



Reconnecting Communities

Vision 980 Final Engagement Activity Report #1

Updated: January 15, 2025

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the first phase of engagement activities completed for the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) Vision 980 Study-Phase 1 project. The initial Phase 1 engagement activities were implemented to initiate conversations with West Oakland community members regarding the study and create a flow of feedback and opinions from the community to the project team. Additionally, a primary goal of Phase 1 was to begin building trust amongst the legacy communities of West Oakland that are highly skeptical of government intervention and large-scale projects like this, which have caused so much lasting damage to the area.

There have been drastic demographic changes in West Oakland over the last 50+ years and there is a need to hear both from residents that were aware of the past harms and residents whose families were impacted, but were not aware of the harm. With that in mind, the goal then became understanding what kinds of amenities and reconfigurations of Interstate (I-) 980 could be imagined for improving the overall quality of life in West Oakland. The project team stressed during the process that they would be taking a blue-sky approach with anything on the table with the goal of identifying the best-case scenario for I-980 for legacy West Oakland residents. To do this, the project team's role was to mostly listen, but also contribute expertise to encourage further discussion based on the possibilities that exist from precedent projects around the country and the world.

The locations and strategies were selected to connect with a range of residents including legacy West Oakland residents, and a broader range of residents citywide and regionally. Activities were advertised through flyers, direct contact with individuals and organizations, e-mails, and social media posts. The goal was to deploy a distributed strategy where individuals, organizations, and other spheres of influence shared the information within their circles to expand the reach.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

Table 1 lists the activities and deliverables that were completed during the first phase of outreach and engagement for the project between March and October 2024. Appendix A: Outreach and Engagement Events Summary, Appendix C: Comment Cards, and Appendix D: Outreach and Engagement Photos provide more information on the events that were held.

Table 1: Outreach and Engagement Activities and Deliverables

Activity/Deliverable	Description
Evaluation Framework/Equity-Based Performance Measures Workshop	Attended by the project team and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members to determine methods and metrics to evaluate aspects of the project from an equity perspective.
Goals And Objectives Workshop	Attended by the project team and TAC members to determine goals and objectives for the project.
Mobile Workshops	Staffed by the project team to promote and discuss the project with the community and promote completion of the survey.
Project Website	Developed to provide information on upcoming events and the survey as well as background on the project and other key resources.
Public Workshop	Hosted virtually by the project team to provide the community an opportunity to learn about the project and discuss and ask questions of the project team.
Social Media Posts	Developed to promote the mobile and public workshops, survey, and the project website.
TAC Meeting	Hosted by the project team to introduce the project and allow the opportunity for TAC members to discuss and ask questions of the project team.

The activities and deliverables shown above met the requirements established in the Vision 980 Outreach and Engagement Plan. Given the limitation of resources within the scope of the plan, RBA Creative took the initiative to schedule additional engagement activities based on the unique opportunity to connect with legacy Black residents of West Oakland. These activities are summarized in Appendix A: Outreach and Engagement Events Summary, Appendix C: Comment Cards, and Appendix D: Outreach and Engagement Photos. RBA Creative and their affiliated nonprofit organization, SOA Village Housing DBA EVOAK, also solicited external funding to sponsor three engagement activities including a listening session in partnership with the Center for Black Health and Equity, No Place Like the Town, and



Oakland's Finest, a concert hosted by Oakland City Council District 4 representative Janani Ramachandran.



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ONLINE SURVEY

The purpose and structure of the online survey was to gather information from West Oakland residents and surrounding neighborhoods regarding:

- Basic sentiment about I-980
- People's interaction with the freeway for travel
- Impediments the freeway creates to local access and travel
- Ideas for the freeway's future vision
- Basic demographic information about the respondents
- Respondent zip codes

Over 2,700 surveys were filled out at the time of closing (December 31st, 2024). From the responses received, the project team was able to show that survey respondents were predominantly white and not from the immediate project area, with approximately 31% of the respondents self-identified as residents within the zip codes that overlap with the project area. Survey results also indicated that most respondents' ages ranged from 25 to 54.

Many respondents look at the I-980 freeway as a massive, polluting piece of infrastructure in what was and could be a thriving West Oakland community. There were a small number of people who currently utilize the freeway for travel that were concerned with how any changes to I-980 might influence their travel time and routes. Their concerns were largely in their inability to imagine alternative configurations to address existing traffic. Respondents were asked about their experiences driving on, living near, or generally interacting with I-980, including how often they drive on I-980, quality of life factors impacted by I-980, and what the respondents would prefer for the future of I-980. Respondents were able to give their thoughts on priorities like affordable housing, gentrification, parks, and improved public transportation. They were also able to respond to issues of cultural and community facilities, walkability/bikeability, and improved economic development opportunities. Appendix B: Survey Results by Zip Codes provides a comparison of results of certain questions from West Oakland residents and other zip codes.

Additional outreach efforts were made to CBOs and low-income housing providers in West Oakland to increase respondents from the project area. For the next phase of outreach, the project team is identifying strategies to further target responses from legacy West Oakland residents and ensure the demographics of respondents are more representative of the overall demographics of the project area.

OUTREACH SUMMARY

Table 2 presents statistics from the activities that were conducted for the first phase of outreach.

Table 2: Phase 1 Outreach Statistics

Measure	Statistic
Number of events	15
Number of event attendees	~750
Number of flyers handed out	~2,000
Number of surveys completed	2,715

Most of the people who had any prior knowledge of the history of the freeway and the lasting harm that was done to the community by its construction were in favor of reimagining the corridor with specific benefits to the legacy communities that were harmed.

There were comments that the freeway didn't need to be removed in order to do harm repair, although the strategies to accomplish that were not identified or in some instances undoable (i.e. reallocate the money for the study and future money to reimagine the freeway to direct payments to impacted residents).

There was also mistrust and suspicion about whether or not the benefits from a reimagined freeway would benefit impacted communities, and additional concerns any changes may worsen the dynamics of gentrification in West Oakland. In some instances, these fears and suspicions were allayed with the prospect of preventative policy and legislative initiatives like certificates of preferences, etc.

