

V.

## FULFILLING OUR PRINCIPLES: PRIORITIES FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND PROSPERITY IN THE EAST BAY

East Bay Forward has identified twelve critical priorities to ensure that the region succeeds in coordinating and mobilizing its assets and resources to build an equitable, sustainable, and resilient economic future. The priorities respond to the findings from this report's analyses regarding the East Bay's future opportunities and challenges, as well as the input and recommendations from the many stakeholders that participated in the development of this blueprint.

An equity-first approach ensures that current and future generations will achieve meaningful economic inclusion, access to opportunity, and upward mobility.

Sunset over the Tri-Valley. Photo by: Dawn Humphrey.



San Leandro Tech Campus. Courtesy of the City of San Leandro.

**Together, the twelve priorities serve as a comprehensive framework for engaging and activating efforts by East Bay EDA's many stakeholders to ensure a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable economic future for our businesses and residents.** The priorities chart a course for more widely shared future economic growth, but achieving that vision will require the East Bay's business and nonprofit leaders, education professionals, elected officials, local governments, community members, and other stakeholders to work together so that their individual efforts create synergistic outcomes centered around these strategic priorities for the region. This approach reflects the reality that the East Bay's most pressing challenges and opportunities are shared both locally and regionally, so our approach must combine individual and collective decisions and actions.

As noted in the introduction to this report, six guiding principles were developed with extensive input from diverse East Bay stakeholders and underpin the priorities for East Bay Forward. These principles must guide the efforts of East Bay EDA's stakeholders and compel us to be:

- 1. Connected.** Many of our region's greatest challenges are inextricably linked, requiring coordinated regional advocacy, policy actions and investments that address multiple challenges and deliver shared benefits.
- 2. Equitable.** An equity-first approach ensures that current and future generations will achieve meaningful economic inclusion, access to opportunity, and upward mobility.
- 3. Measurable.** For our region to move forward, we need to be able to measure meaningful indicators and outcomes indicating how we are doing with accomplishing our goals.

4. **Regenerative.** Supporting clean and renewable investments to support the just transition to a dynamic, healthy, and circular economy has immense potential to drive innovation and growth, as well as yield economic, environmental, and community benefits.
5. **Resilient.** From destructive wildfires to future public health crises, there is an urgent need to mobilize and prepare for complex, intersecting disasters and to future-proof our physical and human assets to provide maximum resilience against ongoing and future challenges.
6. **Transformational.** Public and private investment must focus on dismantling barriers and creating opportunities for long-term and systemic solutions; it is imperative that we do more than promote incremental change.

East Bay EDA will pursue the priorities outlined in East Bay Forward by coordinating with various East Bay stakeholders across four different “focus areas.” Each of the focus areas represents specific topics around which East Bay EDA brings together members and partners with specific knowledge, networks, and resources. These focus areas include:

1. **Business Climate:** Encompasses efforts to attract, grow, and retain businesses of all sizes and industry sectors to ensure that the East Bay continues to enjoy the benefits of a diverse composition of companies and industries.

2. **Land Use and Infrastructure:** Encompasses efforts to address critical, interconnected land use policy issues to support the mobility of people and goods across the East Bay and beyond, as well as the needs for resilient, responsive and safe transportation, utilities, and other essential infrastructure systems to withstand climate-related risks and other disasters.
3. **Education and Workforce Development:** Encompasses efforts to advance access to and implementation of early childcare, K-12 education, higher education, and workforce preparedness to ensure the East Bay provides a globally competitive and diverse workforce that can access quality jobs and careers.
4. **Community Health and Well-Being:** Efforts within this focus area recognize that community safety, health, and empowerment are all critical ingredients for addressing disparities between the East Bay’s communities and ensuring greater resiliency against economic downturns and other external shocks.

The remainder of this report provides more details about the twelve priorities, including major opportunities and challenges for each priority, and examples of actions that East Bay EDA’s partners could pursue to support each priority’s implementation. The featured case studies serve to highlight relevant innovative, equity-centered, and collaborative models and best practices in the East Bay.



## 1. Prioritize delivering resources and services for East Bay small to mid-sized businesses—especially those most severely impacted by the pandemic.

### Challenges and Opportunities

Small to mid-sized businesses play an important role in the East Bay. Comprising the majority of business establishments, they employ the most people and thus offer the

#### PACIFIC COMMUNITY VENTURES

Pacific Community Ventures (PCV) is a nonprofit community development financial institution that combines affordable loans with pro-bono advising; impact measurement, evaluation and research; and tools and small grants to create good-quality jobs that address racial and gender wealth gaps. During the pandemic, demand soared for advising and capital, requiring PCV to shift focus on small business resilience, job preservation, and getting restorative capital and advice into the hands of entrepreneurs who needed it and were being left out of federal resources. PCV co-founded the \$150M California Rebuilding Fund, the largest, multi-stakeholder public-private partnership launched for small businesses anywhere in 2020.

#### OAKLAND INDIE ALLIANCE

The Oakland Indie Alliance (OIA) is a small business support network that provides marketing, advocacy, and comradery for independent business owners to connect and share resources. OIA focuses on tactical and community-oriented efforts in order to respond quickly amidst challenging times for small businesses. Throughout the pandemic, OIA served as a clearing-house for information from the city, county, and state. More recently, OIA spearheaded a Parklet Building Initiative, pulling in support from pro bono architects, designers, and builders to create free parklets for small businesses using donated materials. OIA also launched a grant program, Keep it Caring, Keeping it Oakland COVID-19 Recovery Fund, to fill the gap on critical capital needs BIPOC, women, and queer-owned businesses.

most opportunity for employment growth in the East Bay while providing opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship, and serving as a mechanism for households to build wealth through business ownership. Yet small businesses suffered disproportionately during the pandemic, particularly those in the industry sectors that experienced the greatest losses in jobs such as entertainment, dining, and personal services. The adoption of digital technology and other innovations accelerated during the pandemic, disproportionately impacting those small businesses that lacked the support to share in these gains, while at the same time workforce shortages exacerbated the situation. Compounding things further, pre-existing inequities in access to capital and resources for small businesses, especially minority-owned, immigrant-owned, and woman-owned small businesses have become more amplified as a result of the pandemic. As we work to overcome these impacts, an opportunity now exists to resolve longstanding inequities and provide the resources and assistance that will support entrepreneurship, support the growth of the East Bay's small businesses, and enable small businesses to continue offering diverse services creating and a variety of job opportunities for residents.

