

RECEIVED  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SAN FRANCISCO  
2018 JUN 11 PM 4:05  
BY          JW

**From:** Phillip Babich  
Direct Phone: +1 415 659 5654  
Mobile: +1 213 999 5749  
Email: pbabich@reedsmith.com

Reed Smith LLP  
101 Second Street  
Suite 1800  
San Francisco, CA 94105-3659  
+1 415 543 8700  
Fax +1 415 391 8269  
reedsmith.com

**To:** San Francisco Board of Supervisors

**Date:** June 11, 2018

**Subject:** *Appeal by One Vassar LLC of Planning Commission's Certification of the Environmental Impact Report for the Central SoMa Plan*

**Introduction**

This appeal is submitted on behalf of One Vassar LLC (“One Vassar”). The San Francisco Board of Supervisors (“Board”) should reverse the Planning Commission’s (“Commission”) certification of the Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) for the Central SoMa Plan. The Commission’s certification was erroneous for three main reasons. First, the EIR did not consider a project alternative with higher housing density as a means to substantially lessen significant impacts on transit, traffic, and air quality. The Commission’s failure to do so violates the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”). Second, the EIR violates CEQA because it failed to discuss inconsistencies between the Plan’s goal of 33% affordable housing and the Housing Element of the General Plan’s goal of 57% affordable housing citywide. And, third, the EIR violates CEQA because it did not discuss inconsistencies between the housing sustainability district (“HSD”) designation for the Plan area and the Housing Element; the HSD provides expedited review for residential projects taller than 160 feet only if the building is 100% affordable, a disincentive to building affordable housing units, whereas the Housing Element, as previously stated, requires substantial increases in the number of affordable housing units citywide.

For these reasons, the Board should reverse the Commission’s certification of the EIR.

**Factual and Procedural Background**

In December 2016, the City and County of San Francisco’s Planning Department (“Planning Department”) released the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”) for the Central SoMa Plan. (Exh. 1.) The public comment period ended in February 2017. (*Id.*) One Vassar timely submitted its comments on the DEIR [Exh. 2] and, as such, has standing to bring this appeal.

On May 10, 2018, the Commission voted unanimously to certify the EIR and its findings under CEQA. (Exh. 3 at pp. 10-12.) The EIR findings included, among other things, that the Central SoMa Plan would result in significant and unavoidable environmental impacts even with mitigation measures with respect to transit, traffic, and air quality:

- Transit: Development under the Plan “would result in a substantial increase in transit demand that would not be accommodated by local transit capacity, and would cause substantial increase in delays resulting in adverse impacts on local and regional transit routes.” (Exh. 4 at p. 29)
- Traffic: Development under the Plan “would result in crosswalk overcrowding” in certain intersections and “an increased demand for on-street commercial and passenger loading and a reduction in on-street loading supply” that would impact loading zones and create potential hazards or significant delays for transit, vehicles, bicycles and/or pedestrians.” (*Id.* at p. 30.)
- Air quality: Development under the Plan would violate certain air quality standards and would result in “emissions of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and toxic air contaminants that would result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.” (*Id.* at pp. 36-37.)

The Planning Department prepared a statement of overriding considerations pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21081, subdivision (b) [requiring finding by public agency “that specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant effects on the environment”] and Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15093, subdivision (a) [“statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record”]. (*Id.* at pp. 51-55.) Section 21081, subdivision (a) requires a finding based on substantial evidence that “[s]pecific considerations ... make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the environmental impact report.” However, the statement is not supported in all aspects by substantial evidence and, in any event, the environmental impacts with respect to transit, traffic, and air quality could have been mitigated as discussed below.

### Argument

The Board’s review of the Planning Commission’s certification of a final EIR is controlled by San Francisco Administrative Code section 31.16. The Board must affirm the certification if it “finds that the final EIR complies with CEQA, including that it is adequate, accurate and objective, sufficient as an informational document, correct in its conclusions, and reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the City and that the Planning Commission certification findings are correct.” (SF Admin. Code, § 31.16(c)(4).) “The Board shall reverse the Planning Commission’s certification of the EIR if the Board finds that the EIR does not comply with CEQA, including that it is not adequate, accurate and objective, is not sufficient as an informational document, that its conclusions are incorrect or it does not reflect the independent judgment and analysis of the City, or that the Planning Commission certification findings are incorrect.” (*Id.*, (c)(5).) The Board should reverse the certification for the three main reasons discussed below.