The connections of the work to date to the next phase of the project include a general sentiment that the reimagination of the I-980 freeway is a viable effort, but only if it this work is tied to comprehensive harm repair and not a continuance of the harmful policies of the past.

There was also a predominance of input on the need for affordable housing, specifically to preserve the legacy communities of West Oakland. Also mentioned repeatedly was the need for small businesses and other economic development strategies that could create jobs for residents.

According to reporting from the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project, health concerns were mentioned as a vital component to the reimagination of the freeway. Asthma-related emergency room visits in West Oakland are 76% higher than the Alameda County average, and asthma hospitalizations are 88% higher. Heart disease mortality rates are 33% higher in West Oakland compared to the county average and these health inequities contribute to a reduced life expectancy on average of 12 to 15 years less for Black residents.

Lastly, for the residents who were aware of the cultural history of West Oakland before the freeway, a restoration and revitalization of the arts should be factored into the reimagined corridor.



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With these endorsements from the community, and a clear indication of the areas of concern, the work moving forward can seek to address these concerns. Additionally, an important aspect of the work moving forward will be to conduct more outreach to legacy residents of West Oakland and organizations to create strong partnerships across the project area to support enhanced community building activities. There was significant interest from local legislators at the city, county, state, and federal levels to assist in the engagement efforts and help navigate the community and political landscape to support project priorities.

In upcoming engagement efforts, the project team could improve its outreach to legacy and local communities to balance the wider Oakland or regional engagement. The project team is currently developing additional strategies to locate and engage legacy West Oakland residents, including those displaced from the immediate area. The challenges are largely a function of the extensive resources required to do sustained engagement with hard-to-reach communities.

Additionally, much more research will be required to assess some of the policy initiatives and other key components that are not currently covered within the project scope. The process of resource identification has begun for some of the deficiencies in capacity for research, policy development, and community building.



APPENDIX A: OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT EVENTS SUMMARY

Event/ Activity	Date/Time	Estimated Number of Interactions	Number of Email Sign- Ups	Location	Audience Type	Demographics (Observed)	Materials	Staffing
Super OGs Convening	March 30 th , 2024 10:00 AM- 12:00 PM	15	15	360 14 th Street, Oakland, CA 94612	Hyper Local – West Oakland Legacy Residents	Black	No materials	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative) and Kit Powis (WSP)
West Oakland Juneteenth	June 22 nd , 2024 11:00 AM- 5:00 PM	50	20	San Pablo Avenue and Brockhurst Street, Oakland, CA 94607	Hyper Local – West Oakland Legacy Residents	Black	Flyers, visioning exercise, and kiosk with iPad	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative) and Kit Powis (WSP)
Town Nights	June 28 th , 2024 6:00-9:00 PM	50	15	Hoover Elementary School, Oakland, CA 94607	Hyper Local – West Oakland Legacy Residents	Black	Flyers, visioning exercise, and kiosk with iPad	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative)
Montclair Village Farmers Market	July 7 th , 2024 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM	30	0	Montclair Village Farmers Market, Oakland, CA 94611	Regional and Citywide Residents	Majority white	Flyers	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative)
Lake Merritt Farmers Market	July 20 th , 2024 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM	50	20	Lake Merritt Farmers Market, Oakland, CA 94610	Newer Residents Local – Study Area	Majority white	Flyers, visioning exercise, and kiosk with iPad	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative)



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Event/ Activity	Date/Time	Estimated Number of Interactions	Number of Email Sign- Ups	Location	Audience Type	Demographics (Observed)	Materials	Staffing
No Place Like the Town	July 27 th , 2024 11:00 AM- 5:00 PM	40	10	Frank Ogawa Plaza, Oakland, CA 94612	Hyper Local – West Oakland Citywide Local – Study Area	Majority Black	Flyers, visioning exercise, and kiosk with iPad	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative)
Laurel Street Fest	August 10 th , 2024 11:00 AM- 5:00 PM	60	25	Laurel District, MacArthur Boulevard, Oakland, CA 94619	Newer Residents Local – Study Area Citywide Regional	Very racially diverse	Flyers, visioning exercise, and kiosk with iPad	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative)
Center for Black Health and Equity Listening Session	August 29 th , 2024 6:00 PM-8:00 PM	35	35	Black Panther Party Museum, Oakland, CA 94612	Hyper Local – West Oakland Legacy Residents Newer Residents Local – Study Area Citywide Regional	Racially diverse	Flyers, visioning exercise, and kiosk with iPad	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative)
First Friday of the Bay Area White Party	September 27 th , 2024 5:00 PM- 10:00 PM	50	15	Preservation Park, Oakland, CA 94612	Hyper Local – West Oakland Local – Study Area Regional	Black	Flyers, visioning exercise, and kiosk with iPad	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative)



