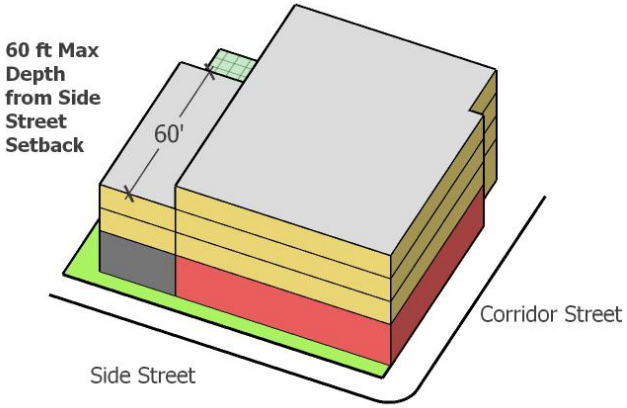
Massing Toward Street Frontage

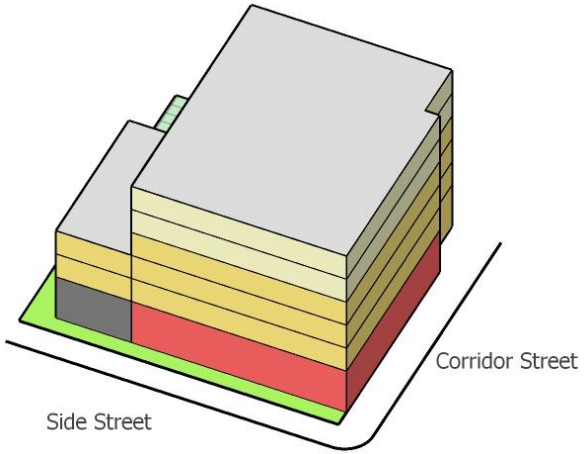
Corner Lot
Base Zoning
4 stories

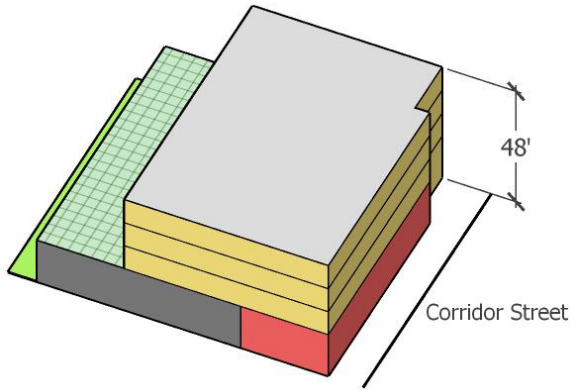
50% Bonus
6 stories

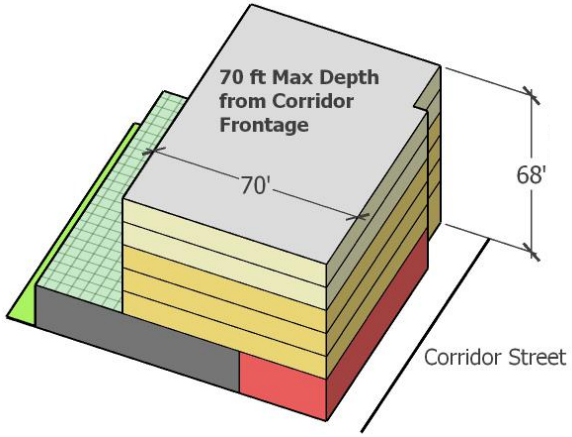
Infill Lot
Base Zoning
4 stories

50% Bonus
6 stories









Alternatives

Estimated Potential Residential Growth

	Existing Zoning + 50% State Density Bonus	**Alternative #1** **Medium Density** + 50% State Density Bonus	**Alternative #2** **Higher Density** + 50% State Density Bonus
Solano Avenue (C-SO)	150-250 units	400 - 550 units	450 - 650 units
North Shattuck (C-NS)	450-550 units	650 - 850 units	750 - 1,000 units
College Avenue (C-E)	40-60 units	50 - 80 units	80 - 130 units
Total	*650-860 units*	***1,100 - 1,600 units****	***1,300 - 1,780 units****

** Approximately 15% of projected units (200-230 units) would be Affordable units based on market rate projects meeting the 20% of base zoning requirement in the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance*

Redevelopment Potential

Total Potential Redevelopment Area as a % of Total Project Area	
Solano Avenue	63%
North Shattuck	37%
College Avenue	22%
Total	***42%***

A. High Redevelopment Potential

- Vacant lots
- Large lots owned by corporate owners
- Large corner lots with surface parking

B. Modest Redevelopment Potential

- Corner lots with low-scale structures
- Mid-block lots with low-scale structures

C. Special Conditions

- Grocery store sites
- City-owned lots

D. Very Low/No Redevelopment Potential

- Sites with Thriving Businesses, Construction Staging Challenges, or Potential Historic Significance
- Challenging Site Conditions
- Historic Sites, Recent, Planned or High-Density Development