### How Do We Respond?

We must prioritize stronger coordination and targeted creation of new resources and services that support our region's small businesses. These efforts need to be particularly focused on BIPOC and immigrant-owned businesses as well as in industries that suffered the greatest losses from pandemic-related restrictions. Enhanced efforts should also be made to connect with and support immigrant-owned businesses.



Pacific Community Ventures supports local businesses like Toriano Gordon's Vegan Mob in Oakland. Courtesy of Pacific Community Ventures.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Leveraging local, state, and federal funding to expand small business assistance and services.
- Pursuing creation of flexible rules for use of any available grants and forgivable loans.
- Pursuing creation of local community banking resources.
- Providing training on digital marketing and sales.
- Expanding small business resources outreach, including multi-lingual access.
- Better connecting small businesses to existing resource partners, including local chambers of commerce, direct business assistance organizations, and technical assistance partners.
- Expanding public procurement opportunities and outreach to minority, immigrant, and woman-owned businesses
- Expanding public sector supports to create a business-friendly environment, including examples such as:
  - » "Open" or "slow" streets, curbside pickup areas, and placemaking efforts
  - » Streamlining business permitting, licensing, and other city services
  - » Improving crime-prevention measures and cleanliness of public realm
- Providing resources to assist businesses in recruiting and training new workers.
- Engaging utility companies to reduce operating costs for small businesses.



East Bay Innovation Awards. Courtesy of East Bay EDA.

### THINK SILICON VALLEY

Fremont is one of the fastest growing cities in California and major economic hub of the Bay Area known for its strong manufacturing presence. To enhance the city's marketing and business attraction efforts, the City of Fremont launched a new website which serves as a central hub for business investors, developers, entrepreneurs and community members to learn about economic news, business districts, company ecosystem, and business resources.

## 2. Promote assets and opportunities in the East Bay region to attract and retain a diverse range of businesses and quality jobs.

### Challenges and Opportunities

The East Bay offers an abundance of assets and opportunities for businesses, including its diversified economy, diverse workforce, major institutions, innovative business activities, setting within the dynamic Bay Area economy, and unique mix of culture, arts, parks, and amenities. While many East Bay communities currently promote themselves individually, the East Bay has yet to have built a unified image for businesses and residents in the same way that Silicon Valley and San Francisco do. An opportunity exists to promote the region to attract businesses, workers, and investment while reducing competing and duplicative efforts by individual cities and organizations.

### How Do We Respond?

As the primary representative of the East Bay overall, the East Bay EDA is in a unique position to collaborate with its members and partners to develop and implement a marketing and communication campaign to promote the East Bay's unique assets and opportunities. Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Create an East Bay marketing and communications campaign, targeted primarily to businesses, to promote the East Bay's major assets, innovation ecosystem, industry growth opportunities, both overall and by subarea.
- Leverage events such as the East Bay Innovation Awards and other regional opportunities to market and promote the East Bay.

### 3. Concentrate education, workforce training, and broadband infrastructure investments that expand equitable access to economic opportunity.

#### Challenges and Opportunities

Education, training, and broadband investments not only support the East Bay's workers in accessing job opportunities, but these investments are also essential to meet the challenges of closing the racial, gender, and geographic disparities that exist in education, income, and wealth across the East Bay. East Bay stakeholders identified four major challenges in providing necessary workforce education, training, and on-the-job experience: 1) gaps exist in the transitions and "handoffs" between the different providers of these services, 2) additional efforts are required to expand services and ensure they remain relevant for current market demand, 3) education and job training resources are not proportionately distributed in the East Bay, and 4) many workers are unable to take advantage of education and training resources without additional supports such as low-cost child care, low-cost or free education, and paid apprenticeships/ internships. Access to broadband internet service is also

necessary to fully participate in today's society for education, work, access to services and resources, and for businesses to take part in e-commerce.

The analyses in this report identified industries that are projected to grow rapidly in the East Bay while offering corresponding growth in high-quality jobs with livable wages and opportunities for career advancement and relatively low barriers to entry. These opportunities are especially concentrated in the "green" sustainability-focused building trades, manufacturing jobs, health care, and education, but can be found throughout the East Bay's growing and innovative industries such as biomedical manufacturing and biotechnology. Taking advantage of these and other workforce opportunities will require the East Bay to leverage available and new funding resources to develop programs and partnerships, expand overall education and workforce training capacity, and resolve gaps in broadband service and affordability.

#### How Do We Respond?

Our region's ability to create opportunities for workers depends on coordinating and enhancing the efforts of our education, workforce training, and apprenticeships or on-the-job training around our growing industry sectors and occupations that offer high-quality jobs and large numbers of projected job openings. Collaborative efforts will also be required to create the systemic changes that will ensure physical access to workforce development resources and avoid having workers "fall through the cracks" as they transition between education, training, and work opportunities. We must also seek out and expand resources that support workers engaged in education and apprenticeships, such as the "earn and learn" model described below.

#### EARN AND LEARN FREMONT

Earn and Learn Fremont (ELF) is an innovative approach to addressing persistent workforce talent gaps while providing individuals affected by COVID-19 layoffs the opportunity to jumpstart a new career in advanced manufacturing. Launched in March 2021, ELF is a collaborative partnership between Ohlone College and Evolve Manufacturing, with support from the City of Fremont and two regional workforce boards the Alameda County Workforce Development Board, and work2future. The initial pilot program included 25 participants receiving eight weeks of paid work experience at Evolve Manufacturing and six weeks of concurrent virtual skills development training via Ohlone College's Smart Manufacturing Technology Program.



