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General Plan Referral

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Case No. 2019-006619GPR
**Small Sites Program – Acquisition of Multifamily Affordable
Housing Developments**

Block/Lot No.: 6959/003, 3532/059, 4336/015, 01800/006, 0115/018, 3570/020

Project Sponsor: Mayor’s Office of Housing
1 South Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94103

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

*Recommended
By:* 
John Rahaim, Director of Planning

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) is proposing to acquire six existing multifamily housing developments through the agency’s Small Sites Program, totaling 69 units ranging in size from studios to 2-bedroom units (located at 4830 Mission Street, 65 Woodward street, 1411 Florida Street, 1201 Powell Street, 462 Green Street, and 3280 17th Street). The program provides loans to nonprofit organizations to buy existing rental buildings at risk of market-rate conversion or loss due to physical decline. These buildings are then converted to permanently affordable housing, thereby helping limit residential displacement. The program requires that buildings complete improvements to meet life safety requirements, including seismic soft-story retrofits. Some of the projects also include existing retail spaces that will be preserved through the program.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The environmental analysis and/or permits have been issued for 4830 Mission Street (2017-014686PRJ and 2019-002886PRL), 65 Woodward Street, and 1411 Florida Street (2017-014686PRJ and 2019-002886PRL).

The work proposed at 1201 Powell Street, 462 Green Street and 3280 17th Street includes the following:

- 1201 Powell Street: Project includes a soft story retrofit with approximately 15 cubic yards of soil disturbance, approximately 5 feet depth of excavation, and approximately 30 wood windows to

**SMALL SITES PROGRAM – ACQUISITION OF MULTIFAMILY
AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS**

be replaced in-kind. All window permits would be reviewed by the San Francisco Planning Department and the window types and materials would be required to meet the Secretary of Interior Standards.

- 462 Green Street: Project has filed an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Permit with facade alterations (2019-003746PRJ/BPA 201903195622). The replacement and facade work must meet the Secretary of Interior Standards before the plans are signed and the permit issued.
- 3280 17th Street: Project includes in-kind roofing and repair work.

The physical work associated with 1201 Powell, 3280 17th Street and 462 Green are Categorical Exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Planning Case No. 2019-006619PRJ).

GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE AND BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The proposal to acquire the six buildings through the Small Sites Program is, on balance, **in conformity** with the General Plan, as described in the body of this Report.

Note: General Plan Objectives are shown in **BOLD UPPER CASE** font; Policies are in **Bold** font; 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.

POLICY 1.1

Plan for the full range of housing needs in the City and County of San Francisco, especially affordable housing.

Comment: The Small Sites Program was established to help stabilize buildings that are occupied by low- to moderate-income tenants throughout San Francisco that are particularly susceptible to market pressures, resulting in property sales, increased evictions, and rising tenant rents. The program provides housing for tenants earning up to 120% of Area Median Income (AMI), and further requires that when units are vacated and rented to new tenants that the property strive for an average income level of 80% AMI.

OBJECTIVE 2

RETAIN EXISTING HOUSING UNITS, AND PROMOTE SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE STANDARDS, WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING AFFORDABILITY.

POLICY 2.4

Promote improvements and continued maintenance to existing units to ensure long term habitation and safety.

POLICY 2.5

Encourage and support the seismic retrofitting of the existing housing stock.

Comment: The six Small Sites Program developments would be required to upgrade the buildings to meet minimum life safety and seismic standards, and that they maintain the units for the duration of the program (minimum 75 years).

OBJECTIVE 3

PROTECT THE AFFORDABILITY OF THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK, ESPECIALLY RENTAL UNITS

POLICY 3.1

Preserve rental units, especially rent controlled units, to meet the City’s affordable housing needs.

POLICY 3.2

Promote voluntary housing acquisition and rehabilitation to protect affordability for existing occupants.

POLICY 3.4

Preserve “naturally affordable” housing types, such as smaller and older ownership units.

POLICY 3.5

Retain permanently affordable residential hotels and single room occupancy (SRO) units.

OBJECTIVE 4

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

POLICY 4.4

Encourage sufficient and suitable rental housing opportunities, emphasizing permanently affordable rental units wherever possible.

Comment: The goals of the Small Sites Program are to permanently stabilize existing rental housing stock that is serving low- to moderate-income households, by acquiring and preserving “naturally affordable” units. It allows existing tenants to continue living in the developments when they are accepted into the program. It also focuses on preserving a variety of unit sizes and types, and the six projects currently proposed for inclusion in the program include units ranging from studios to 2-bedroom units.

OBJECTIVE 7

SECURE FUNDING AND RESOURCES FOR PERMANENTLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING, INCLUDING INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS THAT ARE NOT SOLELY RELIANT ON TRADITIONAL MECHANISMS OR CAPITAL.

POLICY 7.3

**SMALL SITES PROGRAM – ACQUISITION OF MULTIFAMILY
AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS**

Recognize the importance of funds for operations, maintenance and services to the success of affordable housing programs

POLICY 7.6

Acquire and rehabilitate existing housing to maximize effective use of affordable housing resources.

Comment: The proposed project would provide funding to maintain and preserve existing affordable housing, including funding for operations and the necessary rehabilitation to bring projects up to current life safety and seismic standards.

OBJECTIVE 8

BUILD PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR CAPACITY TO SUPPORT, FACILITATE, PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

POLICY 8.1

Support the production and management of permanently affordable housing.

OBJECTIVE 9

PRESERVE UNITS SUBSIDIZED BY THE FEDERAL, STATE OR LOCAL SOURCES.

POLICY 9.2 Continue prioritization of preservation of existing affordable housing as the most effective means of providing affordable housing.

Comment: The program partners with nonprofit organizations to protect existing low- and moderate-income residents in rental housing developments, utilizing local funding sources.

COMMERCE & INDUSTRY ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 2

MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE A SOUND AND DIVERSE ECONOMIC BASE AND FISCAL STRUCTURE FOR THE CITY.

POLICY 2.1

Seek to retain existing commercial and industrial activity and to attract new such activity to the city.

OBJECTIVE 3

PROVIDE EXPANDED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITY RESIDENTS, PARTICULARLY THE UNEMPLOYED AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED.

POLICY 3.1

Promote the attraction, retention and expansion of commercial and industrial firms which provide employment improvement opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

Comment: The project would preserve buildings that include existing retail spaces, ensuring they can continue to serve as spaces for neighborhood-serving businesses and provide employment opportunities for workers of different skill levels.

PROPOSITION M FINDINGS – PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1

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:

Eight Priority Policies Findings

The subject project is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 in that:

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 will not displace or restrict access to any existing neighborhood-serving retail or restrict future opportunities. The existing retail spaces at some of the sites will be preserved through the program.

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

The project will enhance the economic diversity of our neighborhoods by preserving existing affordable housing at a range of income levels.

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

The project will directly support the preservation and enhancement of the City's supply of affordable housing.

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

The proposed project will not impede Muni transit service, nor overburden our 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 residential employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced.

The project will not displace any individual businesses.

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

The proposed project will not hinder earthquake preparedness efforts. Further, the project will require the subject buildings to meet current seismic and safety codes and standards.

7. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

The project would not have an adverse effect on landmarks or historic buildings.

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

The project will not impact parks and open spaces.

RECOMMENDATION:

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