**1. By Failing To Analyze A Higher Housing Density Alternative As A Means To Substantially Lessen Significant Impacts On Transit, Traffic, And Air Quality, The EIR Violates CEQA**

“[A]n EIR must describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project ... which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project[.]” (*Tracy First v. City of Tracy* (2009) 177 Cal.App.4th 912, 925 [citing *In re Bay-Delta et al.* (2008) 43 Cal.4th 1143, 1162-1163]; CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(a).) The nature and scope of the alternatives to be studied in an EIR is governed by the rule of reason. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(a); *Village Laguna of Laguna Beach, Inc. v. Board of Supervisors* (1982) 134 Cal.App.3d 1022, 1029.) Under the rule of reason, an EIR need discuss only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. (*Id.*, (f).) The range of alternatives examined in an EIR should be designed to foster informed decision-making and public participation. (*Id.*, (a).) An alternative must avoid or substantially lessen the Plan’s significant environmental effects [Pub. Res. Code, § 21002], offering substantial environmental advantages [*Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* (1990) 52 Cal.3d 553, 566]. It must also be able to implement most of the Plan’s objectives. (*Mira Mar Mobile Community v. City of Oceanside* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th 477.) An alternative must also be “potentially feasible” [CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(a)] in that it is “capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, and technological factors” [Pub. Res. Code, § 21061.1]. And, it must be “reasonable” [CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(a)] in that the alternative is not remote and speculative requiring, for example, significant changes in governmental policy or legislation [*Residents Ad Hoc Stadium Comm. v. Board of Trustees of Lodi* (1979) 89 Cal.App.3d 274, 286].

Here, the EIR did not describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the Plan because it omitted consideration of a higher housing density alternative to substantially lessen significant environmental impacts. (*See Mira Mar*, 119 Cal.App.4th at 490 [a higher density alternative should be considered in an EIR when it would avoid or substantially lessen significant impacts of the project].) Such an alternative not only would have substantially lessened the significant and unavoidable environmental impacts of the Plan as stated in the EIR on transit, traffic, and air quality, but it might have reduced those impacts to less than significant.

Under the Plan, the household growth under is projected to be 14,400 by 2040, which would presumably be accommodated by the projected growth in the number of housing units, which is 14,500.<sup>1</sup> (Exh. 1 at p. IV-6, Table IV-1.) However, the projected growth in the number of jobs by 2040 in the plan area is 63,600. (*Id.*) With such a large gap between the increase in the number of households and the increase in the number of jobs, vehicle trips by out-of-town commuters, clogging transit routes, would vastly outnumber shorter in-town commutes by residents who could walk or bicycle to work, which would significantly lessen impact on transit. As a result, Impact TR-3 of the EIR found that

---

<sup>1</sup> The Planning Department attempts to explain major discrepancies among various figures for projected number of housing units in the plan area. (See Exh. 10.) With respect to the figures cited here, the department says that “the EIR analyzes an increase of approximately 14,500 residential units within the EIR study area, of which 8,320 units are anticipated to occur with the Plan Area.” (*Id.* at p. 3.) The department provides no explanation for what it considers the “EIR study area”; the location of the project in the EIR is the same as the description of the project boundaries in the Central SoMa Plan.

“[d]evelopment under the Plan would result in a substantial increase in transit demand that would not be accommodated by local transit capacity, and would cause a substantial increase in delays resulting in adverse impacts on local and regional transit routes.” (Exh. 1 at p. S-17.) The EIR found that there would be a significant and unavoidable adverse impact with respect to transit, even after mitigation. (*Id.*) In addition, “[T]ransit impacts on Muni, Golden Gate Transit, and SamTrans operations would be significant and unavoidable.” (*Id.* at p. VI-25.)