Concurrently, resolving broadband needs will require coordination of stakeholders and resources to address 1) geographic gaps in high-speed broadband and mobile data service; 2) high costs of high-speed data service subscriptions; 3) increasing digital fluency within the workforce and population, including knowledge of how to access and navigate

online resources; and 4) supporting small business owners in expanding their internet presence and e-commerce operations.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Improving coordination of education, workforce training, and apprenticeship programs for occupations that offer high-quality jobs and many openings, including working with community colleges and other regional post-secondary education and training institutions to expand workforce skills.
- Collaboratively addressing systemic barriers to accessing education and workforce trainings for students and workers.
- Expanding paid earn-and-learn opportunities to support individuals engaged in training, apprenticeships, and internships.
- Investing in business incubator and accelerator programs serving entrepreneurs and startups in underserved communities.
- Working with broadband service providers to prioritize access to affordable and reliable, high-speed internet for small businesses and residents in low-income areas.
- Expanding training programs in schools and other locations to increase digital fluency among workers, residents, and business owners.

### **INSTITUTE FOR STEM EDUCATION**

Cal State East Bay established the Institute for STEM Education in 2011 to create a powerful regional center for STEM education—serving the hiring needs of employers as it provides education and opportunity to students throughout the region. The Institute for STEM Education supports efforts directly addressing the critical teacher shortage in STEM disciplines through its Teacher Education Program and MESA College Prep Program. The Institute's Career Awareness and Preparation (CAP) program also gives students the skills and knowledge to plan their pathway to enter college and the workforce, which builds the STEM workforce pipeline to reflect the diversity of the East Bay. By including a diverse set of educational stakeholders from all levels and leveraging relationships with industry, the CSU East Bay's Institute for STEM Education offers a strong model for others to emulate.

### **TECH EXCHANGE**

Tech Exchange's core solution, Tech for All, connects low-income families who are digitally disconnected by providing them with a free refurbished computer, digital skills workshop, free tech support, and assistance accessing affordable \$10/month Internet. Tech Exchange partners with school districts, libraries, public agencies, and community organizations on tech fairs and digital skills workshops. As the first step in rolling out its Smart Neighborhoods Initiative, Tech Exchange opened its Tech Hub in an East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) commercial facility located in the San Antonio neighborhood of Oakland to serve as a central, inclusive space for community members to access a high-quality computer lab for school, work and other life needs.



## 4. Align land use policy and infrastructure investments to ensure sufficient flexibility to respond to regional trends around remote work, e-commerce, and related innovations.

### Challenges and Opportunities

The explosive growth of remote work and e-commerce are among the most significant long-term transformational trends on the ways in which our region will work, live, and conduct business. As a result, these trends will have wide-ranging impacts on our region's land use needs.

The land use impacts associated with the rise of e-commerce preceded the COVID-19 pandemic, but was certainly accelerated during this time. As described earlier in this report, e-commerce creates new demand for fulfillment facilities near population centers, reduces the overall square feet of retail space required to serve residents—especially in secondary regionally-focused shopping centers—and is increasing the share of “experiential” uses in retail spaces such as restaurants and gyms. This shift creates new opportunities to rethink, redevelop, and reuse retail spaces and centers, potentially integrating new uses such as housing, office, and distribution space.

Longer term, there is greater uncertainty about the longer-term impacts of remote work on land uses in the East Bay. Although more workers will return to their offices over time, we can be reasonably confident that higher shares of East Bay workers and residents will continue to work remotely part-time or full-time compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic. Demand for office space per-worker will likely decline as some companies remain largely remote or expand shared “hot-desking” of workspaces. While business districts such as Downtown Oakland or Bishop Ranch will remain major office hubs, it is possible that an opportunity will exist to grow co-working or secondary office locations closer to the East Bay's residential communities. The nature of demand for retail space may also shift over time if demand for stores and restaurants declines in central business districts and creates

expanded opportunities within neighborhood commercial districts.

### How Do We Respond?

Aligning land use policy to address remote work and e-commerce requires the East Bay's communities to come together to share lessons learned and best practices in accommodating these shifts. Land use policies and business regulations must support adaptive reuse and flexible zoning that supports the evolving needs of retail, office, and logistics properties. At the same time, our communities must also be careful to ensure land use policies and public investments benefit all East Bay communities and not just individual one where specific companies may be located.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Sharing and, when applicable, aligning local and regional best practices for implementing flexible zoning that accommodates development interest while minimizing potential land use conflicts resulting from the impacts of e-commerce, food delivery and remote work.<sup>31</sup>
- Focusing efforts to support the creation of walkable, amenity-rich places that can support higher-density job growth, whether in existing or emerging job centers.
- Planning for transformation of underperforming malls and large shopping centers into mixed-use places that, when possible, incorporate jobs, housing, amenities, and regional transit connections within walking distance of each other. Integrating long-range land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning and investments to reduce suburban sprawl and to better serve the mobility needs of low-income individuals, students, senior citizens, and people with disabilities.

<sup>31</sup> See, for example, “The Future of Cities: Reenvisioning Retail” by the National League of Cities at [https://www.nlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CS-Future-of-Cities\\_Reenvisioning-Retail.pdf](https://www.nlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CS-Future-of-Cities_Reenvisioning-Retail.pdf)

## 5. Mobilize the East Bay's robust network of institutions and organizations to address regional housing affordability.

### Challenges and Opportunities

The East Bay's high housing costs are at the root of a series of interrelated barriers for businesses, families, and the region as a whole. East Bay business owners and leaders cite high housing costs as one of the greatest challenges for worker attraction and retention, particularly for businesses requiring workers at a variety of income and skill levels. At the individual level, high housing costs make it difficult for all workers to live in the East Bay—yet the burdens of high housing costs are borne most heavily by the East Bay's lower-income residents, resulting in the worsening of longstanding inequities connecting race, income, and education. At the regional scale, connecting workers to jobs over ever-longer commute distances means a constant need to invest in infrastructure to connect distant residential areas. Despite the immense scale of these challenges, the East Bay is in the fortunate position of having a robust network of organizations, programs, policies, and local efforts that together create an opportunity to

address our housing affordability needs.

