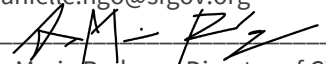




GENERAL PLAN REFERRAL

May 20, 2022

Case No.: 2022-004676GPR
Block/Lot No.: N/A
Project Sponsor: Office of Supervisor Dean Preston
Applicant: Dean Preston – (415) 554-7630
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San Francisco, CA 94102
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Recommended By: 
AnMarie Rodgers, Director of Citywide Policy
For Rich Hillis, Director of Planning

Recommendation: Finding the project, on balance, is **in conformity** with the General Plan

Project Description

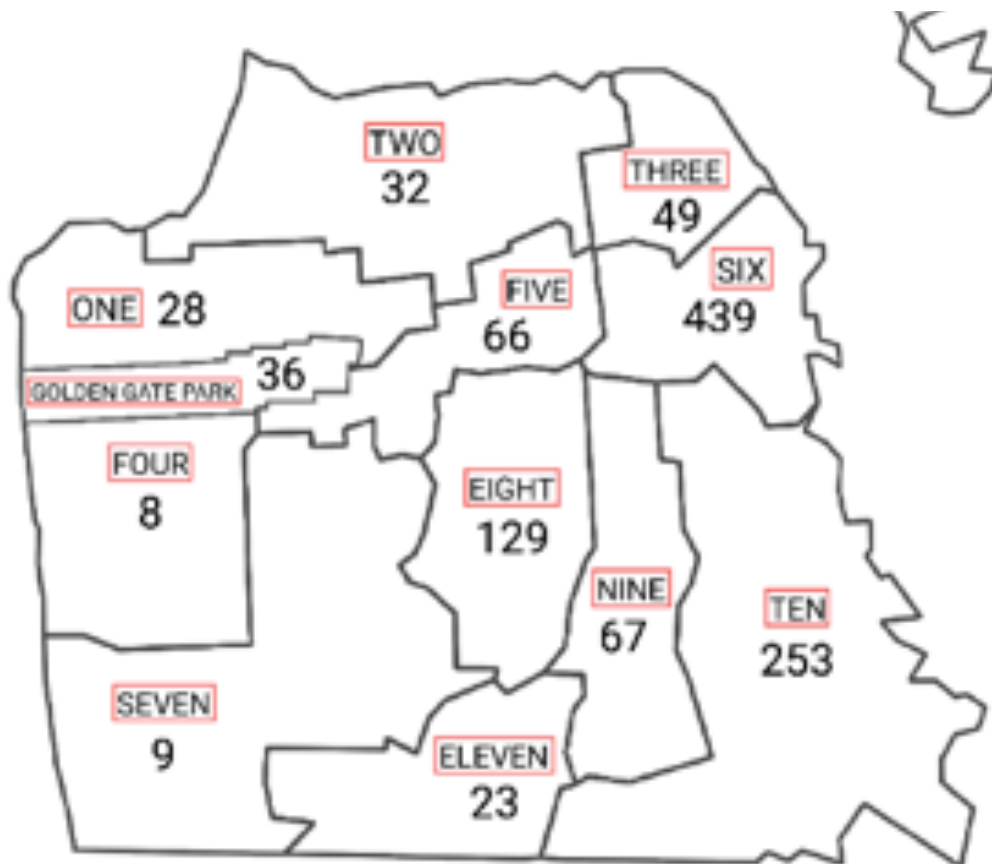
The project, Board File No. 220286, would amend the Administrative Code to require that the City acquire at least 20 additional dwelling units (or “housing units”) for use as transitional housing for homeless transitional age youth (TAY) in the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood no later than March 31, 2023. The Ordinance is sponsored by Supervisor Dean Preston. This General Plan Referral analyzes the proposal for consistency with the General Plan. As defined by the proposed ordinance, homeless TAY are youth between the ages of 18-29 (inclusive) who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

An estimated 48% of youth experiencing homelessness in San Francisco are homeless because they were displaced from housing in San Francisco (Source: Homeless Youth Alliance). The Haight-Ashbury is a destination for youth seeking refuge from abusive families, alienating foster care and group home situations, and juvenile justice system involvement (Homeless Youth Alliance).