To address these significant and unavoidable environmental impacts, the City should have considered a higher housing density alternative. Such an alternative could have reduced the Plan’s environmental impacts on transit, traffic, and air quality to less than significant. (*See, e.g., Cleveland Nat’l Forest Found. v. San Diego Ass’n of Governments* (2017) 3 Cal. 5th 497, 506 [stating greenhouse gas reductions can be achieved by maximizing building densities at locations served by public transit, thereby reducing automobile dependency]; *see also* Exh. 5 at p. 4; Exh. 6 at p. 97 [reductions in GHG emissions can be achieved through local government development of “land use plans with more efficient development patterns that bring people and destinations closer together in more mixed-use, compact communities that facilitate walking, biking, and use of transit”]; Exh. 11 at p. RTC-278-RTC-279 [“VMT per person would decrease, both in the Plan Area and throughout the Bay Area, if more housing were provided within the Plan Area”]; Exh. 4 at p. 36 [recognizing relationship between greater vehicle trips and an increase in criteria air pollutants])

Indeed, the City has long-recognized the correlation between high housing density and reductions in transit impacts: “In the Bay Area, transportation is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), with passenger travel in cars and light trucks causing more than 40% of those emissions.” (Exh. 5 at p. 4.) “Transforming some of that passenger travel to transit, biking or walking will not only support environmental goals like reduction of energy consumption, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and less air pollution, but also economic and social ones such as increased physical activity, lower vehicle accident rates, and lower household transportation expenses.” (*Id.*; *see also* Exh. 7 at p. 4 [explaining how high-density housing leads to traffic reduction and fewer auto trips].) Nonetheless, the City failed to consider a higher housing density alternative that could have reduced transit impacts and impacts on air quality.

Moreover, a higher housing density alternative would satisfy virtually all of the Plan’s primary objectives, including the objective of increasing housing and bringing City residents closer to their in-City jobs.

Such an alternative is also feasible and is able to be accomplished within a reasonable amount of time. The vast majority of new zoning in the Plan area already allows for residential use. Under the Plan, proposed amendments to the Planning Code and Zoning Map rezone the majority of the Plan area as Central SoMa Mixed Use (“CMUO”) and Mixed Use-General District (“MUG”). Permitted uses in the CMUO sites include residential uses. (SF Planning Code, § 848 [proposed].) Permitted uses in the MUG sites also include residential uses. (SF Planning Code, § 840 [proposed].) The CMUO district is “designed to encourage a mix of residential and non-residential uses” (Exh. 4 at p. 181.) and the MUG district encourages “[n]ew residential or mixed use developments . . . to provide as much mixed-income

family housing as possible.” (*Id.* at p. 169.) Both zones not only permit, but explicitly encourage residential use. The plan area, after being rezoned to comprise a majority CMUO and MUG districts, can accommodate more housing than is currently projected in the Central SoMa Plan and the EIR. In addition, the City’s Housing Element recognizes that the South of Market area can accommodate more housing with higher housing density and in-fill projects. (Exh. 4 at p. I.73 [“with higher densities allowed in [Chinatown and South of Market], in-fill development could accommodate at least an additional 9,870 units”].) Thus, a higher housing density alternative is feasible and should have been considered in the EIR.

Lastly, a higher housing density alternative is reasonable, requiring no changes in governmental policy or legislation. As discussed below in Section 2, the City’s Housing Element of the General Plan and its regional allocation for affordable housing, require the City to build a higher percentage of affordable housing units relative to market-rate housing than is projected under the Plan. Thus, governmental policy and implementing legislation are already pushing the City toward increasing the number housing units, both affordable and market-rate, in the Plan area. To this end, higher housing density could have also been obtained by increasing building height limits in many areas within Central SoMa and/or enlarging building footprints.

Thus, because the EIR did not consider a project alternative with higher housing density that would substantially lessen environmental impacts on transit, traffic, and air quality, the Board should reverse the Commission’s certification of the EIR.