### How Do We Respond?

This priority is focused on doing the work of organizing and amplifying the efforts of East Bay EDA's partners on reducing the burdens of housing costs for our residents and workforce, recognizing the impacts of these burdens on our entire region's economy. Any and all solutions will be needed to truly make a change and reduce inequitable impacts of housing costs, from distributing short-term funding to prevent evictions as moratoria expire, changing policies to expand our housing diversity and supply, to supporting efforts that provide more housing choices that are affordable to residents at all incomes. Addressing housing affordability challenges is also not just about reducing the cost of housing, but about increasing the incomes and job quality of residents through efforts such as those described in the third priority of East Bay Forward.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Distributing funding to prevent evictions as moratoria expire.
- Adopting a range of housing policies shared across East Bay jurisdictions aimed at increasing affordable housing, increasing housing production, enhancing resident protections, and reducing homelessness.<sup>32</sup> Examples include:
  - » Enabling construction of tiny homes, micro-units, co-housing, modular construction, motel/hotel conversion
  - » Tapping into the Bay Area Regional Housing Fund, which provides capital for affordable housing developers to cover acquisition and pre-development expenses.

#### FRUITVALE TRANSIT VILLAGE, A MODEL FOR COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Oakland's Fruitvale Transit Village is a vibrant, community-oriented mixed-use development with hundreds of affordable housing units and commercial space for locally-owned retail and offices for community organizations. Adjacent to the Fruitvale BART station and AC Transit hub, the transit village also includes a high school, childcare facilities, health clinics, and a wide array of community resources. Created by the Unity Council in the early 2000s, the Fruitvale Transit Village is a multi-phased development and partnership between the City of Oakland, Alameda County, BART, Unity Council, EBALDC, private developers, and many community-based organizations.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, research and recommendations by the Turner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley: <https://turnercenter.berkeley.edu/research-and-policy/>



Fruitvale Transit Village in Oakland. Courtesy of The Unity Council.

### PUBLIC LANDS STRATEGY IN PLAN BAY AREA 2050

The reuse of public lands is a key housing strategy in Plan Bay Area 2050, which would provide thousands of low- and middle-income families with homes in transit- and opportunity-rich communities. Thousands of acres of land owned by cities, transit agencies, school districts, counties or other public agencies are currently sitting vacant or underutilized. Since this land is publicly owned, it offers unique strategic opportunities to advance multiple priorities like affordability and economic development. Deed-restricted affordable housing is more feasible on publicly owned lands because acquiring the land, a major expense for development, has already been done. Public lands are key opportunity sites for increasing the Bay Area's supply of affordable housing, as well as nesting that housing within complete communities offering services and open space.

- » Municipal streamlining of permitting and entitlements process, and objective design standards
- » Implementing public-private partnerships and funding models with major institutions and employers, e.g., Kaiser Permanente's Housing for Health Fund to preserve and expand affordable housing
- » Adopting funding tools and programs that are shared across jurisdictions, such as a first-time homebuyer program or county-wide housing bond measures.
- Developing a shared East Bay housing advocacy platform for desired changes in state and Bay Area regional laws, regulations, and policies, including those related to wages, workforce development, and job access, since housing and economic security are inextricably linked.

## 6. Protect and invest in the East Bay's industrial employment lands to support economic diversity.

### Challenges and Opportunities

The East Bay's industrial employment lands are one of the region's greatest strategic advantages within the greater Bay Area, offering incomparable quantity and diversity of industrial land uses and buildings compared to the rest of the region. Industrial lands provide flexibility to businesses and host our goods movement activities, our fast-growing manufacturing industries, and many of our innovation-oriented uses like R&D, prototype development, and advanced manufacturing. Businesses located in the East Bay's industrial lands provide many high-quality middle-wage and middle-skill job opportunities. These lands also support our ports and commercialization of technologies from our research institutions. And the varying mix of industrial buildings, lands, and businesses in each of the region's subareas makes a unique contribution to that subarea and the East Bay as a whole.

Opportunities and challenges facing the East Bay's industrial lands—and the businesses they accommodate—also vary from subarea to subarea. A concentration of older industrial buildings along the I-880 corridor are vulnerable to seismic risks, particularly in portions of Central and Southern Alameda County. Many older and smaller industrial properties along this corri-

dor also do not meet modern needs in terms of size, ceiling heights, power, or loading access. Bay-adjacent industrial buildings are vulnerable to sea level rise. The “northern waterfront” of Contra Costa County includes older properties requiring reinvestment, but also presents opportunities to meet the East Bay's sustainability needs while facilitating the creation of new and different kinds of jobs as local refineries propose shifts to cleaner energy production.

### How Do We Respond?

Protecting and investing in the East Bay's industrial employment lands requires coordination among communities, businesses, and property owners within subareas, given that the opportunities and needs vary significantly in different East Bay communities. At the same time, the East Bay should leverage regional planning and policy efforts around industrial lands, including the “Priority Production Areas” (PPA) program by the Association of Bay Area Governments and Metropolitan Transportation Commission focused on identifying and protecting productive clusters of industrial businesses.<sup>33</sup>

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Identifying and preserving functional industrial lands, especially lands identified by the Association of Bay Area Governments as Priority Production Areas.
- Collaborative efforts focused on understanding and supporting the needs of businesses located on industrial lands.
- Encouraging integrated, comprehensive planning and future infrastructure investments to be resilient and responsive to climate change and other disasters (i.e., sea level rise, seismic activity, flooding, fires).

#### GATE 510

Gate 510, formerly an automobile manufacturing plant in San Leandro, has been reimaged as an incubator and innovation hub for entrepreneurs, makers, creators and visionaries to collaborate, invent, work and manufacture. With flexible suite options and a “town center,” access to high-speed fiber internet, and multi-functional amenities, Gate 510 has allowed a range of businesses, from clean tech to coffee roasting, to grow and build connections with other innovators through multi-functional amenity spaces.

