




GENERAL PLAN REFERRAL

December 9, 2025

Case No.: 2025-011186GPR
Address: various
Block/Lot No.: various
Project Sponsor: San Francisco Public Works
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Recommended By: 
Joshua Switzky, Deputy Director of Citywide Planning for
Sarah Dennis Phillips, Director of Planning

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

Please note that a General Plan Referral is a determination regarding the project's consistency with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 and conformity with the Objectives and Policies of the General Plan. This General Plan Referral is not a permit to commence any work or change occupancy. Permits from appropriate Departments must be secured before work is started or occupancy is changed.

Project Description

The City and County of San Francisco is proposing a \$525 million Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response (ESER) Bond for the June 2026 ballot to fund seismic upgrades and much-needed improvements to aging first responder facilities and capital infrastructure (Project). These improvements will increase San Francisco's capacity to quickly respond to a major earthquake or other disaster and recover from the aftermath. The ability to respond quickly in an emergency will have a direct impact on how well San Francisco recovers after the next big earthquake.

The ESER 2026 Bond, a \$525 million General Obligation Bond for the June 2026 ballot to fund investments in public safety facilities, emergency firefighting water system, a modern bus maintenance facility, deteriorating and seismically unsafe neighborhood fire stations and police stations. Investments may include:

- 1) Renovate, expand and seismically upgrade the City's aging Emergency Firefighting Water System (EFWS). The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission will likely expand capacity to include a separate component that uses drinking water. This extension of the system can supply water for both fighting fires and for drinking. This expanded system will extend high-pressure water pipelines, hydrants and key connection points into the City's western neighborhoods, allowing firefighters to use the network as a reliable secondary defense against large-scale fires, particularly after a major earthquake when the domestic system may be damaged and service interrupted.
- 2) Repair and replace deteriorating and seismically unsafe neighborhood fire stations. ESER 2026 bond funding would be used to potentially replace deficient fire stations that do not meet seismic and life-safety requirements, making them vulnerable to failure. Examples of these fire stations may include:
 - Fire Station No. 2, 1340 Powell St.
 - Fire Station No. 7, 2300 Folsom St.
 - Fire Station No. 8, 36 Bluxome St.
 - Fire Station No. 40, 2155 18th Ave.
- 3) Make seismic, safety and operational improvements to district police stations and support facilities. One potential project could be the Taraval Police Station, which was built in 1915. This historic building has a high probability of collapsing after a major earthquake and would not be operational, potentially increasing response times and delaying service. A full seismic renovation and expansion of the westside station would create a facility that meets current life-safety codes and accommodates a growing police force.
- 4) Critical building repairs and improvements at public safety facilities. These state-of-good-repair projects would include building improvements, such as the repair or replacement of roofs and plumbing and electrical systems. These projects would focus on important public safety facilities, such as police and fire stations and other buildings that support first responders.
- 5) Replace a 110-year-old, seismically unsafe bus yard with a modern bus maintenance and storage facility to help ensure Muni has buses available to provide transit service after a disaster. The Potrero Yard Modernization Project would rebuild the facility, a converted streetcar facility into a modern, four-story, efficient bus maintenance and storage facility. It would become Muni's trolley bus hub with room to accommodate 246 electric trolley buses, 100 more than the current capacity allows. Potrero Yard does not meet modern seismic standards.

Environmental Review

Except for the project noted below, the Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response (ESER) 2026 Bond Program is not an activity subject to CEQA because it would not result in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment pursuant to Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4). Further, CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4) provides that a project does not include the creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities that do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

As to the exception noted above, the ESER 2026 Bond Program includes funding for one specific project that has already received CEQA review. The Planning Commission certified the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Potrero Yard Modernization Project on January 11, 2024 (Planning Case No. 2019-021884ENV).

If the Bond is approved, Bond-funded projects that are not yet identified or proposed would be referred to the Planning Department for separate environmental review.

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; staff comments are in *italic* font.

SAFETY AND RESILIENCE ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 3.1

EXISTING BUILDINGS. ENSURE RETROFITS AND RENOVATIONS TO EXISTING STRUCTURES INCREASE BUILDING LONGEVITY AND MEET CURRENT BEST PRACTICES TO PROTECT OCCUPANTS AND STRUCTURES.

POLICY 3.1.3

Abate structural and non-structural hazards in City-owned properties.

OBJECTIVE 3.3

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC REALM. ENSURE THE CITY'S LIFELINE SYSTEMS, TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE FACILITIES, UTILITIES, STREETS, PUBLIC SPACES, AND COASTS CAN WITHSTAND AND ADAPT TO ALL HAZARDS.

POLICY 3.3.1

Reduce the risk of all hazards to community facilities and lifeline infrastructure, starting with Environmental Justice Communities.