Reconnecting Communities

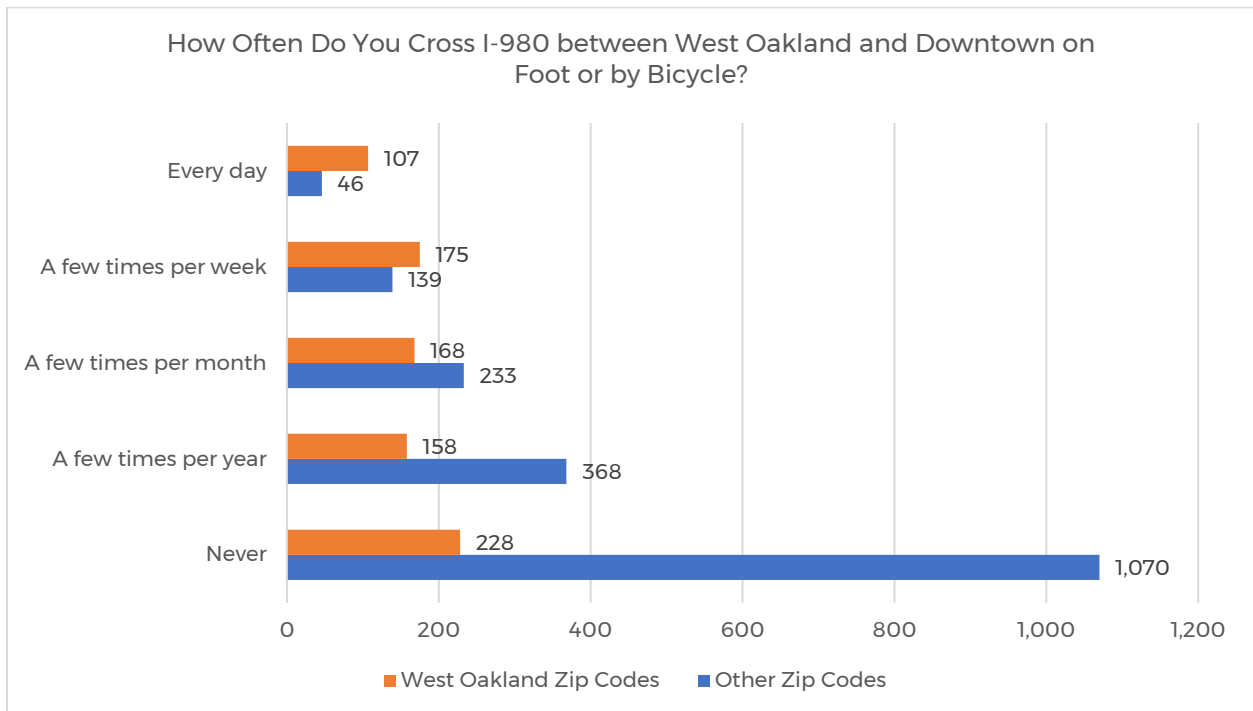
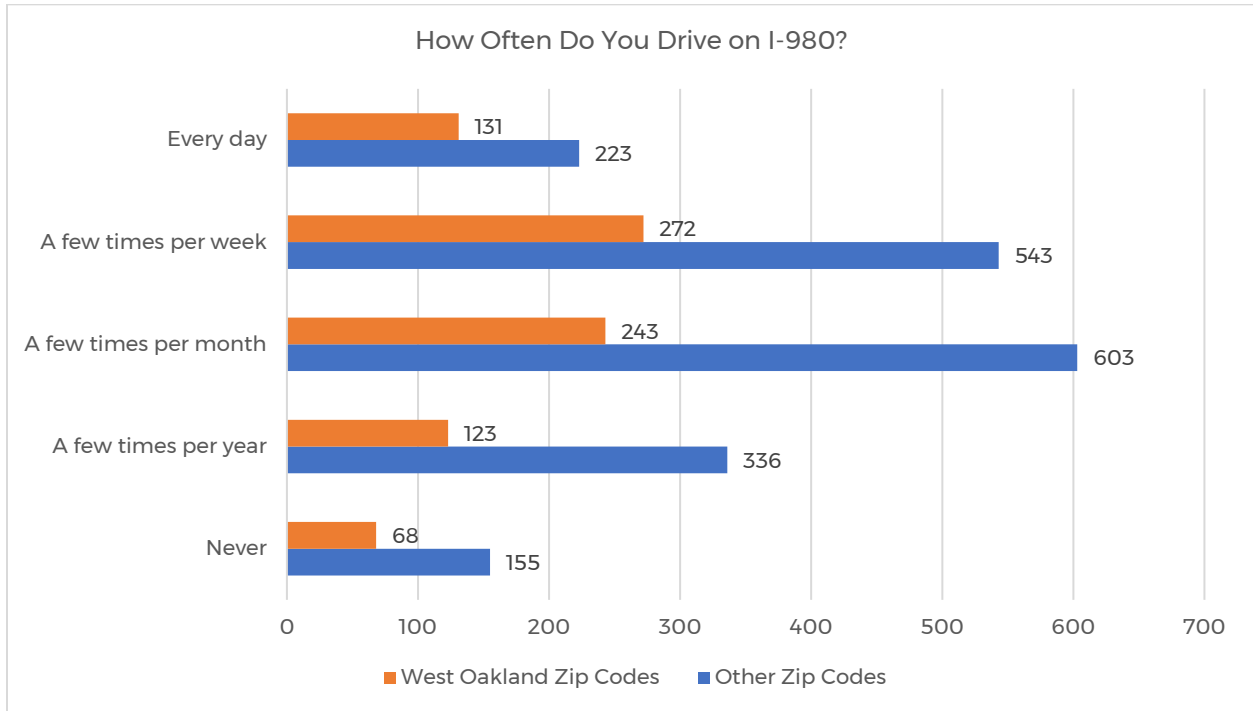
Event/ Activity	Date/Time	Estimated Number of Interactions	Number of Email Sign- Ups	Location	Audience Type	Demographics (Observed)	Materials	Staffing
McClymonds Alumni Picnic	September 28 th , 2024 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM	40	5	DeFremery Park, Oakland, CA 94607	Hyper Local – West Oakland Legacy Residents	Majority white non-West Oakland residents	Flyers and visioning exercise	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative) and Kit Powis (WSP)
Public Workshop	October 2 nd , 2024 6:00-8:00 PM	107 registrants/59 participants	107	Zoom	Citywide Local – Study Area	N/A	Agenda and slide deck	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative), Erik Bird (WSP), and Kit Powis (WSP)
Mobile Workshop #1 (Oakland First Fridays)	Friday, October 4 th , 2024 5:00-9:00 PM	100	12	Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, CA 94612	Hyper Local – West Oakland Legacy Residents Newer Residents Citywide Local – Study Area	Majority white, non-West Oakland residents	Flyers, paper surveys, visioning exercise, three poster boards, comment cards, and kiosk with iPad	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative) and Kit Powis (WSP)
Oakland's Finest Council District 4 Concert	Friday, October 11 th , 2024 5:00 PM-9:00 PM	50	10	Holy Names University, Oakland, CA 94619	Newer Residents Citywide Local – Study Area	Majority white, non-West Oakland residents	Flyers and sign-up sheet	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative)