<sup>33</sup> For more information see <https://abag.ca.gov/our-work/land-use/ppa-priority-production-areas>



## THE NORTHERN WATERFRONT

Throughout the early 20th century, the East Bay economy was oriented around legacy manufacturing activity. Richmond and communities along the “Northern Waterfront” from unincorporated Rodeo to Antioch, were a center for resource-based manufacturing activities. These included processing crude oil, agricultural products, metal, chemicals, and lumber, as well as other products. During this period, waterways were also critical for shipping. The Richmond waterfront was an important asset for the megaregion’s goods’ movement, and its shipyards employed many workers.

Today, the industrial landscape has changed. Traditional manufacturing employment has declined in Contra Costa County, as the manufacturing sector today is more oriented toward high-tech activities. The Port of Oakland, which is a container port and located near a more central concentration of highways and rail, plays a much larger role in the megaregion than the Port of Richmond, which focuses on bulk cargo.

Certain legacy manufacturing activities and the Port of Richmond continue to contribute significantly to Contra Costa’s economy, and they provide middle-wage jobs for the local workforce. However, the Northern Waterfront and the communities it supports face many challenges today, including aging buildings, contaminated properties, and dependence on fossil fuel industries. And the local workforce in these communities is more likely to experience unemployment, and they are less able to access career advancement opportunities. Today, several of the area’s jurisdictions and larger employers are in the process of exploring a “just transition” to shift toward activities with lower negative environmental impacts while preserving high-quality jobs. The Northern Waterfront Economic Development Initiative is also a proactive, multi-jurisdiction effort that is working to address many of these challenges and create new jobs and opportunities for residents. More information about the Northern Waterfront can be found [here](#).

- Supporting the East Bay’s goods movement ecosystem through creating mechanisms to enhance connection between East Bay manufacturers and distributors to local, regional, and global markets.
- Working with ABAG and MTC to expand the PPA program beyond its initial limited scope presented in Plan Bay Area 2050, recognizing that some critically important industrial lands in the East Bay were not included in the PPA program because of their proximity to transit and to housing opportunities. Policy modifications may be needed to maintain these industrial lands while also benefiting from proximity to transit and housing.
- Developing and sharing best practices for preserving industrial land and employment opportunities while balancing needs for producing housing and protecting health of residents living in adjacent industrial areas; for example, the City of Oakland is currently updating its Planning Code to address these goals.

## 7. Secure regional and local multimodal transportation infrastructure investments to support job growth and accessibility.

### Challenges and Opportunities

We must meet the challenge of making continuous transportation infrastructure investments that support the East Bay's ongoing economic health, growth, and prosperity. At the regional level, an opportunity exists to benefit from planned projects including "Link21" megare-

gion transportation project planning (which may include a new transbay crossing), the Valley Link connection between BART and Altamont Corridor Express, the DTX Extension of Caltrain into the San Francisco Transbay Transit Center (creating an improved connection to East Bay bus service and BART), and BART's extension to Santa Clara County. New federal and other funding resources are also likely to become available for local improvements critical to supporting residents access to jobs and amenities, such as electric vehicle charging infrastructure, investments in local public transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and investments in goods movement infrastructure.

#### GoMentum Station

GoMentum Station, owned and operated by AAA, is one of the nation's largest secure testing facilities for connected and automated vehicle technology at the former Concord Naval Weapons Station in Concord. GoMentum Station was co-founded by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), which currently leads and facilitates collaborative partnerships to advance the next generation of transportation network infrastructure. The 2,100-acre GoMentum Station is at the center of cutting-edge transportation research and testing, advancing safer, greener, and more accessible transportation options across modalities.

#### San Pablo Avenue Corridor Project

San Pablo Avenue is the spine of a critical multimodal travel corridor that traverses multiple cities across Alameda and Contra Costa counties, connecting tens of thousands of people daily between residential communities, employment centers, schools, and other activity hubs. The Project aims to advance "complete streets" concepts to ensure safety, quality, and convenience for current and future residents and businesses, particularly as demand for travel on the corridor is projected to increase as higher-density, mixed-use development continues. Led by the Alameda County Transportation Commission, the San Pablo Avenue Corridor Project brings together multiple partners and stakeholders, including the California Department of Transportation, Contra Costa Transportation Authority, AC Transit, and the cities of Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland, El Cerrito, Richmond and San Pablo.

### How Do We Respond?

Coordinated planning and advocacy by East Bay EDA's stakeholders and partners will position the region to "get out ahead" of transportation funding opportunities and planning for new transportation projects. This proactive approach will ensure that the East Bay not only receives investment when available, but also that new projects and service will most effectively support the needs of the East Bay's businesses and residents.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Planning for and developing advocacy platforms to maximize benefits from regional and megaregion projects such as Link21, Valley Link, the DTX Extension, and BART's extension to Santa Clara County.
- Developing "shovel ready" projects that connect residents with jobs and amenities in order to improve local jurisdictions' abilities to compete for new transportation funding for items such as electric vehicle charging infrastructure, public transit investments, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and roadway investments.
- Setting standards and pursuing funding for climate resilient transportation infrastructure to mitigate disaster risks.

## 8. Position the East Bay to be a leader in sustainability and climate advancements while spurring economic growth and innovation.

### Challenges and Opportunities

As described previously in this report, “CleanTech” opportunities encompass a wide range of types of businesses and technologies that reduce our society’s greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on nonrenewable fossil fuel resources. Broad recognition of the need to address climate change is leading to increased investment and interest in sustainability solutions at the global, national, and regional scales. Growing opportunities are found in a wide range of areas, including electrification of buildings and transportation, advancements in renewable energy generation, and reducing waste to build a “circular” economy. The East Bay is particu-

larly well positioned to leverage opportunities for CleanTech advancements and business growth by building off the East Bay’s existing large base of related jobs and businesses, innovations generated by UC Berkeley and the national laboratories, advanced manufacturing capabilities, skilled workforce, and industrial land supply that can accommodate diverse service, construction, and manufacturing businesses.