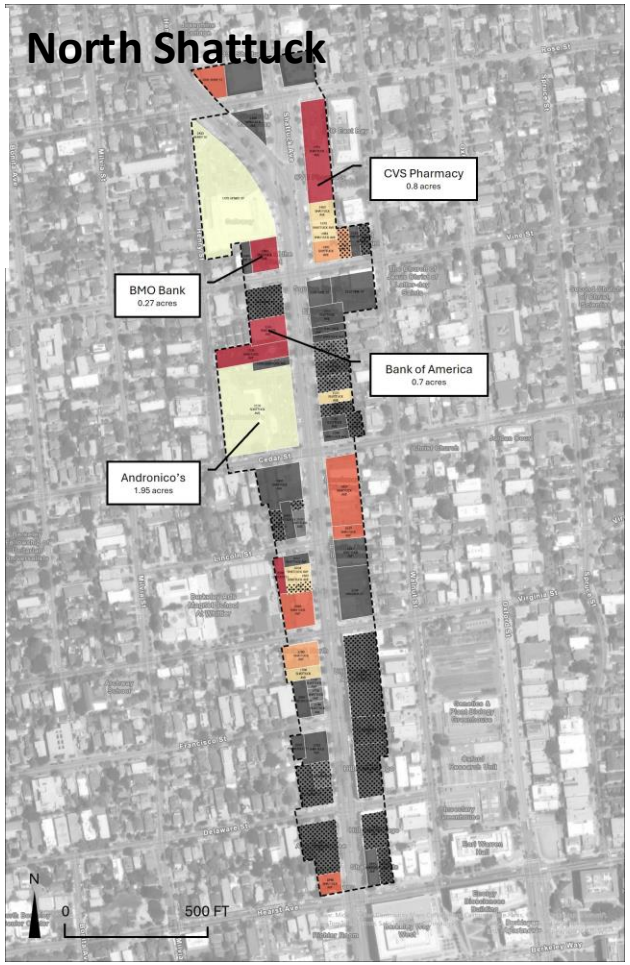
Redevelopment Potential

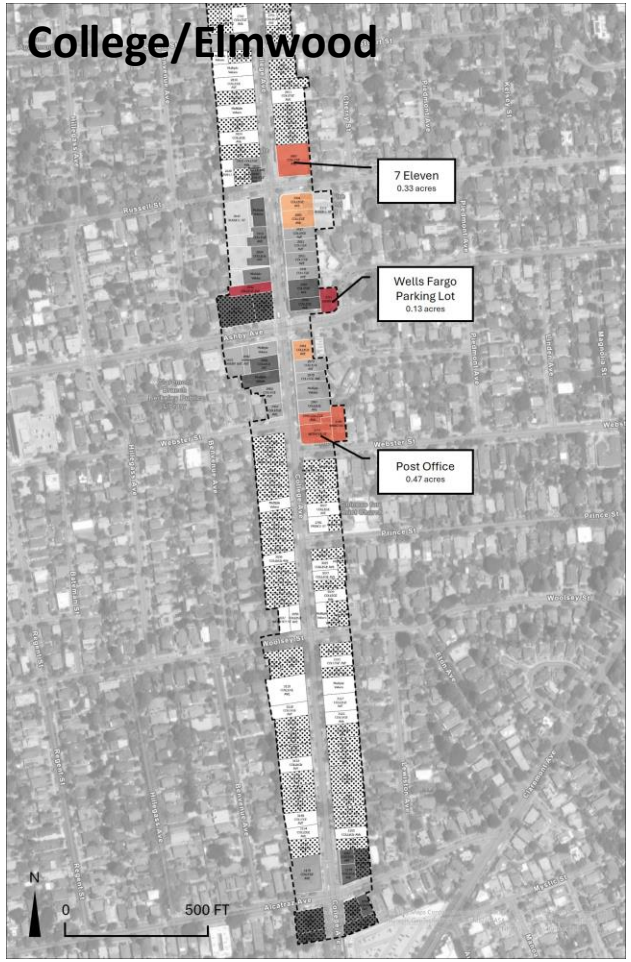
A. High Redevelopment Potential
- Vacant or Corporate Ownership
- Real Estate Asset

B. Modest Redevelopment Potential
- Corner and Large Infill Sites
- Small Infill Sites

C. Special Conditions
- Grocery Store
- City Owned

D. Very Low/No Redevelopment Potential
- Sites with Thriving Businesses, Construction Staging Challenges, or Potential Historic Significance
- Challenging Site Conditions
- Historic Sites, Recent, Planned or High-Density Development