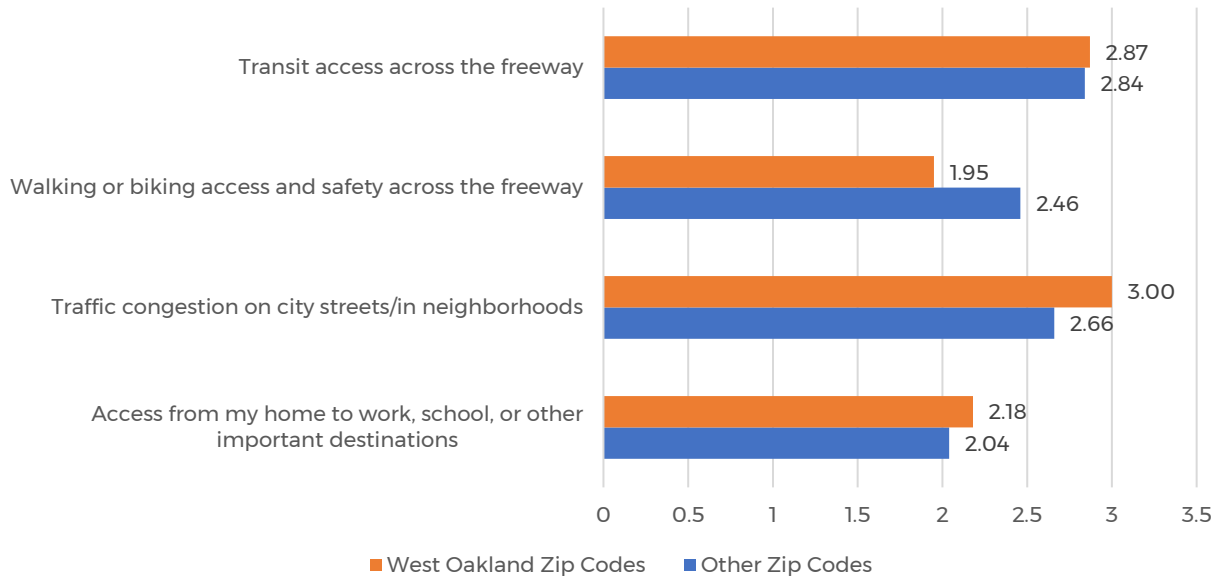
Reconnecting Communities

Event/ Activity	Date/Time	Estimated Number of Interactions	Number of Email Sign- Ups	Location	Audience Type	Demographics (Observed)	Materials	Staffing
SparkIt Place Celebration	October 12 th , 2024 11:00 AM-1:00 PM	75	5	SparkIt Place, Oakland CA 94607	Hyper Local – West Oakland Legacy Residents Local – Study Area	Racially diverse	Flyers, paper surveys, and public presentation	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative)
Mobile Workshop #2 (Friday Night at the Oakland Museum)	Friday, October 18 th , 2024 5:00-9:00 PM	75	15	Oakland Museum of California 1000 Oak Street, Oakland, CA 94607	Regional Bay Area residents	Majority white, non-West Oakland residents	Flyers, paper surveys, visioning exercise, three poster boards, comment cards, and kiosk with iPad	Randolph Belle (RBA Creative) and Erik Bird (WSP)

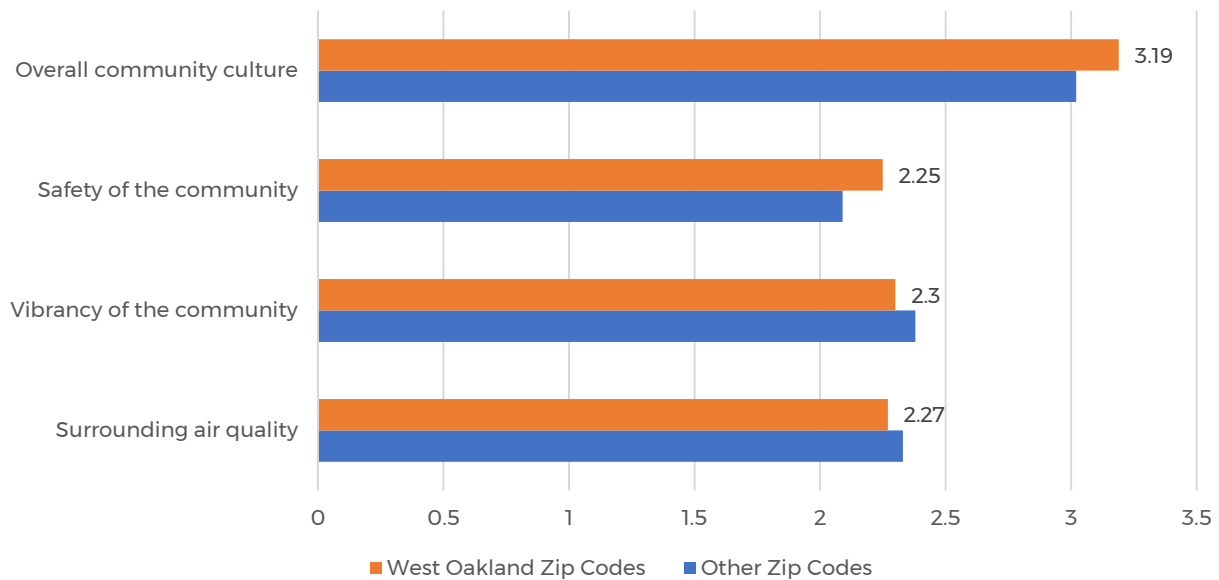
APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESULTS BY ZIP CODES



Please Rank the Following Travel Factors Impacted by I-980 that are Most Important to You.