**2. By Failing To Discuss Inconsistencies Between The Central Soma Plan, Which Calls For 33% Affordable Housing, And The Housing Element Of The General Plan, Which Calls For 57% Affordable Housing Citywide, The EIR Violates CEQA**

An EIR must discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15215(d).) An “applicable plan is a plan that has already been adopted and thus legally applies to a project.” (*Chaparral Greens v. City of Chula Vista* (1996) 50 Cal.App.4th 1134, 1145 fn. 2.) The purpose of this requirement is to identify inconsistencies that the lead agency should address and to allow the agency an opportunity to modify a project to avoid any inconsistencies. (*See Orinda Ass’n v. Board of Supervisors* (1986) 182 Cal.App.3d 1145, 1169.) A proposed project’s inconsistency with an applicable general plan may indicate that the project has a significant environmental impact. (*See Lighthouse Field Beach Rescue v. City of Santa Cruz* (2005) 131 Cal.App.4th 1170.)

Here, the EIR stated that “[t]he objectives, principles, and implementation strategies of the Plan are founded, in part, upon the policy direction of the Housing Element [of the General Plan], particularly with respect to provision of affordable housing, and do not present a potential conflict with those policies. (Exh. 1 at p. III-10.) One Vassar disagrees with this conclusion. The Plan does not achieve the housing goals set forth in the Housing Element.

The Housing Element recognizes that the City’s “share of the regional housing need for 2015 through 2022 has been pegged at 28,870 new units, with almost 60% to be affordable.” (Exh. 8, Preface; Part II at pp. 2-3.) Moreover, “[f]or the RHNA period covering 2015 through 2022, ABAG has projected that at least 38% of new housing demands for San Francisco will be from very low and low income households (households earning under 80% of area median income), and another 22% of new housing demands to be affordable to households of moderate means (earning between 80% and 120% of area median income).” (SF Planning Code, § 103(b)(4).) “[I]n the current 2015-2022 Housing Element period San Francisco must plan for the capacity for roughly 28,870 new units, 57% of which should be suitable for housing for the extremely low, very low, low and moderate income households to meet its share of the region’s projected housing demand.” (*Id.* at (b)(5); *see also* Exh. 8, Part II at pp. 2-3.)

Here, the EIR fails to discuss the inconsistency between the Central SoMa Plan’s goal for affordable housing of 33% of new units and the Housing Element’s recognition that 57% of new housing units should be affordable citywide. (SF Planning Code, § 103(b)(5).) This inconsistency indicates that the project has a significant environmental impact. (*See Lighthouse*, 131 Cal.App.4th 1170.) The environmental impacts that will result from this inconsistency are, as previously discussed, impacts on transit, traffic, and air quality. Indeed, as the City has recognized, there is an environmental need “to increase housing near jobs, reduce urban sprawl, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” (Exh. 8, Preface.) By failing to address the plan’s inconsistencies with the Housing Element of the General Plan, the EIR violates CEQA. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15215(d).)

As such, the Board should reverse the Commission’s certification of the EIR on grounds that it failed to consider a higher housing density alternative to the Central SoMa Plan, which is inconsistent with the Housing Element of General Plan in violation of CEQA.

**3. By Failing To Discuss Inconsistencies Between The HSD Ordinance, Which Disincentives Affordable Housing For Buildings Taller Than 160 Feet, And The Housing Element Of The General Plan, Which Calls For 57% Affordable Housing Citywide, The EIR Violates CEQA**

The HSD proposed ordinance is inconsistent with the Housing Element of the General Plan because it creates a disincentive to construct affordable housing in projects taller than 160 feet; whereas the Housing Element calls for substantial increases in the construction of affordable housing. The EIR fails to discuss this inconsistency and, as such, it violates CEQA.<sup>2</sup>

The proposed ordinance provides a “streamlined, ministerial approval process” for eligible residential and mixed-use projects in the plan area. (Exh. 9, § 343(a).) However, projects over 160-feet tall are ineligible for this process unless they satisfy certain requirements. The project’s “principal use” must be “housing, where all such housing is restricted for a minimum of 55 years as affordable for ‘persons and families of low or moderate income,’ as defined in California Health and Safety Code Section 50093[.]” (*Id.*, (d)(4).) If the building is not 100% affordable housing, it will not receive

---

<sup>2</sup> In addition, the City violated both AB 73 and CEQA for failing to prepare and circulate a new EIR that analyzed potential environmental impacts of the HSD designation and allow for public review.

expedited review. Projects less than 160-feet tall would get expedited review if “no less than 10% of its dwelling units [are] units affordable to very low or low income families[.]” (*Id.*, (d)(7).)