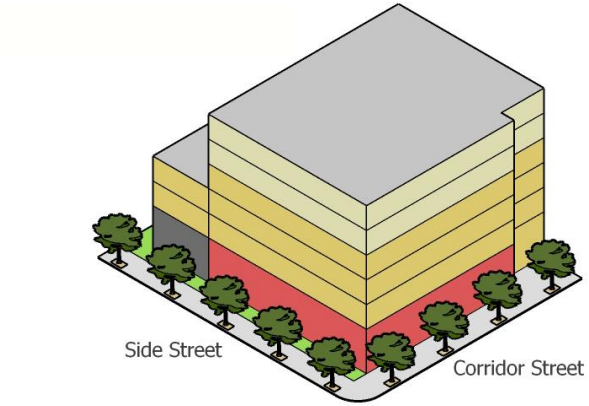
Zoning Comparison

Maximum Allowable Number of Stories	
7/8 stories	• Downtown Core/Corridor (C-DMU)** • Telegraph Avenue, Southside Specific Plan (C-T)
6 stories	-**North Shattuck (C-NS) (Proposed Alternative #2)**
5 stories	• San Pablo Draft Specific Plan (C-W) (Proposed)* • Downtown Buffer (C-DMU)** • **Solano Avenue (C-SO) (Proposed Alternative #2)** • **North Shattuck (C-NS) (Proposed Alternative #1)**
4 stories	• Adeline Corridor (C-AC), South Shattuck • North Shattuck south of Virginia (C-C) (Existing/No Proposed Change) • Telegraph (C-C) • University Avenue (C-U) • **College Avenue (C-E) (Proposed Alternative #2)** • **Solano Avenue (C-SO) (Proposed Alternative #1)**
3 stories	• **College Avenue (C-E) (Proposed Alternative #1)** • North Shattuck (C-NS) (Existing) • College Avenue in Rockridge (C-N) (Existing/No Proposed Change) • Adeline Corridor (C-AC), North and South Adeline • San Pablo Existing (C-W)* (Existing)
2 stories	• **Solano Avenue (C-SO) (Existing)** • **College Avenue (C-E) (Existing)**

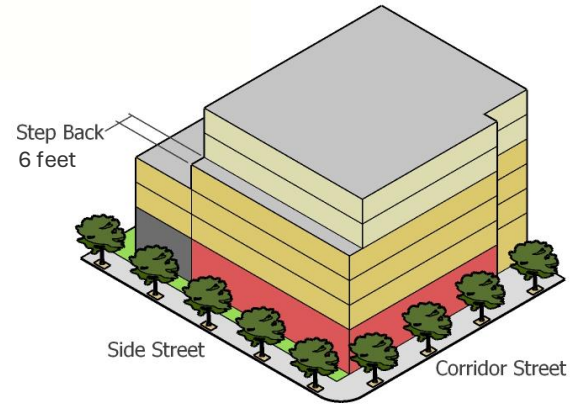
Building Form Alternatives

Upper Floor Step Backs

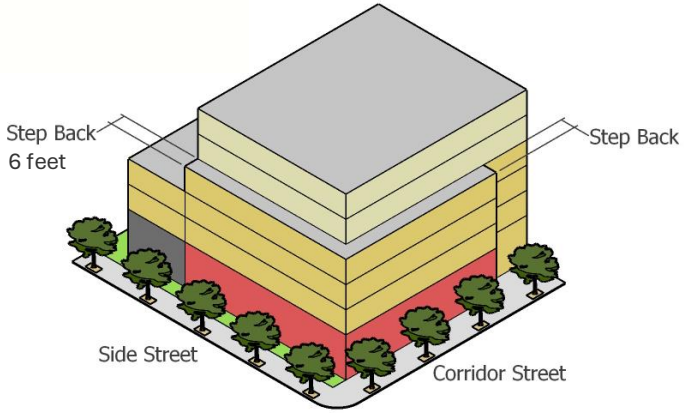
Alternative 1
No Upper Floor Step Back



Alternative 2
Upper Floor Step Back on Side Streets



Alternative 3
Upper Floor Step Back on All Streets



Upper Floor Step Backs

	Alternative 1 No Upper Floor Step Back		Alternative 2 Upper Floor Step Back on Side Streets		Alternative 3 Upper Floor Step Back on All Streets	
	Corridor Street	Side Street	Corridor Street	Side Street	Corridor Street	Side Street
Solano Avenue	None	None	None	6 feet above 4th story	6 feet above 4th story	6 feet above 4th story
North Shattuck	None	None	None	6 feet above 5th story	6 feet above 5th story	6 feet above 5th story
College Avenue	None	None	None	10 feet above 3rd story	10 feet above 3rd story	10 feet above 3rd story

Residential-only Buildings

The existing zoning has lower maximum heights, special building setbacks, and lower allowed lot coverage for residential-only buildings. To encourage more housing, the proposed zoning alternatives do not have special form standards for residential-only buildings except for building setbacks. Residential buildings would be allowed to be of the same size and scale as mixed-use buildings.