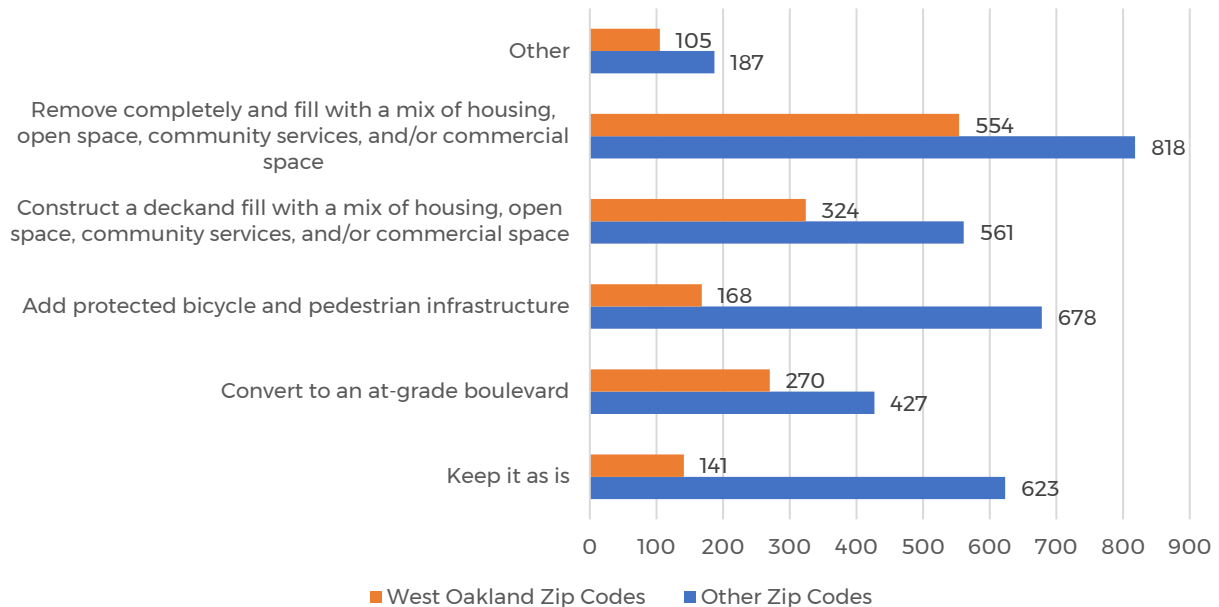
Please Rank the Following Quality of Life Factors Impacted by I-980 that are Most Important to You.



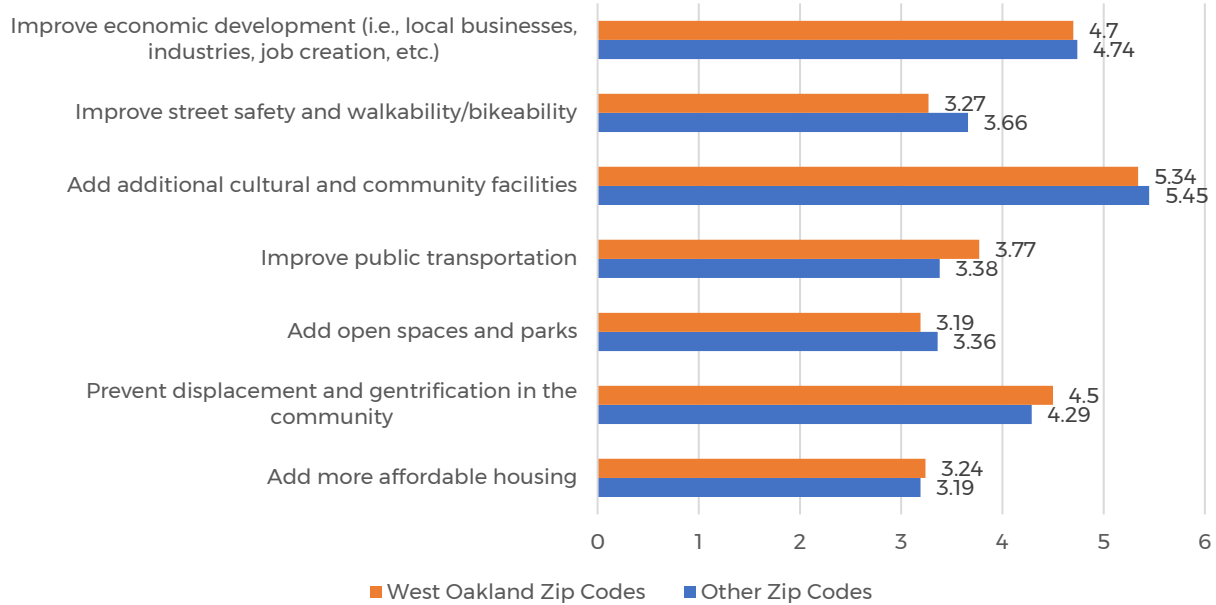
Please Rank the Following Economic Opportunity Factors Impacted by I-980 that are Most Important to You.



