

November 18, 2025



**Re: November, 19 2025 MTC Meeting**

Item 10a: Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Policy and One Bay Area Grant (OBAG 4)

As a Berkeley City Councilmember representing District 7, which includes the UC Berkeley campus and Southside neighborhood, I want to express my appreciation and support for the Transit-Oriented Communities Policy. My district is disproportionately impacted by the Bay Area's debilitating housing crisis, with many students facing housing insecurity, homelessness, and exorbitant housing costs. While the City of Berkeley, and the Southside especially, has been increasing our housing supply by building more transit-oriented housing, this is a regional crisis that will require regional solutions. Therefore, I am eager to see the TOC Policy implementation continue forward as written, with robust mechanisms for anti-displacement and housing abundance.

The TOC's Affordable Housing and Commercial Stabilization Policies will also specifically support more sustainable transportation connections in Equity Priority Communities and meaningfully tackle housing affordability and displacement. The TOC Policy, however, is not just about technical compliance or meeting policy goals. It is about opportunity and quality of life for all Bay Area residents. It is making real the promise that all Bay Area students, workers, immigrants, retirees, low-income residents, and families have the opportunity to live in beautiful neighborhoods where they can walk, bike, or take transit to go to school or work, spend the afternoon at the park with their children, or pick up groceries or medications at a pharmacy. This is the vision we've been working towards together.

Based on the staff presentation and the discussion amongst Commissioners and staff at the MTC Workshop, I have some serious concerns with several of the new proposals to the TOC Policy, as well as their link to OBAG 4.

I strongly oppose weakening the housing policy menu, especially the suggestions to amend or remove policies regarding the "3 P's" housing menu; in fact, it should be strengthened with these two policies set as requirements: "no net loss" of homes and right of first refusal with new units at comparable rents. We will not be able to address our housing crisis holistically if we are pushing more residents out of the region or into homelessness. Otherwise, the TOC Policy's housing policy menu furthers the 3Ps framework that elevates affordable housing production, preservation, and tenant protections as key strategies to address housing affordability and displacement, and MTC should adopt this requirement.

I reject the suggestion that points should be awarded for mere compliance with State law tenant protections. Doing so would, at a minimum, eliminate any incentive for jurisdictions to take further steps to prevent displacement and stabilize communities. Full compliance with the TOC Policy should be a requirement for the OBAG 4 TOC set-aside. Similarly, jurisdictions should not be able to achieve full compliance while only meeting a fraction of the housing and density standards, nor partial compliance without meeting any of the density or parking standards. Finally, I oppose the last-minute proposal to reduce the required densities for cities with fewer than 30,000 people, as doing so would exacerbate residential segregation in the greater Bay Area.

Given the twin imperatives of making the Bay Area more affordable for people of all incomes and growing transit ridership, I strongly encourage you to uphold and implement the TOC Policy Standards.

Thank you for your time, engagement, and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Cecilia Lunaparra*

Berkeley City Councilmember, District 7 (UC Berkeley Campus & Southside Neighborhood)