Upper Floor Step Backs

No upper floor step back

Upper floor step back above 5th Floor

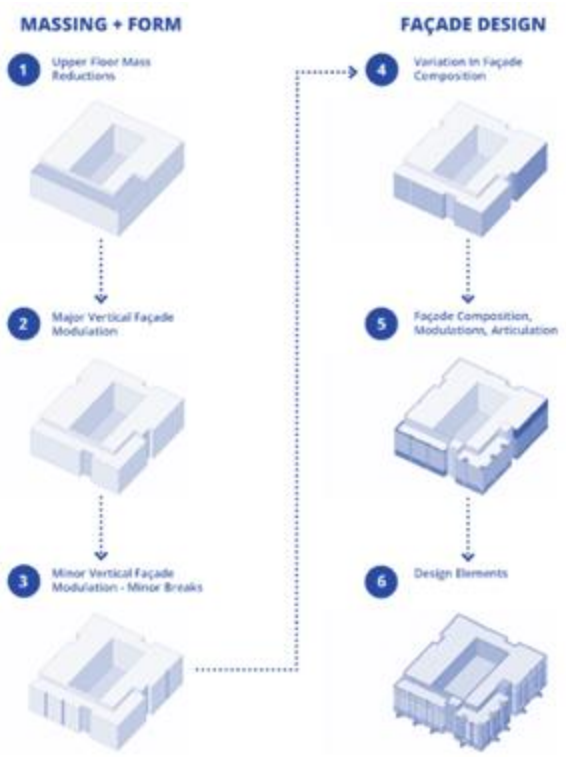
Upper Floor Step Backs

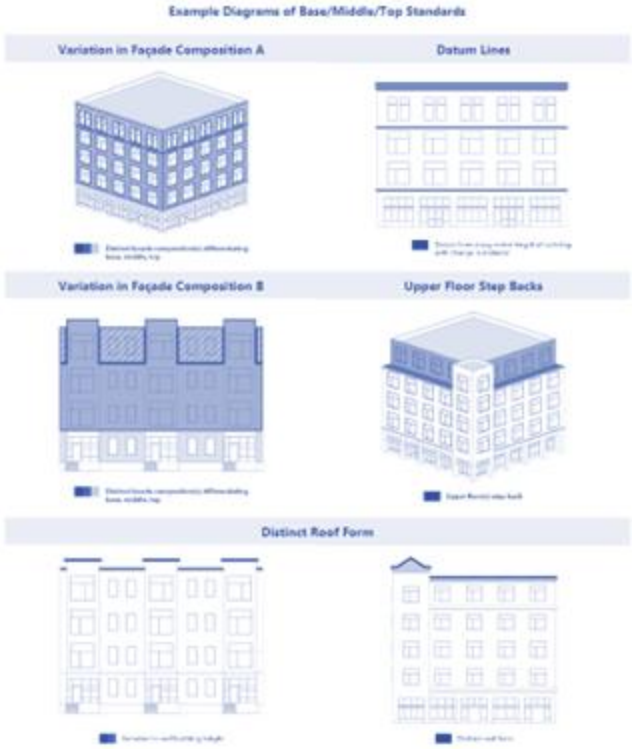
No upper floor step back

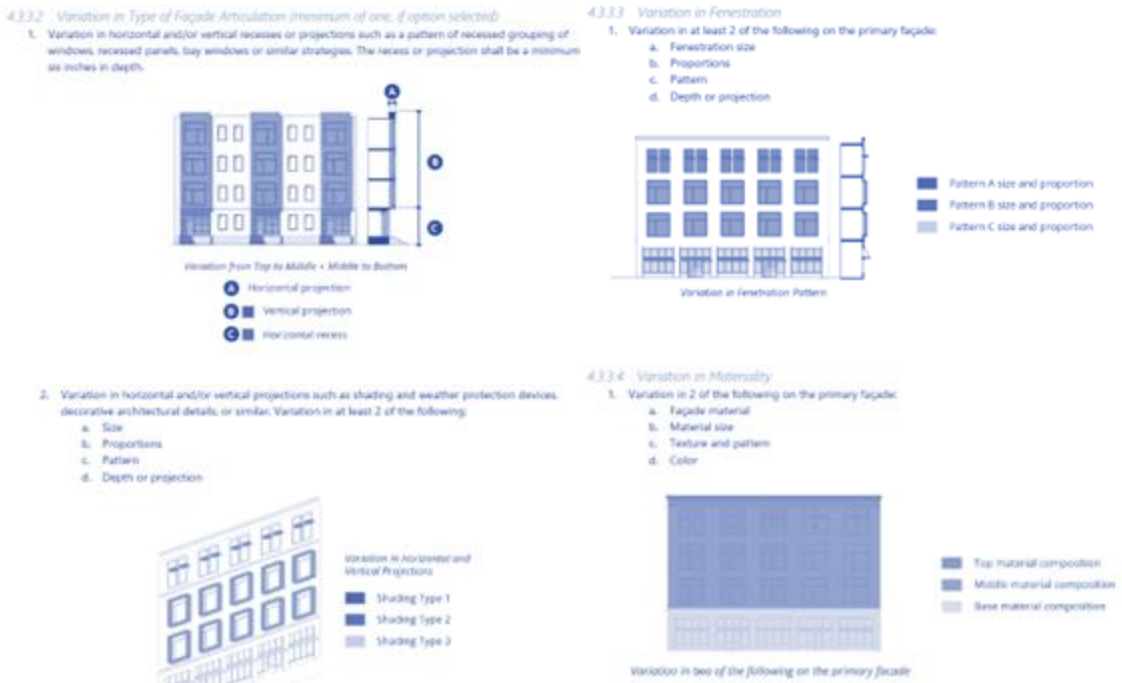
Upper floor step back above 3rd Floor

Additional Objective Design Standards

Should the zoning update include objective design standards?