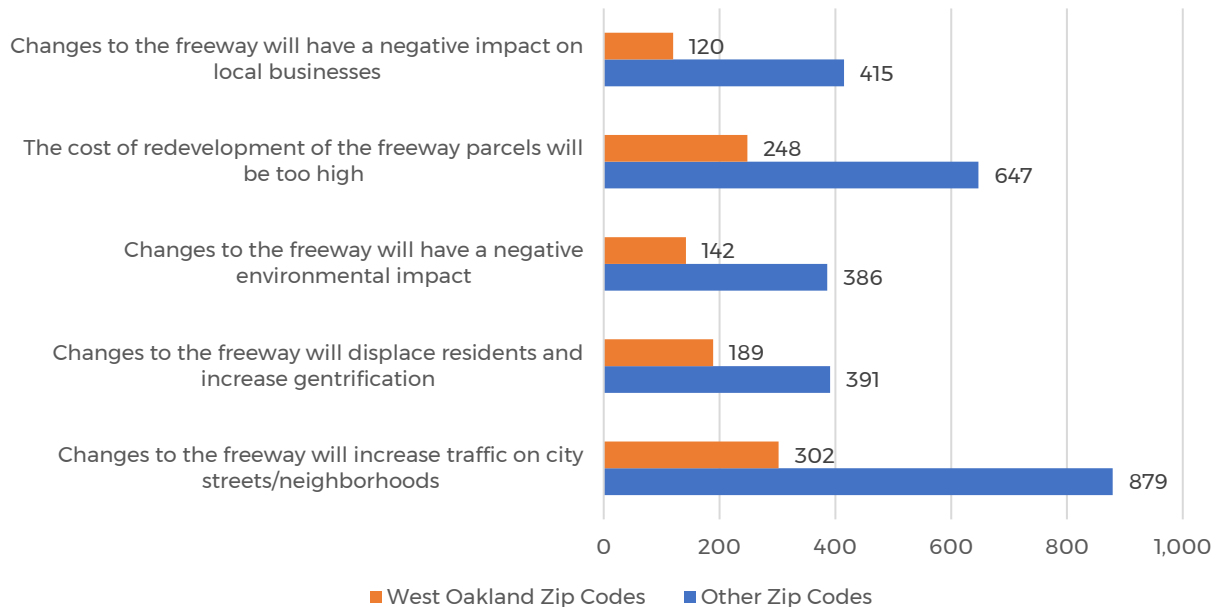
What Would You Prefer for the Future of I-980?



Please Rank the Following Priorities for the Future of I-980.




What Concerns, if any, Do You Have About Potential Changes to I-980?



APPENDIX C: COMMENT CARDS

What to do with the 980 Freeway?
That would be cool if...




Show us


Tell us
I would like some parks still keep part of the greenbelt and apartments and more SMOKE STOPS

Thank you

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Please join our mailing list or contact:
 Community Visioning Coordinator for RBA Creative, Randolph Belfe, at randolph@rbacreative.com or
 Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov.

RBA CREATIVE 

What to do with the 980 Freeway?
That would be cool if...




Show us

Tell us

connect recreation housing food *welcome to Oakland*

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RBA CREATIVE 

What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

Affordable Affirmative action housing that can be energy/environmentally sustainable. Bunch of tall buildings with two separate floors for greenery, solar panels, and commercial business.

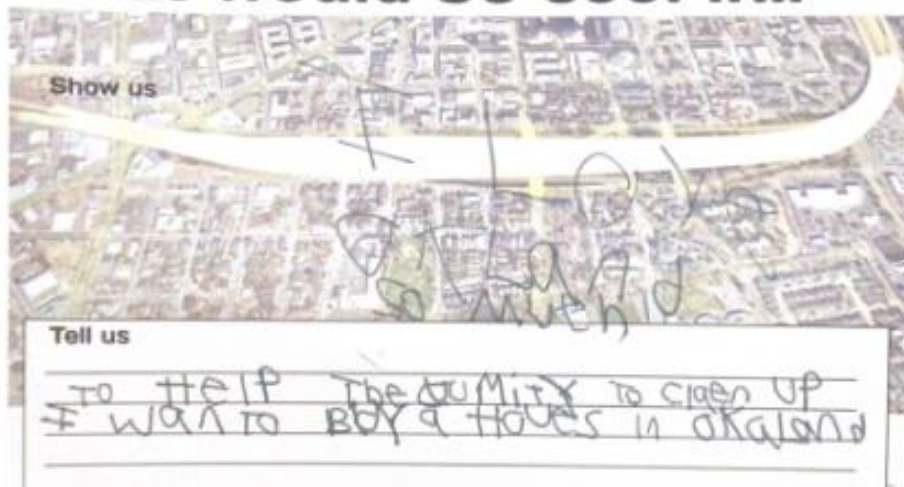
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What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

To help the community to clean up I want to buy a house in Oakland

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What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

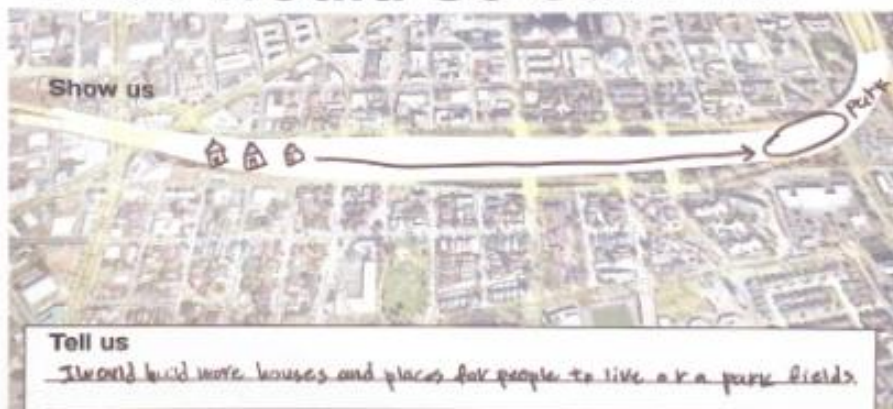
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What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

I would build more houses and places for people to live or a park field.

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What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

Replace with a mix of housing and innovation businesses to support education and small business development. Also create parks and open spaces.

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What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

Housing, another BART or train line for a 7th Bay crossing, pedestrian plaza, offices, retail

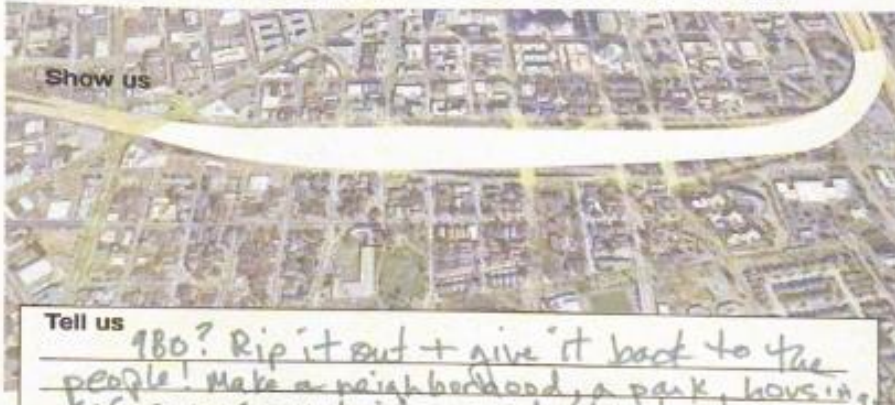
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What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

980? Rip it out + give it back to the people! Make a neighborhood, a park, housing, bike spaces - make it a good place!

