

**BOARD of SUPERVISORS**



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**MEMORANDUM**

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Date: January 22, 2025  
To: Planning Department/Planning Commission  
From: John Carroll, Assistant Clerk, Land Use and Transportation Committee  
Subject: Board of Supervisors Legislation Referral - File No. 250003  
General Plan - Central SoMa and Transit Center District Commercial Development Requirements

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- ☒ California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Determination  
(*California Public Resources Code, Sections 21000 et seq.*)
  - ☒ Ordinance / Resolution
  - ☐ Ballot Measure
- ☐ Amendment to the Planning Code, including the following Findings:  
(*Planning Code, Section 302(b): 90 days for Planning Commission review*)
  - ☐ General Plan    ☐ Planning Code, Section 101.1    ☐ Planning Code, Section 302
- ☐ Amendment to the Administrative Code, involving Land Use/Planning  
(*Board Rule 3.23: 30 days for possible Planning Department review*)
- ☐ General Plan Referral for Non-Planning Code Amendments  
(*Charter, Section 4.105, and Administrative Code, Section 2A.53*)  
(Required for legislation concerning the acquisition, vacation, sale, or change in use of City property; subdivision of land; construction, improvement, extension, widening, narrowing, removal, or relocation of public ways, transportation routes, ground, open space, buildings, or structures; plans for public housing and publicly-assisted private housing; redevelopment plans; development agreements; the annual capital expenditure plan and six-year capital improvement program; and any capital improvement project or long-term financing proposal such as general obligation or revenue bonds.)
- ☐ Historic Preservation Commission
  - ☐ Landmark (*Planning Code, Section 1004.3*)
  - ☐ Cultural Districts (*Charter, Section 4.135 & Board Rule 3.23*)
  - ☐ Mills Act Contract (*Government Code, Section 50280*)
  - ☐ Designation for Significant/Contributory Buildings (*Planning Code, Article 11*)

Please send the Planning Department/Commission recommendation/determination to John Carroll at [john.carroll@sfgov.org](mailto:john.carroll@sfgov.org).

[General Plan - Central SoMa and Transit Center District Commercial Development Requirements]

**Ordinance amending the General Plan to reduce commercial development requirements in the Central SoMa Area Plan and the Transit Center District SubArea Plan areas; affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; making findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1; and adopting findings of public necessity, convenience, and welfare under Planning Code, Section 340.**

NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font. **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*. **Deletions to Codes** are in ~~*strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*~~. **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font. **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~. **Asterisks (\* \* \* \*)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code subsections or parts of tables.

Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

Section 1. Environmental and Planning Code Findings.

(a) Section 4.105 of the Charter provides that the Planning Commission shall periodically recommend to the Board of Supervisors, for approval or rejection, proposed amendments to the General Plan. Section 4.105 further provides that if the Board of Supervisors fails to act within 90 days of receipt of the proposed General Plan amendments, then the proposed amendments shall be deemed approved.

(b) Planning Code Section 340 provides that the Planning Commission may initiate an amendment to the General Plan by a resolution of intention, which refers to, and incorporates by reference, the proposed General Plan amendments. Section 340 further provides that the Planning Commission shall adopt the proposed General Plan amendments after a public

1 hearing if it finds from the facts presented that the public necessity, convenience, and general  
2 welfare require the proposed amendment or any part thereof. If adopted by the Commission  
3 in whole or in part, the proposed amendments shall be presented to the Board of Supervisors,  
4 which may approve or reject the amendments by a majority vote.

5 (c) After a duly noticed public hearing on September 19, 2024, by Resolution  
6 No. 21612, the Planning Commission initiated amendments to the proposed General Plan.  
7 Said resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in Board File No. 250003  
8 and incorporated herein by reference.

9 (d) On \_\_\_\_\_, the Planning Commission then adopted the proposed General  
10 Plan amendments by Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_, finding in accordance with Planning  
11 Code Section 340 that the public necessity, convenience, and general welfare required the  
12 proposed amendments.