*Examples from other cities, specific standards may be drafted during zoning code development.

Ground Floor Land Use Alternatives

Solano Ave Ground Floor Land Use

Ground Floor Retail Required

Ground Floor Residential OK

North Shattuck Ground Floor Land Use

Ground Floor Retail Required

Ground Floor Residential OK

College Ave Ground Floor Land Use

Ground Floor Retail Required

Ground Floor Residential OK

Summary of Feedback

Workshop #1 Recap

- Welcome from Mayor Ishii and the project team
- Presentation on project background, overview, and intent, and high-level findings from existing conditions analysis
- Small group discussions

►DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- *What characteristics do you want to make sure are maintained in this neighborhood?*
- *How would you like to see this neighborhood evolve and change?*
- *What do you think about adding housing to this neighborhood?*
- *What types of housing would you like to see this neighborhood?*

Workshop #1 Key Takeaways

Solano Avenue

- Prioritize protecting small businesses
- Provide diverse rental options
- Concerns over parking and congestion
- Opportunity to invest in public transportation and decrease car reliance
- Promote coordination with the City of Albany

North Shattuck

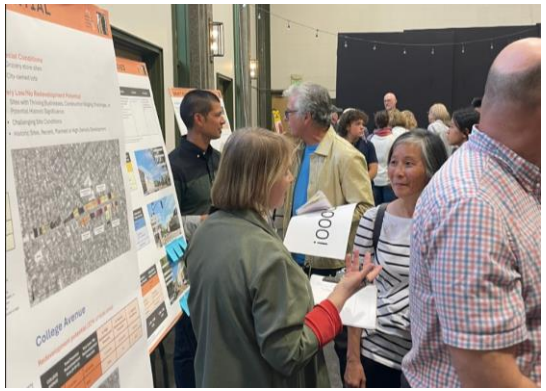
- Create more affordable housing
- Create mixed-use development with community-serving uses
- Maintain characteristic small businesses
- Create new development that meshes with existing urban fabric
- Increase walkability & bikeability
- Preserve parking to support businesses

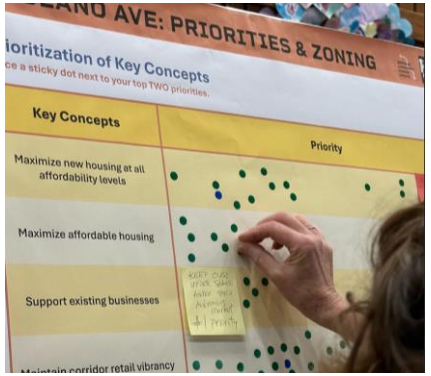
College Avenue

- Maintain charm, scale, and character of College Ave
- Consider environmental impacts of development
- Promote variety in housing - size, income, families, households
- Consider adding housing to wider corridors like Claremont rather than College
- Concern over parking and congestion

Workshop #2 Recap

- Approximately 350 participants
- 25-minute Presentation followed by one-hour open house with four stations including survey questions
- Strong desire from participants for a townhall style meeting format
- Open House format was selected because it gave the most amount of people ability to talk with staff, ask questions, and provide feedback





Workshop #2 Demographics

(see full summary for more detail)

North Shattuck

~ 60 participants

Residents - **31%**
- Own - **70%**
- Rent - **25%**

Work in Berkeley - **20%**

Age
- 18-54- **32%**
- 55-64 - **52%**
- 65 or older - **26%**

Ethnicity
- White - **71%**
- Asian or Asian American - **5%**
- Hispanic of Latino/a/x - **5%**

College Avenue

~ 130 participants

Residents - **39%**
- Own - **84%**
- Rent - **10%**

Work in Berkeley – **18%**

Age
- 18-54 - **32%**
- 55-64 - **14%**
- 65 or older - **64%**

Ethnicity
- White - **77%**
- Asian or Asian American - **8%**
- Hispanic of Latino/a/x - **3%**

