

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[General Plan Amendments - Western South of Market Area Plan]

Ordinance amending the General Plan, by adding the Western South of Market (SoMa) Area Plan, generally bounded on its western portion by 7th Street, Mission Street, Division Street, and Bryant Street, and on its eastern portion by 7th Street, Harrison Street, 4th Street, and Townsend Street; making conforming amendments to the Housing, Commerce and Industry, and Recreation and Open Space Elements, the Land Use Index, and the SoMa, East SoMa, Mission, Showplace Square/Potrero, and Central Waterfront Area Plans; and making environmental findings and findings of consistency with the General Plan and the Priority Policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.

Existing Law

The General Plan of the City and County of San Francisco is a planning document that sets a strategic and long term vision for the City. State law requires that the General Plan address seven issues: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise and safety. In addition, a general plan can also contain area plans, which cover specific geographic areas of a city. In San Francisco, area plans have been adopted for Glen Park, Balboa Park Station, Bayview Hunters Point, Central Waterfront, Chinatown, Civic Center, Downtown, East Soma (South of Market), Hunters Point Shipyard, Market and Octavia, Mission, Northeastern Waterfront, Rincon Hill, Showplace Square/Potrero, South of Market, Van Ness Avenue and Western Shoreline. In these area plans the more general policies in the General Plan elements are made more precise as they relate to specific parts of the city.

Amendments to Current Law

This Ordinance would add the new Western SoMa Area Plan ("Area Plan"), the area roughly bounded by 7th Street, Mission Street, Division Street, and Bryant Street on the western portion of the plan area, and 7th Street, Harrison Street, 4th Street, and Townsend Street on the eastern portion of the plan area, to the San Francisco General Plan. The Area Plan presents a vision and a set of objectives and policies that recognize Western SoMa unique character and seek to enhance the neighborhood's special quality and function.

The Area Plan builds on the Eastern Neighborhoods Plans' vision for the traditionally industrial and mixed use areas in the eastern part of the City. The Area Plan complements the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan's patterns of land use, urban form, public space, circulation, and historic preservation, and makes adjustments to this specific area based on today's understanding of the issues and focused community outreach to the residents and workers in the area.

The legislation makes findings, including environmental findings and findings of consistency with the General Plan, as proposed for amendment, and the Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1.

Background Information

The Western SoMa community planning process began in 2001, originally as a part of Eastern Neighborhoods, with the goal of developing new zoning controls for the industrial portion of this neighborhood. The Western SoMa plan area was eventually removed from the Eastern Neighborhoods planning process and on November 23, 2004 the Board of Supervisors passed Resolution No. 731-04 creating the Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force (“Task Force”). The Task Force was charged with conducting a comprehensive analysis of the Western SoMa plan area and developing recommendations. The Task Force, with assistance from the Planning Department held numerous public workshops and worked with consultants throughout 2008, resulting in the publication of a Draft Western SoMa Community Plan in September 2008. An updated version of the plan was published in October 2011.