### How Do We Respond?

Building on the East Bay’s existing leadership in sustainability and climate advancements requires efforts to 1) connect the region’s network of existing businesses, technologies, and resources to create synergies that enhance innovation and growth; 2) enhance demand for sustainability investments and infrastructure through public policy, advocacy for sustainable public infrastructure investments, and outreach to businesses and residents to encourage decarbonization and waste reduction; and 3) prioritizing workforce investments focused on the skills required for related manufacturing and construction occupations.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Developing public-private collaborations to align education, workforce, public agencies, and business stakeholders around identifying and resolving critical gaps and opportunities for regional workforce development needs, technological innovations, and investment opportunities.
- Supporting businesses to incorporate “circular” solutions and innovations into their operations to reduce waste and costs.

#### AC TRANSIT’S ZERO EMISSION BUS PROGRAM

AC Transit has been building the most comprehensive zero emission bus program in the country. As the primary bus operator in the East Bay, AC Transit has expanded from hydrogen fuel-cell electric buses to battery electric buses. The program includes on-site hydrogen production and fueling, electric charging, on-site fleet maintenance, and workforce training.

#### ZERO NET ENERGY CENTER

The Zero Net Energy Center in San Leandro is an educational facility, co-sponsored by the local electricians’ union (IBEW) and the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA), that supports training of over 2,000 electricians annually. The building is a deep energy retrofit of a 1980s office building. Its innovative design and state-of-the-art technologies in solar, wind, solar thermal, lighting, and building automation systems are regularly used in the curriculum. These features enable an energy use reduction of 75% compared to similar US buildings and lower its carbon footprint to an estimated 175 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, all at comparable construction cost to conventional construction methods.



Saildrone Mission Control in Alameda. Courtesy of City of Alameda.

- Pursuing market development efforts such as StopWaste's partnership with East Bay EDA to retain and attract green businesses to reduce waste and accelerate the decarbonization of the built environment.
- Sharing best practices across East Bay jurisdictions regarding laws and regulations targeting sustainable construction, clean energy generation, and waste reduction.
- Proactively invest in zero-emission technologies to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, e.g., Port of Oakland's construction of zero-emissions truck charging stations to enable cleaner freight and cargo-handling.



## 9. Bolster the East Bay's diversity of arts, culture, parks, and other essential assets to ensure a vibrant and cohesive region.

### Challenges and Opportunities

The East Bay's vast collection of arts and culture organizations, institutions, and venues express the rich diversity of our region's cultures and communities. We also benefit from an extensive and varied parks system through the East Bay Regional Park District's preservation and stewardship of 73 parks, 1,250 miles of

trails and 55 miles of shoreline. The East Bay boasts an abundance of art galleries, museums, science centers, and community gathering spaces that support the health, well-being, and sense of belonging and inclusion for our residents. These arts, culture, parks, and essential assets have made the East Bay's quality of life an attraction for residents, workers and visitors, as well as provide diverse employment opportunities, generate significant economic activity in the region and beyond.

Opportunities exist to address three major challenges: 1) usable, family-friendly parks are not evenly distributed throughout the region, 2) rising costs for commercial spaces and housing are making it difficult for arts and cultural organizations to operate and to retain their workforces, and 3) the need to strengthen the resiliency of the arts and culture sector through pandemic-related investments to make them fit for reopening and enable digital/hybrid offerings to ensure financial sustainability.

#### BLACK CULTURAL ZONE

Formed by a powerful coalition of Black residents, leaders, organizers, and advocates, as well as more than 30 Black-led organizations, the Black Cultural Zone (BCZ) was established in 2014 to address the disparate impact of decades of disinvestment in East Oakland and more recent displacement of Black residents and legacy businesses by centering Black arts and culture within a community development framework. BCZ successfully transformed a vacant lot into a center for cultural, community and commercial activity, which the community renamed Liberation Park. Today, Liberation Park is home to the AKOMA Outdoor Farmers Market, a bi-weekly farmers market prioritizing local Black and Brown farms, in addition to local retail, restaurants and food trucks, artists and makers, and health and wellness providers.

#### THE SOGOREA TE' LAND TRUST

Sogorea Te' is centered in Huchuin, the ancestral homeland of the Confederated Villages of Lisjan, now known as the East Bay (Ohlone territory). The Sogorea Te' Land Trust is an urban indigenous women-led land trust focused on cultural revitalization, land restoration and bringing Lisjan's vibrant traditions back to the land. The organization's critical work is funded in large part by the Shuumi Land Tax, a voluntary annual or monthly contribution that non-Indigenous people living on traditional Lisjan territory make to acknowledge the community's deep history and to support community development activities.

### How Do We Respond?

Bolstering the East Bay's arts, culture, and parks assets will require enhanced collaboration and coordination between arts and culture organizations to advocate for shared needs and concerns—including the perennial need for additional funding. Expanded promotion of the East Bay as a whole (as noted in Priority 2) can also feature and support these destinations and organizations. Resolving access challenges to parks will require concerted efforts to improve low-cost transportation options to existing parks, and to continue seeking opportunities and funding to expand parks and other recreational opportunities in underserved areas.



Umoja Skating Rink at East Oakland's Liberation Park. Photo Courtesy of Black Cultural Zone.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Convening diverse arts and culture organizations to identify shared needs and strategies for addressing those challenges at the local and regional scales.
- Developing a toolkit of policy options and funding mechanisms for cities to use for providing commercial spaces to arts and culture non-profit organizations at below-market rate rents. For example:
  - » Partnering with property owners and developers on privately-owned public spaces and/or affordable commercial spaces for community organizations that provide essential neighborhood services, especially in areas most impacted by the pandemic as well as those most vulnerable to gentrification pressures.<sup>34</sup>
- Enhance capacity-building, technical assistance and funding mechanisms which can enable arts and culture organizations to adapt to new business models.
- Enhancing transit service to parks and other recreation.
- Expanding funding mechanisms for acquiring, building, and maintaining parks that can also serve multiple benefits, including "green" infrastructure (e.g., stormwater management, ecological restoration, edible parks).