Solano Avenue

~ 120 participants

Residents - **37%**
- Own - **89%**
- Rent - **9%**

Work in Berkeley – **13%**

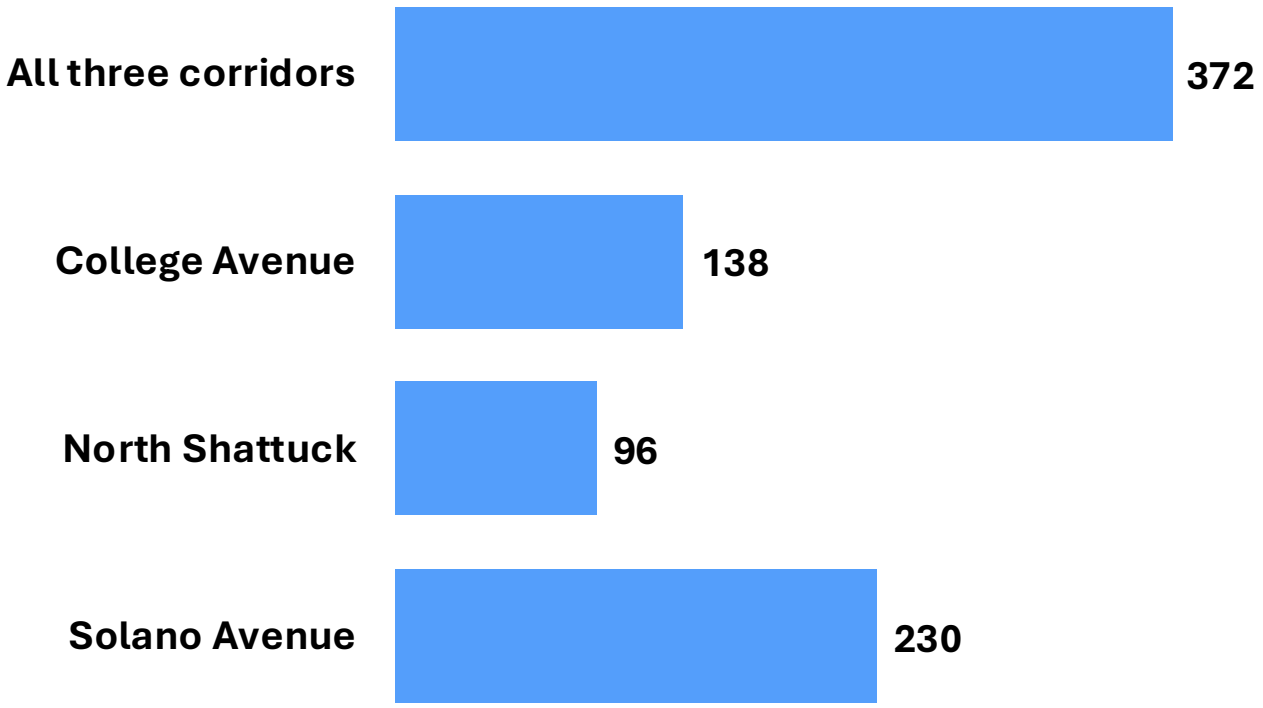
Age
- 18-54 - **35%**
- 55-64 - **22%**
- 65 or older - **43%**

Ethnicity
- White - **70%**
- Asian or Asian American - **7%**
- Hispanic of Latino/a/x - **5%**

Survey Recap (Aug 27 to date)

- Approximately **830** respondents and counting!
- Survey will remain open until October 10th

Which corridor(s) would you like to take the survey for?



Survey Demographics (to date)

Overall

~ 600 respondents

Live in Berkeley - **87%**

- Own - **75%**
- Rent - **23%**

Work in Berkeley - **35%**

Age

- 18-54- **54%**
- 55-64 - **15%**
- 65 or older - **30%**

Ethnicity

- White - **70%**
- Asian or Asian American - **10%**
- Hispanic of Latino/a/x - **6%**

Connection to Corridors

- Live near Solano Avenue - **49%**
- Live near North Shattuck - **37%**
- Live near College Avenue - **28%**

Solano Avenue Results

Workshop (~120 participants)