Transitional housing provides people with a place to temporarily stay while engaging with social services for up to two years. In this proposed ordinance, the transitional housing for homeless TAY would be acquired or leased by the Department of Homelessness & Supportive Housing (HSH) for 10 years and would provide onsite supportive services. The transitional housing would be part of the HSH’s Temporary Shelter portfolio as clients would access the services as guests and would not have a lease.

As of February 2022, HSH provides over 150 beds of dedicated transitional housing to serve TAY, typically leased by operating non-profit providers. There is one transitional housing site for TAY in the Haight-Ashbury that serves up to 15 people. There are no permanent supportive housing units for TAY in the Haight-Ashbury (San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Budget and Legislative Analyst, May 2022).

The Haight-Ashbury, neighborhood is not the only neighborhood with TAY needs. The San Francisco 2019 point-in-time count produced the following map recording the count of unaccompanied children and TAY.¹



¹ “San Francisco Youth Homeless Count and Survey, Comprehensive Report 2019”. Report produced by Applied Survey Research. Pg 9. https://hsh.sfgov.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2019HIRDReport_SanFranciscoYOUTH_FinalDraft-1.pdf

In the General Plan Objectives and Policies referenced below, the text, first and foremost, prioritizes increasing the City’s stock of permanently affordable housing to reduce homelessness and the risk of homelessness. Transitional affordable housing, as outlined by the proposed ordinance, is different than permanent affordable housing in that residents are only permitted to live on-site for a period of two years or less. Transitional housing can offer housing security, with services, for a limited time only. However, transitional housing can benefit TAY insofar as the resources needed for acquisition for transitional housing do not reduce the City’s capacity to provide TAY with permanently affordable housing.

A General Plan Referral is required because the proposed ordinance concerns the acquisition of property by the City.

Environmental Review

On 05/17/2022, the Planning Department determined that the project (the Ordinance) is not defined as a project under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15378 and 15060(c)(2) because it would not result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

General Plan Compliance and Basis for Recommendation

As described below, the Project is consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 and is, on balance, in conformity with the Objectives and Policies of the General Plan.

Note: General Plan Objectives are shown in **BOLD UPPER CASE** font; Policies are in **Bold** font; supporting text is indented in standard font; and staff comments are in *italic* font.

HOUSING ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 1

IDENTIFY AND MAKE AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT ADEQUATE SITES TO MEET THE CITY’S HOUSING NEEDS, ESPECIALLY PERMANENTLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

The first objective of the Housing Element prioritizes increasing the City’s stock of permanently affordable housing to reduce homelessness and the risk of homelessness. Transitional affordable housing, as outlined by the proposed ordinance, is different than permanent affordable housing in that residents are only permitted to live on-site for a period of two years or less. Transitional housing can offer housing security, with services, for a limited time only.

POLICY 1.3

Work proactively to identify and secure opportunity sites for permanently affordable housing.

The Project is a requirement for the City to purchase additional housing units, specifically, at least 20 additional dwelling units for use as transitional housing for homeless TAY in the Haight-Ashbury. This would increase the City's inventory of transitional affordable housing. Increasing the stock of transitional affordable housing, as outlined by the Ordinance, will benefit transitional age youth insofar as the acquisition requirement do not reduce the City's capacity to provide TAY with permanently affordable housing.

OBJECTIVE 4

FOSTER A HOUSING STOCK THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS ACROSS LIFECYCLES.

POLICY 4.3

Provide a range of housing options for residents with special needs for housing support and services.

Supporting Text to POLICY 4.3: Populations in need of support include the physically and mentally disabled; those suffering from mental illness, cognitive impairment; or dementia; or those suffering from severe illness such as AIDS. They also include people undergoing transitions, such as those trying to exit homelessness, aging out of foster care, leaving a hospital or institutional care; or populations in need of special security, such as transgender individuals. . . .