This severe restriction on buildings taller than 160 feet disincentives construction of affordable housing units. A developer does not have a financial incentive to include 100% affordable housing units in a project that is taller than 160 feet just to obtain expedited ministerial review because that project is not a money-making endeavor. On the other hand, a developer has an incentive to include 10% affordable housing units in a project to receive expedited review because there is a cost benefit in saving time and eliminating the uncertainty of discretionary review. So, in effect, the proposed ordinance caps HSD projects at 160 feet in height. As previously discussed [*see supra* section 2], the Housing Element of the City’s General Plan requires the City to establish more affordable housing. (Exh. 8 at p. I.33.) By encouraging less, not more, affordable housing, the proposed ordinance conflicts with the City’s Housing Element. By failing to discuss the inconsistency between the HSD ordinance and the Housing Element, the EIR violates CEQA. Therefore, the Board should reverse the Commission’s certification of the EIR on this additional ground.

#### 4. Conclusion

The Board should reverse the Commission’s certification of the EIR. First, the EIR did not consider a project alternative with higher housing density as a means to substantially reduce significant environmental impacts on transit, traffic, and air quality. The Commission’s failure to do so violates CEQA. Second, the EIR violates CEQA because it failed to discuss inconsistencies between the Plan and the Housing Element; the Plan calls for 33% affordable housing and the Housing Element has a goal of 57% affordable housing citywide. And, third, the EIR violates CEQA because it did not discuss inconsistencies between HSD designation and the Housing Element. For these reasons, the Board should reverse the Commission’s certification of the EIR.

Respectfully submitted,



Phillip H. Babich  
Reed Smith LLP



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

RECEIVED  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SAN FRANCISCO  
2018 JUN 11 PM 4:05  
BY: *DW*

## Planning Commission Motion No. 20182

HEARING DATE: MAY 10, 2018

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
**415.558.6378**

Fax:  
**415.558.6409**

Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

*Case No.:* 2011.1356E  
*Project Address:* Central SoMa Plan  
*Zoning:* Various  
*Block/Lot:* Various  
*Project Sponsor:* San Francisco Planning Department  
Steve Wertheim-- (415) 558-6612  
[steve.wertheim@sfgov.org](mailto:steve.wertheim@sfgov.org)  
*Staff Contact:* Elizabeth White-- (415) 575-6813  
[elizabeth.white@sfgov.org](mailto:elizabeth.white@sfgov.org)

### ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE CERTIFICATION OF A FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED CENTRAL SOMA PLAN.

MOVED, that the San Francisco Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") hereby CERTIFIES the final Environmental Impact Report identified as Case No. 2011.1356E, the "Central SoMa Plan" (hereinafter "Project"), based upon the following findings:

1. The City and County of San Francisco, acting through the Planning Department (hereinafter "Department") fulfilled all procedural requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Cal. Pub. Res. Code section 21000 *et seq.*, hereinafter "CEQA"), the State CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Admin. Code Title 14, section 15000 *et seq.*, hereinafter "CEQA Guidelines") and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code (hereinafter "Chapter 31").
  - A. The Department determined that an Environmental Impact Report (hereinafter "EIR") was required and provided public notice of that determination by publication in a newspaper of general circulation on April 24, 2013.
  - B. The Department held a public scoping meeting on May 15, 2013 in order to solicit public comment on the scope of the Project's environmental review.
  - C. On December 14, 2016, the Department published the Draft Environmental Impact Report (hereinafter "DEIR") and provided public notice in a newspaper of general circulation of the availability of the DEIR for public review and comment and of the date and time of the Planning Commission public hearing on the DEIR; this notice was mailed to the Department's list of persons requesting such notice.
  - D. On December 14, 2016, copies of the DEIR were mailed or otherwise delivered to a list of persons requesting it, to those noted on the distribution list in the DEIR, and to government agencies, the latter both directly and through the State Clearinghouse.