<sup>34</sup> Urban Displacement Project, UC Berkeley.

## 10. Expand access to health resources, human infrastructure investments, and other supports that enhance the resilience of our region's most vulnerable residents and workers.

### Challenges and Opportunities

The disparate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic were a stark reminder of the longstanding inequities that exist in the East Bay, both geographically and by gender, race, ethnicity, and immigration status. These inequities include differences in quality, access, and ability to afford child care, education, job

training, and health resources. At the same time, the pandemic has created a new opportunity to address these challenges by elevating awareness of these inequities by renewing emphasis on funding “human infrastructure,” and clearly demonstrating that the success of our economy truly does depend on the resilience of our entire workforce.

### How Do We Respond?

With the COVID-19 pandemic fresh in our minds, a unique opportunity exists to implement transformational changes to better support the East Bay's vulnerable residents and workers. The East Bay's stakeholders can collaboratively develop, pursue, and deploy new funding resources and investments in education, workforce development, child-care, and health resources. This is also a moment when new possibilities may exist to pursue adoption of public policies in East Bay jurisdictions that will support livable worker wages and benefits that will help protect our workforce against future disasters and economic shocks.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Assessing and closing gaps in health resources and human infrastructure investments, with a particular focus on needs demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic's impacts.
- Expanding and increasing childcare subsidies in order to support our workforce.
- Expanding public-private partnerships to improve low-cost health care access throughout the East Bay.
- With more people experiencing homelessness across the region, leveraging local, state, and federal funding will be critical to provide comprehensive support services.

#### LA CLÍNICA DE LA RAZA

La Clínica's goal is to ensure every person has access to high-quality, culturally appropriate health care, regardless of their ability to pay. Serving both Alameda and Contra Costa communities, La Clínica's sites are located in the most underserved areas where the need for healthcare services is the highest so resources are closest to those who need them the most. Throughout the pandemic, La Clínica has been critical to Contra Costa County's vaccination efforts, teaming up with Contra Costa County to facilitate COVID testing and vaccinations for communities of color and other underserved and disproportionately impacted segments of the population.

#### ALAMEDA COUNTY COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB) is at the forefront of comprehensive approaches to ending hunger and poverty. From social services to libraries to schools, ACCFB works with public, private, and nonprofit organizations to advocate for solutions to end poverty, increase access to school meal programs, and scale efforts to provide healthy food to more households during the pandemic. ACCFB is also a key partner on reducing food waste and fighting climate change. Through its Food Recovery Program, ACCFB provides retailers an outlet for surplus food while leveraging its network and transportation resources to increase food access.





Point Pinole Regional Shoreline Park. Photo by Marc Crumpler.

- Pursuing legislative and policy solutions that expand livable wages, physical and mental health care, and paid sick leave benefits.
- Examining and working to resolve geographic, linguistic, inability to take time off work, and other obstacles to accessing existing services and programs.
- Invest in and enhance the local pipeline of educators, childcare, healthcare, and other frontline workers by aligning education and training with employer needs, as well as building new training pathways to accommodate regional demand.



## 11. Develop solutions to improve public safety outcomes while reducing systemic biases and encounters between community residents and law enforcement agencies.

### Challenges and Opportunities

East Bay EDA's stakeholders emphasized concerns that current approaches to public safety are overly reactive and reliant on law enforcement, and a system that is frequently accompanied by systemic negative outcomes for lower-income residents and people of color. These negative outcomes for specific communities that already confront systemic barriers to success further impede our region's efforts to enhance our workforce's overall preparedness, resiliency, and access to jobs and economic opportunity. The growing awareness of these systemic issues and growing momentum in reforming our approaches to public safety create new opportunities to pursue alternative systems to ensure the safety of our communities, while also reducing systemic biases and unlocking the potential of all East Bay residents.

#### **CENTER FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND RESTORATIVE ECONOMICS (RESTORE)**

Located in East Oakland, Restore is the first center for restorative justice and restorative economics in the country. Restaurant Opportunities Centers United will have their first Oakland restaurant on the ground floor, where they will train individuals to get front-of-house jobs and incubate businesses from low-income communities of color. In addition, Restore will serve as a hub for the Ella Baker Center's initiatives to end mass incarceration and provide dedicated space for Alameda County's restorative justice programs, in which victims feel heard and supported, conflicts are resolved, and communities are strengthened.

### How Do We Respond?

Many of the East Bay's communities are pursuing their own programs and policies to reform their approaches to delivering public safety outcomes. These efforts can be better coordinated and leveraged to share information about effective best practices, advocate for required resources, and examine new policies and programs that can be pursued throughout the region. Additionally, the investments in human infrastructure included in Priority 3 set the groundwork for enhancing the safety of our communities by providing enhanced resources and opportunities for all residents.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Collaborative information sharing and development of revised approaches to delivering public safety outcomes, including public agencies/jurisdictions and non-profit partners.
- Development of policies, programs, and spaces aimed at creating communities in which all residents are welcome and safe.
- Expanding and scaling existing education and workforce training programs with proven effectiveness and track records
- Supporting non-profit partner organizations that are working toward public safety solutions, such as the Center for Employment Opportunities and the Center for Restorative Justice and Restorative Economics in East Oakland.



Located in East Oakland, Restore is the first center for restorative justice and restorative economics in the country. Courtesy of Designing Justice Designing Spaces.

### **ANCHORS IN RESILIENT COMMUNITIES (ARC)**

Generations of disinvestment and harmful policy decisions have drained communities of basic resources and disconnected them from the chance to live up to their potential. While people of color and low- and moderate-income families are disproportionately affected by this injustice, their barriers to opportunity holds all of us back from uplifting our values and advancing our region's economic potential. The mission of Anchors in Resilient Communities (ARC) is to address the social, economic, and environmental determinants of health by leveraging the assets and capacities of Bay Area anchor institutions and community-based partners. This work will focus on expanding community wealth and ownership, improving health outcomes, and strengthening the capacity of communities of color and low- and moderate-income residents to be resilient in the face of climate and economic disruption.