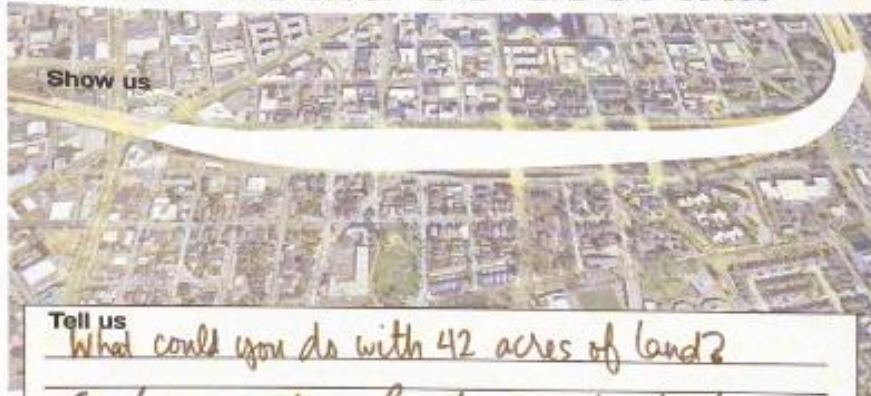
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What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

What could you do with 42 acres of land?
Break a place for humans to be human
instead of in traffic.
"A lot of beautiful things!"

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Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov.



What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

Local train stop West Oakland and Downtown. Commercial shops
and restaurants, green space, mixed housing.

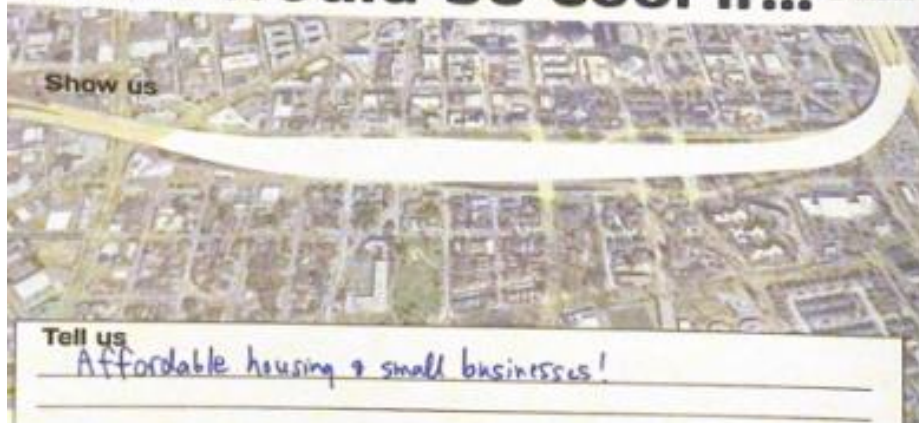
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What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us


Affordable housing & small businesses!

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Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov.



What to do with the 980 Freeway?
That would be cool if...

Show us



Tell us

Have marked use spaces @ the top, spaces that can attract locals + tourists. There has primary use as an underpass.

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Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at bfrank@dot.ca.gov.


RBA CREATIVE

Caltrans

2nd & Van Ness Corridor → "CO-OP" housing

What to do with the 980 Freeway?
That would be cool if...

Show us



Tell us

Core space for public green with housing (accession, bonds, grants, loans for non-profits, businesses affected by displacement (and individual housing). Attention, green perhaps connecting with space, community space for gathering.

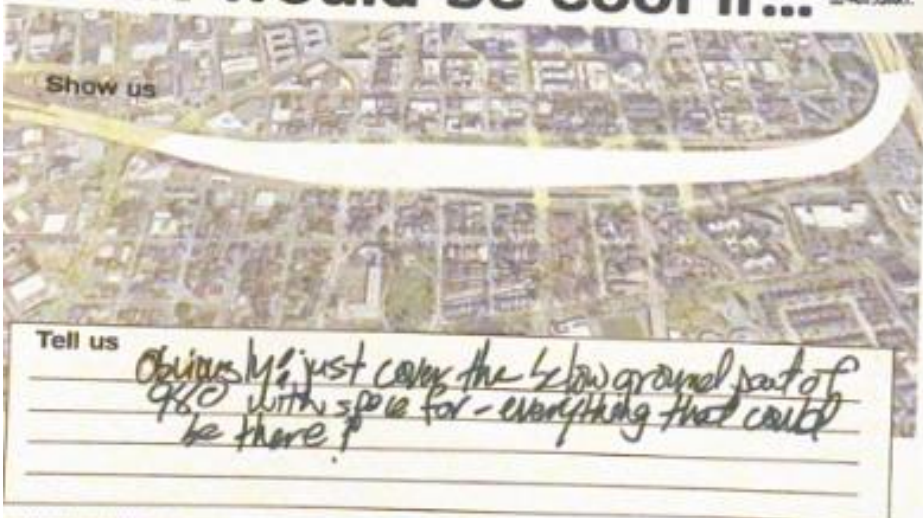
P.S. Lived in St. Oakland for 3 years. Moved to Oakland Heights for more recreation, business, family growth, etc.

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RBA CREATIVE


Caltrans

What to do with the 980 Freeway?
That would be cool if...