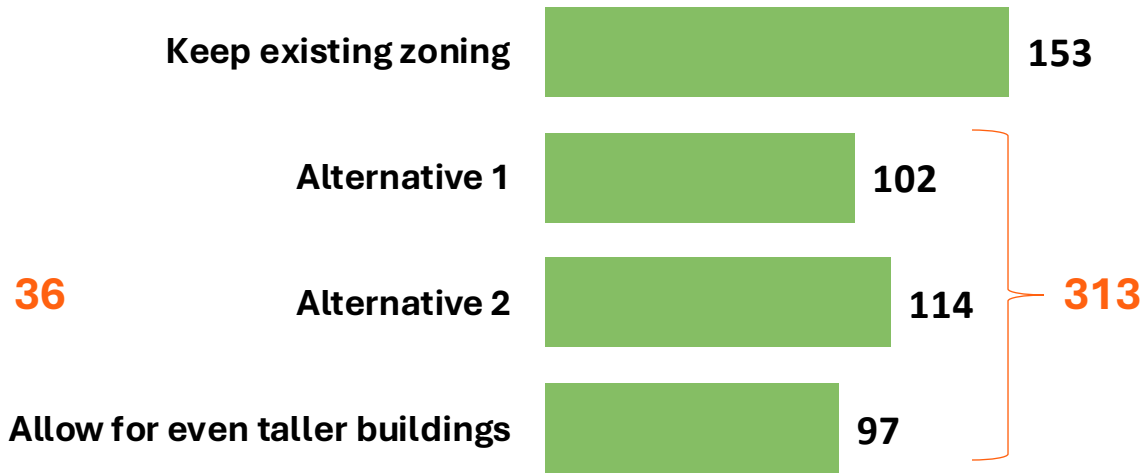
Preferred Alternative

Top 3 Priorities

1. Maintain corridor retail vibrancy
2. Maximize new housing at all affordability levels
3. Support existing businesses

Survey (~450 respondents)

Preferred Alternative



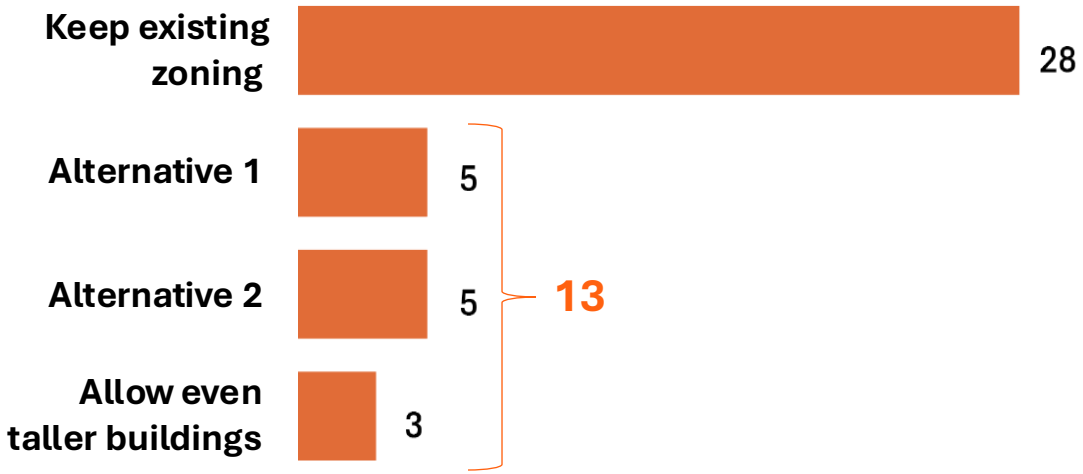
Top 3 Priorities

1. Maintain corridor retail vibrancy
2. Support existing businesses
3. Maximize new housing at all affordability levels

North Shattuck Results

Workshop (~60 participants)

Preferred Alternative

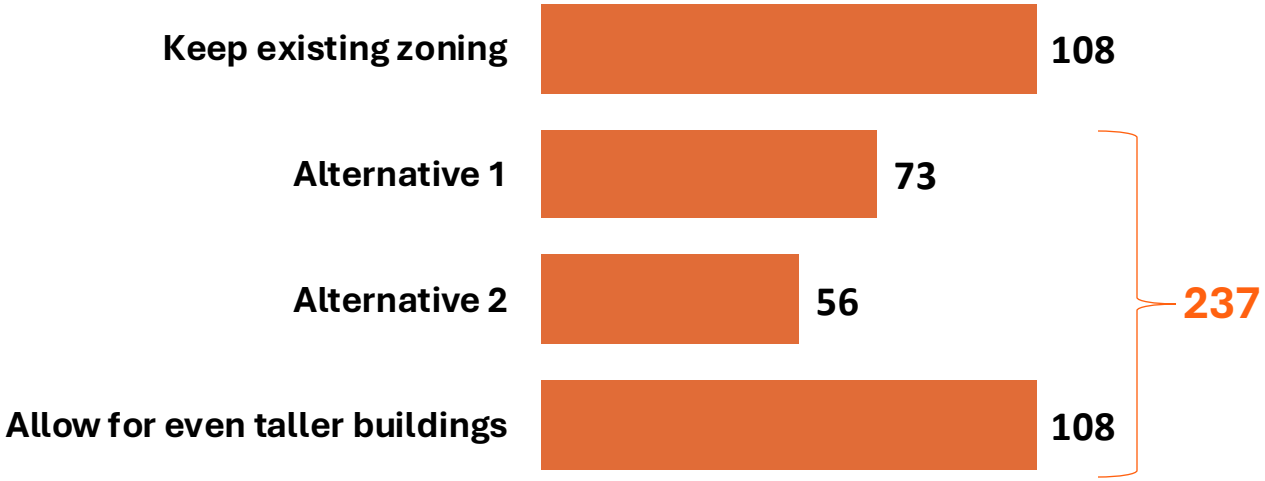


Top 3 Priorities

1. Maximize new housing at all affordability levels
2. Maximize affordable housing
3. Support existing businesses

Survey (~350 respondents)