## 12. Champion efforts to develop integrated socioeconomic data sets and metrics to evaluate equity outcomes over time.

### Challenges and Opportunities

Throughout the East Bay Forward process, stakeholders noted the challenges in obtaining readily available socioeconomic data that can be used to measure and track metrics gauging equity outcomes and changes over time in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, income, and language—especially for smaller geographies. In some cases, this data is available from public sources such as the U.S. Census but requires further analysis and processing to disaggregate detailed information. In other cases, data exists but is scattered across many sources, and few organizations have the expertise and resources to regularly gather information that they seek. Finally, many equity-related metrics are not tracked consistently at all, such as information about the race of small business owners. Better and more consistent tracking of data will create an opportunity for East Bay EDA's stakeholders to better target their efforts and to better understand the results of their actions in closing equity gaps.

#### BAY AREA EQUITY ATLAS

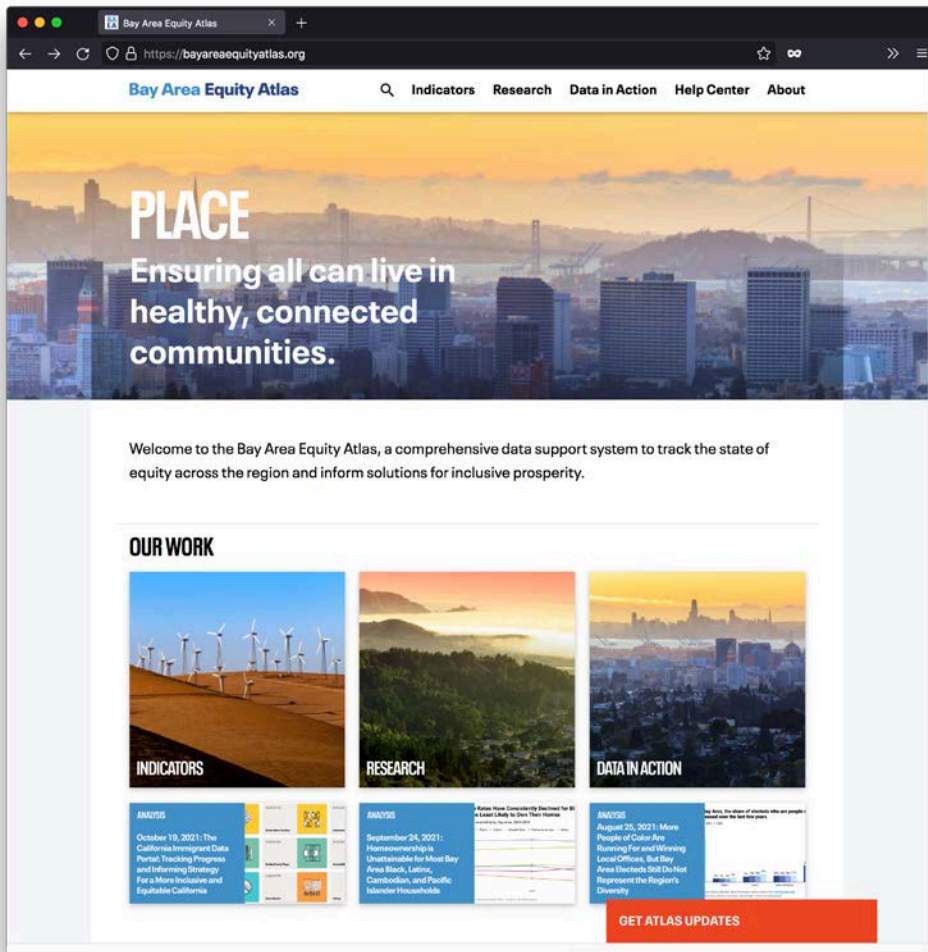
The Bay Area Equity Atlas was developed through a partnership of PolicyLink, The San Francisco Foundation, and the USC Equity Research Institute and is built upon a comprehensive data support system to track the state of equity across the region and equip community leaders with data to inform solutions for inclusive prosperity. As the Bay Area has enjoyed the benefits of rapidly evolving and growing economy, it has also been susceptible to significant socioeconomic challenges that have led to a regional housing shortage that has fueled increased gentrification and a rapid growth in wealth inequality. Community leaders have lacked access to necessary data to drive solutions forward, making robust, disaggregated data critical to informing strategies for equitable growth.

### How Do We Respond?

East Bay EDA's stakeholders should collaboratively work toward developing a shared understanding of metrics required to track equity outcomes, and to understand which data sources already exist versus opportunities to track new data sources. With this understanding, these stakeholders can effectively champion the development of shared resources that integrate available data disaggregated by chosen metrics.

Examples of potential implementation opportunities include:

- Collectively assess data needs and advocate for enhanced data collection by equity indicators and metrics—such as race, gender, income, and language at smaller geographies—in order to improve outreach and targeted resources.
- Based on an understanding of current gaps in available data, work toward expanding data collection within the East Bay's jurisdictions
- Explore and develop partnerships and other opportunities to create resources providing required equity metrics data
- Identify and refine related efforts in other disciplines, jurisdictions, and networks to help aggregate, analyze, and streamline data collection and facilitate transparency in reporting



Bay Area Equity Atlas, a comprehensive data support system to track the state of equity across the Bay Area region and inform solutions for inclusive prosperity.

### ALAMEDA COUNTY UPWARD MOBILITY ACTION PLAN

With the support of the Urban Institute, Alameda County was selected through a national competition to be one of eight counties nationally that will be developing an Upward Mobility Action Plan, a customized roadmap that identifies steps for the county to take to improve economic and social mobility outcomes for vulnerable families and residents. As this work continues forward, the next step will be to dive into the existing metrics data, including local data sources and existing frameworks and plans, to assist counties in determining focus areas for mobility action. Once the plan elements have been developed and finalized, stakeholders in Alameda County will be able to measure and monitor progress against these metrics and better understand gaps and challenges.