

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Chinatown Transit Station Special Use District]

Ordinance amending the San Francisco Planning Code Section 249.66 to: 1) create the Chinatown Transit Station Special Use District at the southwest corner of Stockton Street and Washington Street (Assessor Block No. 211, Lot No. 1); 2) permit the demolition of a mixed-use building in the Chinatown Neighborhood Commercial District for the construction of the Chinatown Station of the Central Subway; and 3) adopt findings, including General Plan Consistency Findings and findings under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Existing Law

Currently, Planning Code section 812.39(b) prohibits demolition of housing in the Chinatown Residential Neighborhood Commercial District. Planning Code section 317 prohibits the issuance of a demolition permit unless a building permit for a replacement building has also been issued.

Amendments to Current Law

This legislation would amend the Planning Code to create the Chinatown Station Special Use District ("SUD"), as Planning Code section 249.66. All otherwise applicable controls would apply in the Chinatown Station SUD except for Planning Code Section 812.39(b) and Section 317.

Background Information

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) plans to construct a continuation of the T-Third Light Rail Vehicle line from the Caltrain Station at Fourth and King Streets to an underground station in Chinatown (the "Project") to create a critical transportation improvement linking neighborhoods in the southeastern portion of the City and County of San Francisco (the "City") with the retail and employment centers in the City's downtown and Chinatown neighborhoods. The Project will provide direct rail service to regional destinations, including the City's Chinatown, Union Square, Moscone Convention Center, Yerba Buena, SoMa and AT&T Park neighborhoods; connect BART and Caltrain; serve a low-auto-ownership population of transit customers; increase transit use and reduce travel time; reduce air and noise pollution and provide congestion relief.

Construction of the Chinatown Station requires the demolition of the existing mixed-use residential commercial building on the southwest corner of Stockton and Washington Streets.

This ordinance will allow the SFMTA the ability to demolish a residential building in Chinatown Residential Neighborhood Commercial District, and will allow such demolition without the concurrent approval of a subsequent building permit. The building is largely vacant: all but one retail tenant and all residential tenants in the building have been relocated pursuant to the Central Subway's Relocation Impact Study and last Resort Housing Plan. The remaining retail tenant expects to vacate the building in mid-February 2012