POLICY 3.3.2

Identify and replace vulnerable infrastructure and critical service lifelines in high-risk areas.

POLICY 3.3.3

Conduct capital planning to advance resilient infrastructure prioritizing life safety and functional recovery, as well as the needs of Environmental Justice Communities and other vulnerable people.

OBJECTIVE 3.4

CITY AGENCY CAPABILITIES. PLAN FOR THE OPERATIONAL, DATA, AND LOGISTICAL CAPACITIES NEEDED TO FACILITATE COMMUNITY SAFETY DURING THE RESPONSE, RECOVERY, AND RECONSTRUCTION PHASES OF ALL HAZARDS.

POLICY 4.2.5

Utilize the City's and region's transit network to facilitate response and recovery during and after a disaster.

OBJECTIVE 5.1

LIFELINES. PROVIDE CRITICAL INFORMATION AND SERVICES TO PREVENT FURTHER LOSS OF LIFE AND ESTABLISH COMMUNITY SAFETY DURING THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF DISASTERS.

POLICY 5.1.1

Ensure the City's lifeline systems are constantly maintained to be in a state of good repair.

The Project is a component of the City's capital planning process to advance resilient infrastructure, prioritizing life safety and functional recovery. It would provide funding for seismic upgrades and other improvements to increase longevity of existing City properties and protect their occupants, and to ensure that lifeline systems, transportation and emergency response facilities can withstand seismic hazards. The Project would:

- Renovate, expand and provide seismic upgrades to the City's Emergency Firefighting Water System (EFWS) and related facilities, a crucial lifeline system, for more effective firefighting and to ensure full operation during and after a major seismic event or other disaster.*
- Repair, replace and provide seismic upgrades to firefighting facilities and infrastructure, police facilities and infrastructure, and public safety facilities and infrastructure, to increase building longevity, protect occupants, and ensure full operation during and after a major seismic event or other disaster.*
- Replace the 110-year-old, seismically unsafe Muni bus storage and maintenance facility at Potrero Yard with a modern bus maintenance and storage facility, to protect occupants and ensure that the City's transit network is functional and can be utilized for response and recovery during and after a disaster.*

COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT**OBJECTIVE 1**

DISTRIBUTE, LOCATE, AND DESIGN POLICE FACILITIES IN A MANNER THAT WILL ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT AND RESPONSIVE PERFORMANCE OF POLICE FUNCTIONS.

POLICY 1.6

Design facilities to allow for flexibility, future expansion, full operation in the event of a seismic emergency, and security and safety for personnel, while still maintaining an inviting appearance that is in scale with neighborhood development.

The Project would repair, replace and provide seismic upgrades to police facilities and infrastructure, including without limitation district police stations, to enable them to remain in full operation in the event of a seismic emergency.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 5

ASSURE A PERMANENT AND ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF FRESH WATER TO MEET THE PRESENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF SAN FRANCISCO.

POLICY 5.5

Improve and extend the Auxiliary Water Supply system of the Fire Department for more effective fire fighting.

The Project would renovate, expand and provide seismic upgrades to the City's Emergency Firefighting Water System (formerly known as the Auxiliary Water Supply system) and related facilities, for more effective firefighting and to ensure full operation during and after a major seismic event or other disaster.

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 improvement and expansion of seismically vulnerable public safety facilities would not interfere with any existing neighborhood-serving retail uses.

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

The improvement and expansion of SFPD, SFFD, and MTA facilities and PUC infrastructure would not convert any existing residential uses to non-residential uses, and will provide improved services to affected neighborhoods, especially in the case of public safety and transit response in following a disaster event.

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

The improvement and expansion of SFPD, SFFD and MTA facilities would not convert any existing

affordable housing to non-residential uses. The MTA Potrero Yard project may create approximately 100 new affordable housing units. The Project would help preserve the City's supply of affordable housing by ensuring that firefighting can operate during and after a major seismic event or other disaster.

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

The Project would not overburden streets or neighborhood parking. It would help preserve MUNI service by replacing the Potrero bus yard with a modern bus maintenance and storage facility, protecting occupants and ensuring transit can operate after a disaster.

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 improvement and expansion of SFFD and SFPD facilities would not convert any existing industrial and service sectors to commercial office space. The Project would help protect the City's industrial and service sectors by increasing the ability of the City's firefighting, police, transit, and other lifeline services to operate during and after a major seismic event or other disaster.

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

The Project's proposed seismic improvements would significantly improve the City's earthquake preparedness and response.

7. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved;

The Project would fund the replacement of the 110-year-old, seismically unsafe Muni Bus Storage and Maintenance Facility at Potrero Yard, which may result in the loss of potentially historic structures. The Project may fund rehabilitation and preservation of historic neighborhood fire stations and/or police stations.

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

The Project would have no effect on the City's parks and open space.

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