13 (e) On December 30, 2024, the Board of Supervisors received from the Planning  
14 Department the proposed General Plan amendments, including the amendments to the  
15 Central SoMa Area Plan and the Transit Center District SubArea Plan. These amendments  
16 are on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 250003 and are incorporated  
17 herein by reference.

18 (f) The Board of Supervisors finds, pursuant to Planning Code Section 340, that the  
19 proposed General Plan amendments will serve the public necessity, convenience, and  
20 general welfare for the reasons set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_  
21 and incorporates those reasons herein by reference.

22 (g) The Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed General Plan amendments are,  
23 on balance, in conformity with the General Plan, as amended by this Ordinance, and the  
24 priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 for the reasons set forth in Planning  
25 Commission Resolution No. 21640, and the Board hereby adopts those findings as its own.

(h) The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this ordinance comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. \_\_\_\_\_ and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board affirms this determination.

Section 2. The General Plan is hereby amended by revising the Central SoMa (South of Market) Area Plan, to read as follows:

#### **Central SoMa Area Plan**

\* \* \* \*

#### **POLICY 3.1.1**

**~~Require~~ Encourage non-residential uses in new development on large parcels.**

Many of the parcels of land in Central SoMa are quite large – reflecting its industrial heritage. And like industrial development of the past, modern companies seek buildings with large floors, which facilitate flexibility and intra-company communication. Given the limited availability of such large parcels in the eCity near excellent local and regional transit, and the need to identify appropriate transit-served space for job growth, the City should promote non-residential development at these locations. ~~Even if circumstances, such as market or broader regulatory factors, require forgoing near-term development on these major parcels, ensuring that these parcels are “land-banked” for significant jobs-oriented development is a necessary long-term strategy for the economic and environmental health of the city and region. These large parcels need not be exclusively non-residential, but they should feature a significant percentage (e.g. at least half) of non-residential and job space.~~

1 \* \* \* \*

2  
3 Section 3. The General Plan is hereby amended by revising the Transit Center District  
4 Sub Area Plan, to read as follows:

5  
6 **Transit Center District SubArea Plan**

7 \* \* \* \*

8 **POLICY 1.3**

9 ~~*Reserve the bulk of remaining space in the core Transit Center District for job growth, by limiting*~~  
10 ~~*the amount of non-commercial uses on major opportunity sites.*~~ *Encourage and permit non-*  
11 *residential uses on major opportunity sites.*

12  
13 In view of the limited number of sizable development sites in the District, which represent the  
14 bulk of the remaining office capacity in the downtown core, it is essential ~~for~~ to allow major  
15 development sites to include a sizable commercial component ~~and not wholly developed with~~  
16 ~~non-commercial uses. At least a few recently constructed large residential projects occupy some of the~~  
17 ~~few major development sites remaining in the downtown core; however, they do not contain any~~  
18 ~~commercial space, thus substantially reducing the capacity of the downtown for future job growth.~~

19  
20 Preserving office and job growth capacity is a major consideration, but so too is  
21 ensuring a mix of uses to help the area achieve a more 24-hour character. A mix of uses is  
22 generally desirable for very large projects, ~~such as those with square footage greater than 500,000~~  
23 ~~gross square feet.~~ Additionally, the Plan recognizes that small lots are often not large enough to  
24 be developed with efficient office buildings, and some very large buildings contemplated in the  
25

1 Plan (i.e. taller than 600 feet) may be too large from a risk and market absorption standpoint  
2 to be devoted to a single use.

3 \* \* \* \*

4  
5 Section 4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after  
6 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the  
7 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board  
8 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

9  
10 Section 5. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors  
11 intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles,  
12 numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the General  
13 Plan that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment  
14 additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the "Note" that appears under  
15 the official title of the ordinance.

16  
17  
18 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
19 DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

20 By: /s/ Peter R. Miljanich  
21 PETER R. MILJANICH  
22 Deputy City Attorney

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