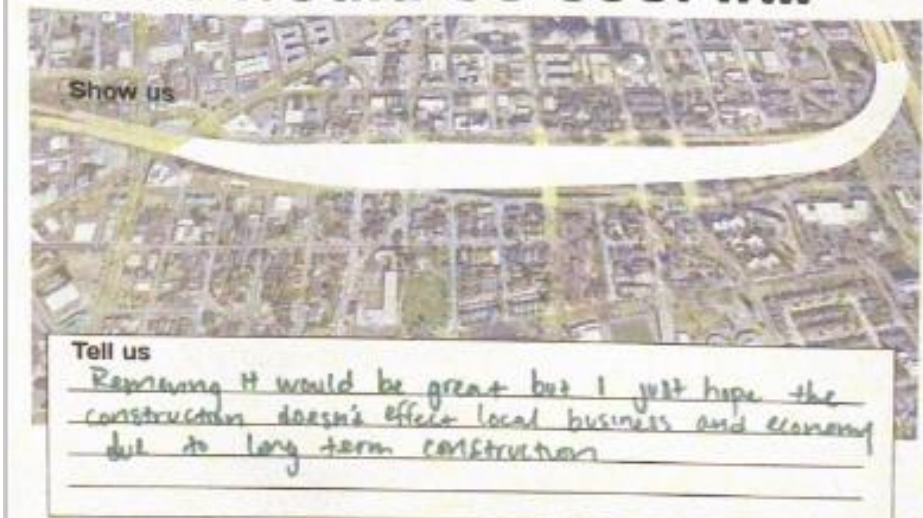
Show us 

Tell us *Obviously just cover the below ground part of 980 with space for - everything that could be there!*

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RBA CREATIVE 

What to do with the 980 Freeway?
That would be cool if...

Show us 

Tell us *Removing it would be great but I just hope the construction doesn't effect local business and economy due to long term construction*

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RBA CREATIVE 

What to do with the 980 Freeway? That would be cool if...



Show us



Tell us

Make a Transit Center on 18th st, like the Salesforce Transit Center. It would be a replacement of the current Uptown Transit Center which is just on a street. Instead, it would be a building. There would also be homes, businesses and two small Parks.

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Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov



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What to do
with the
980 Freeway?



That would be cool if...

Show us





Tell us

Turn the 980 freeway into a waterfront connecting the water ways from the water way channels.

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or Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov

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What to do with the 980 Freeway?

That would be cool if...

Show us 



Tell us it could Be a Park
like tunnel tops!



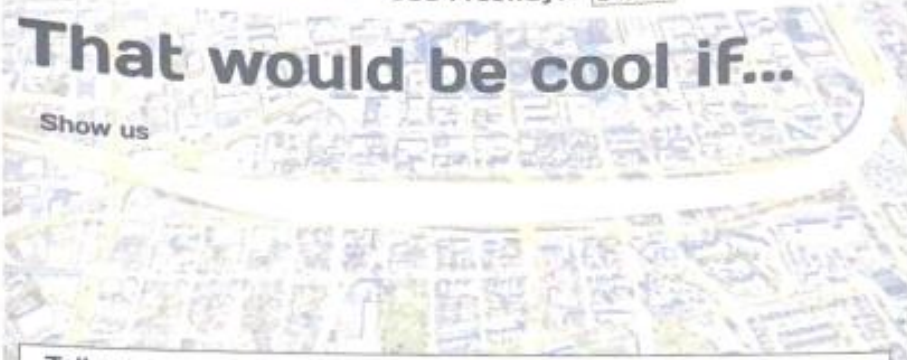
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What to do with the 980 Freeway?

That would be cool if...



Show us 

Tell us Build affordable homes, community centers,
parks, remove traffic confusion
provide tiny houses space

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or Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov

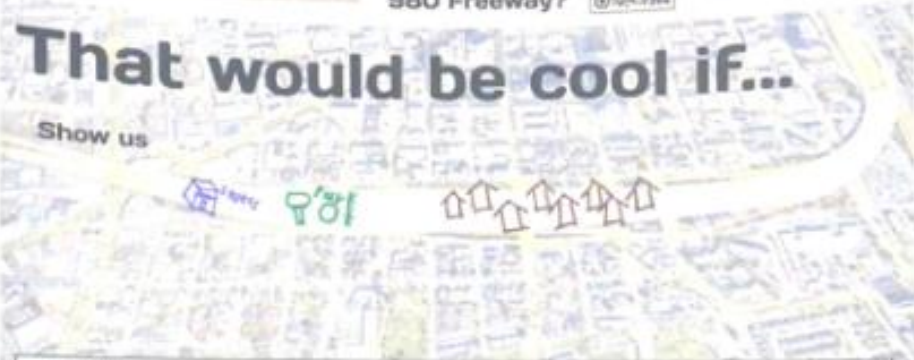
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What to do with the 980 Freeway?

That would be cool if...

Show us



Tell us



if there were a park... or a lot of housing... *a few streets*

if you could involve some of the community land trusts or EBPREC...

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or Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov


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What to do with the 980 Freeway?

That would be cool if...

Show us





Tell us

Like NYC Highline!!

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or Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov

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What to do with the 980 Freeway?

That would be cool if...



Show us

Tell us Like the NYC highline

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What to do with the 980 Freeway?

That would be cool if...

Show us

Tell us Affordable housing, parks, and anything practical to give back to the Black and Brown communities of Oakland

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or Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov

VISION980 Reconnecting Communities

What to do with the 980 Freeway?




That would be cool if...

Show us


Tell us

Affordable housing and black-owned business grants for the families and descendants that were displaced by the 980

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or Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov

VISION980 Reconnecting Communities

What to do with the 980 Freeway?




That would be cool if...

Show us

Tell us

we need a really large park please!!

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Please join our mailing list or contact:
Community Visioning Coordinator for RBA Creative, Randolph Bell, at randolph@rbacreative.com
or Community Planning Branch Chief for Caltrans, Becky Frank, at Vision980@dot.ca.gov

APPENDIX D: OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT PHOTOS