Of particular importance are the ancillary social and medical service facilities, employment or advocacy services that enable positive living for members of in-need populations. The link to services is critical- in some cases, intensive case management and availability of services can make the difference between someone becoming institutionalized or homeless, or remaining in their own home. Therefore, support facilities need to be located on-site, or integrated into neighborhoods within close pedestrian or transit access from residences. . . .

While the Project is not providing permanently affordable housing, it is offering supportive services and a limited stay housing option for Transitional Age Youth.

POLICY 4.6

Ensure that new permanently affordable housing is located in all of the city's neighborhoods, and encourage integrated neighborhoods, with a diversity of unit types provided at a range of income levels.

The Project defines the Haight-Ashbury as the area bounded to the north by Oak Street, to the east by Baker Street, to the south by Frederick Street and the northern border of Buena Vista Park, and to the west by Stanyan Street. There are a few factors of the Haight-Ashbury's housing stock which indicate there is opportunity to expand affordable housing options. First, in the Evaluation of the 2014 Housing Element (Draft March 2022), the Haight-Ashbury is identified as an area with less than 300 total units of housing production from 2005-2019, far fewer relative to areas like Financial District, South of Market, Mission Bay, and Potrero Hill who have produced 3,001-8,721 units. Second, in the Housing Element Update 2022: Sites Inventory and Rezoning Program (Draft March 2022), the Haight-Ashbury is identified as an area with less than 1,000 of probable units that are currently underutilized and/or vacant for housing, with relatively few units in the pipeline of publicly funded affordable housing production and preservation as compared to the rest of the City. Third, the Haight-Ashbury is identified as an area considered for additional height and/or density to generate enough sites to meet the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation for 2023-2031. With these factors considered, the Project would require the City to

increase its inventory of affordable housing in a neighborhood that has historically not contributed significantly to the City's housing stock.

OBJECTIVE 6

REDUCE HOMELESSNESS AND THE RISK OF HOMELESSNESS.

Supporting Text to OBJECTIVE 6: The policies of the 1980s that regarded temporary shelter as an acceptable housing plan for homeless households has been superseded by an increased focus on permanent supportive housing programs.

POLICY 6.1

Prioritize permanent housing and service-enriched solutions while pursuing both short- and long-term strategies to eliminate homelessness.

Supporting Text to POLICY 6.1: While shelters can provide an alternative to sleeping on the streets, they do little to address the underlying causes. . . A permanent solution to homelessness requires permanent affordable housing.

The Project is a requirement for the City to purchase additional transitional housing units, specifically, at least 20 additional dwelling units for use as transitional housing for homeless TAY. As defined by the Ordinance, transitional housing refers to a dwelling unit made available to TAY for a period of two years or less, with onsite TAY services. TAY services refers to in-person support provided by full-time, direct-service behavioral health and medical staff, with a strong focus on supporting successful exits to permanent housing. The provision of housing with TAY Services would offer significant assistance to TAY, if only for a period of two years, would likely be superior to shelters. Permanent housing would be superior to housing limited to no more than a two year stay.

Planning Code Section 101 Findings

Planning Code Section 101.1 establishes Eight Priority Policies and requires review of discretionary approvals and permits for consistency with said policies. The Project is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies as set forth in Planning Code Section 101.1 for the following reasons:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced;

The Project would not have a negative effect on existing neighborhood-serving retail uses and will not have a negative effect on opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of neighborhood-serving retail.

2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods;

The Project would not have a negative effect on housing or neighborhood character.

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced;

The Project would not have an adverse effect on the City's existing supply of affordable housing. Rather, the Project would enhance the supply of affordable housing by increasing the number of transitional housing units by at least 20.

4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking;

The Project would not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI transit service or overburdening the streets or neighborhood parking.

5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced;

The Project would not cause displacement of the industrial or service sectors due to office development, and future opportunities for resident employment or ownership in these sectors would not be impaired.

6. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake;

The Project would not have an adverse effect on City's preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

7. That the landmarks and historic buildings be preserved;

The Project would not have an adverse effect on the City's Landmarks and historic buildings.

8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development;

The Project would not have an adverse effect on the City's parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas.

Recommendation: Finding the project, on balance, is in conformity with the General Plan

Attachments: None