



RE: Newsletter Update on the East Bank Study

November 19, 2021

Fellow Nashvillians:

First, thanks to all of you who have participated in the visioning for the East Bank to date. I believe it is the community's input that helps make great cities and neighborhoods. The East Bank Study is an opportunity not typically seen in a city of our size, especially in 2021. Before us we have 338 acres along our Riverfront that includes disconnected streets, 127 acres of asphalt parking lots, limited access to the riverfront, and zero housing units. Investments such as Cumberland Park and the Bridge Building point to a more positive future.

We are confident that this area can be reshaped into an outstanding and inclusive neighborhood or, collection of neighborhoods, in our community.

I wanted to update you on our progress towards addressing some of the most consistent public feedback to date and invite you to a meeting on [Tuesday, November 30](#) at Cross Point Church.

Throughout our Study many members of the public have provided comments about several key and interrelated planning issues: **(1)** the need for diverse land uses, including housing and affordable housing; **(2)** equitable and safe access to the area through alternative transit modes other than personal vehicles, such as bus service, bicycles, and the like; and **(3)** response to, and proactive measures, regarding the proximity of the river and the opportunities and challenges it brings regarding equitable access and the importance of flood preparation and mitigation.

Fundamental to accomplishing those goals is the needed infrastructure necessary to support new homes, neighborhoods, and amenities for all of Nashville. This is particularly important in areas vulnerable to flooding, where safety must be a prevailing principle to protect our community.

During this planning process, we've taken some important steps in that direction and we have continued to refine a mobility network through extensive community input and technical analysis. As a result of that work, we have proposed a partnership with TDOT to acquire needed Right-Of-Way (ROW), where it is currently insufficient to support sidewalks, pedestrian improvements and other multimodal infrastructure. A mobility plan is necessary to support housing and other uses not currently present on the East Bank. Additional Council approvals will be required for ROW acquisition.

Collaboration with TDOT opens the door for us to truly define a new multimodal network that supports cohesive development for mixed uses, housing, access to amenities like parks, greenways, water access, and a road network that safely supports our pedestrians, cyclists, and

transit users – instead of prioritizing cars. The draft mobility concept also provides an opportunity to connect flood mitigation with those priorities. Metro is leading design of the streets, and our concept emphasizes pedestrians and multimodal function, as well as environmental resiliency. We look forward to hearing the feedback from the community on these comments later this month.

We've heard a wide-range of views on the amount of green space proposed on the East Bank. For those comments suggesting that green space should be more limited, I must respectfully push back: green space is critical mitigation in flood prone areas and park spaces are central to the success of new and dense neighborhoods.

We've heard a variety of comments about the need for some density on the East Bank, and we've heard of the importance of limiting single family uses. We agree. While we anticipate a range of views on what types of density – and height – should be considered, we anticipate that our draft recommendations from this project will recommend density in strategic locations and would not support single family residential uses anywhere on the East Bank.

Additionally, we are considering a housing strategy within the East Bank study area and welcome the community's feedback when those draft recommendations are released. Some factors that we are considering in the development of the plan include, but are not limited to: best housing practices in environmentally sensitive or flood-prone areas; the scope of new infrastructure necessary to support housing uses from a traffic/mobility perspective; and affordable and workforce housing models.

We look forward to receiving input and direction from the community on all land uses on the East Bank, including housing.

As we continue to develop the vision for the East Bank, we will seek the guidance and expertise of our community. The District Councilmembers who represent the neighborhoods most immediately impacted by this project recommended members of our Neighborhood Advisory Committee, who have guided us along the way. We thank them for their continued service. In addition to our public and advisory meetings, we have held many stakeholder input sessions and other community work sessions.

As a result of this approach, the East Bank work reflects one of the most extensive public engagement processes the Department has ever undertaken and we are continuing to strive for more.

Since February we've held 18 meetings with more than 400 attendees, launched three surveys with more than 1,500 participants, grown a newsletter list to nearly 1,000 addresses, held 150 technical meetings and 40 property owner meetings. We welcome any input from Nashvillians about how to broaden and deepen our engagement as we move forward – there will be many more opportunities for public comment.

If you would like to invite the Department to your neighborhood or organization, or if you have recommendations for how we can be more inclusive in our engagement moving forward, please contact Anna Grider (anna.grider@nashville.gov).

I look forward to seeing you on [November 30](#).

Sincerely,
Lucy A. Kempf