Preferred Alternative



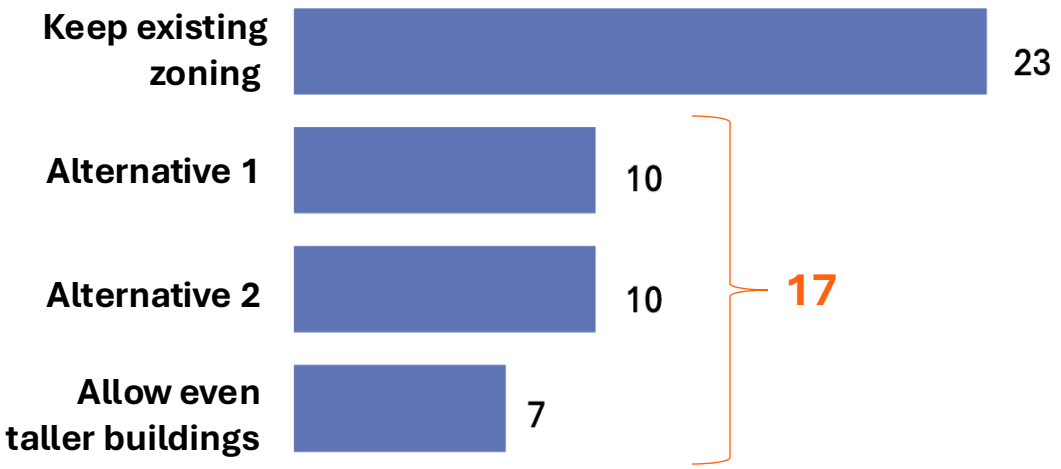
Top 3 Priorities

1. Maintain corridor retail vibrancy
2. Support existing businesses
3. Maximize new housing at all affordability levels

College Ave Results

Workshop (~130 participants)

Preferred Alternative

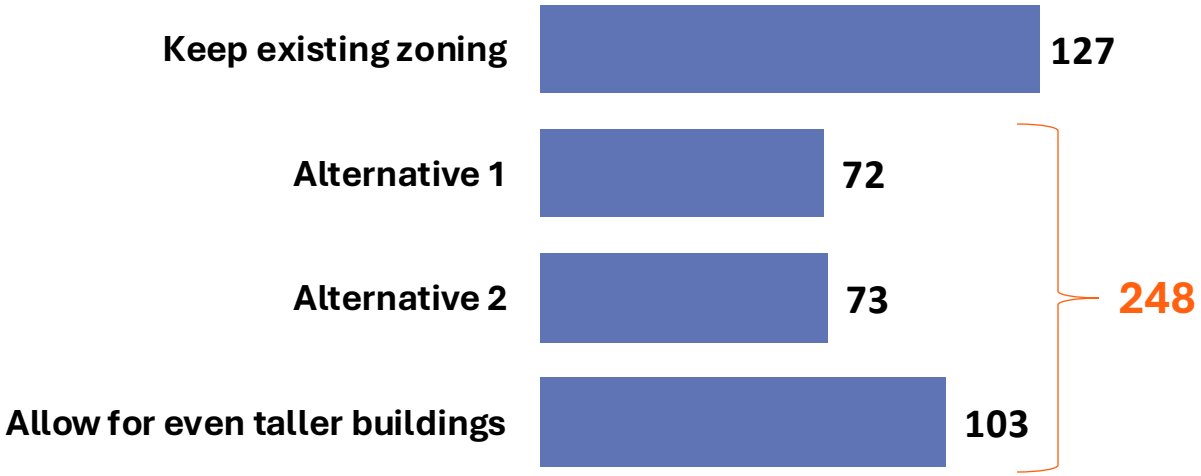


Top 3 Priorities

1. Maintain corridor retail vibrancy
2. Maximize new housing at all affordability levels
3. Support existing businesses

Survey (~370 respondents)

Preferred Alternative



Top 3 Priorities

1. Maintain corridor retail vibrancy
2. Support existing businesses
3. Maximize new housing at all affordability levels

II. Discussion Questions

Question per Corridor

Topic	Specific Considerations
Maximum Base Height	How can we best meet Berkeley's goals of increasing housing in high-resource areas while maintaining each of the corridors' unique character?
Upper floor Step Backs	What are your thoughts on requiring upper floor step backs on street facing facades?
Retail and Ground Floor Uses	Where should retail be required vs. optional? What design strategies support small businesses?
Residential on Ground Floors	Where, and under what conditions, should ground-floor residential be permitted?

General Questions

Topic	Specific Considerations
Support for Existing Businesses During Redevelopment	What strategies could mitigate business disruption or displacement during redevelopment?
Design Standards	In addition to updating the zoning's development standards, should the project team advance recommendations for additional, more detailed objective design standards to be included in the new zoning?
Additional Feedback	Are there other standards or community benefits that should be included?
Community Engagement	What additional community engagement activities should be conducted?

Thank you!