- E. Notice of Completion was filed with the State Secretary of Resources via the State Clearinghouse on December 14, 2016.
2. The Commission held a duly advertised public hearing on said DEIR on January 26, 2017 at which opportunity for public comment was given, and public comment was received on the DEIR. The period for acceptance of written comments ended on February 13, 2017.
  3. The Department prepared responses to comments on environmental issues received at the public hearing and in writing during the 60-day public review period, prepared revisions to the text of the DEIR in responses to comments received or based on additional information that became available during the public review period, and corrected errors in the DEIR. This material was presented in the Responses to Comments document, published on March 28, 2018, distributed to the Commission and all parties who commented on the DEIR, and made available to others upon request at the Department.
  4. A Final Environmental Impact Report (hereinafter "FEIR") has been prepared by the Department, consisting of the DEIR, any consultations and comments received during the review process, any additional information that became available, and the Responses to Comments document all as required by law.
  5. Project EIR files have been made available for review by the Commission and the public. These files are available for public review at the Department at 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, and are part of the record before the Commission.
  6. On May 10, 2018, the Commission reviewed and considered the information contained in the FEIR and hereby does find that the contents of said report and the procedures through which the FEIR was prepared, publicized, and reviewed comply with the provisions of CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code.
  7. The project sponsor has indicated that the presently preferred alternative is the Central SoMa Plan.
  8. The Planning Commission hereby does find that the FEIR concerning File No. 2011.1356E: Central SoMa Plan reflects the independent judgement and analysis of the City and County of San Francisco, is adequate, accurate and objective, and that the Responses to Comments document and the errata dated April 5, 2018 and May 9, 2018 contains no significant revisions to the DEIR that would require recirculation of the document pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15088.5, and hereby does CERTIFY THE COMPLETION of said FEIR in compliance with CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code.
  9. The Commission, in certifying the completion of said FEIR, hereby does find that the project described in the Environmental Impact Report:
    - A. Will result in the following significant and unavoidable project-specific environmental impacts, which cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance:

- a. Central SoMa Plan development, including proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating and environmental effect. Specifically, the Plan could result in traffic noise along Howard Street (under the two-way option for Howard and Folsom streets) that exceeds the noise standards in the General Plan's Environmental Protection Element.
- b. Central SoMa Plan development would result in the demolition or substantial alteration of individually identified historic architectural resources and/or contributors to a historic district or conservation district, including as-yet unidentified resources, a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5.
- c. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in a substantial increase in transit demand that would not be accommodated by local transit capacity, and would cause a substantial increase in delays resulting in adverse impacts on local and regional transit routes.
- d. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in crosswalk overcrowding at the following intersections:
  - i. Third/Mission
  - ii. Fourth/Mission
  - iii. Fourth/Townsend
- e. Central SoMa Plan development would result in an increased demand for on-street commercial and passenger loading and a reduction in on-street loading supply such that the loading demand during the peak hour of loading activities would not be accommodated within on-street loading supply, would impact existing passenger loading/unloading zones, and may create hazardous conditions or significant delay that may affect transit, other vehicles, bicycles, or pedestrians.
- f. Construction activities associated with Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in substantial interference with pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicle circulation and accessibility to adjoining areas, and would result in potentially hazardous conditions.
- g. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes, would generate noise that would result in exposure of persons to noise levels in excess of standards in the *San Francisco General Plan* or Noise Ordinance (Article 29 of the *Police Code*), and would result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise above existing levels.

- h. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes and open space improvements, would result in construction activities in the Plan Area that could expose persons to substantial temporary or periodic increase in noise levels substantially in excess of ambient levels.
  - i. The operation of subsequent individual development projects in the Central SoMa Plan Area and the proposed street network changes (but not the proposed open space improvements) would violate an air quality standard, contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, and/or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.
  - j. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes, would result in operational emissions of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and toxic air contaminants that would result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
  - k. Subsequent future development under the Plan could alter wind in a manner that substantially affects public areas.
- B. Will contribute considerably to the following cumulative environmental impacts, which cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance:
- a. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative land use impact. Specifically, one-way and two-way options for Folsom and Howard Streets could make a considerable contribution to cumulative traffic noise levels, which would exceed the noise standards in the General Plan's Environmental Protection Element.
  - b. Central SoMa Plan development would contribute considerably to significant cumulative historical resources impacts because the Plan could result in demolition and/or alteration of historical resources.
  - c. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative transit impacts on local and regional transit providers.
  - d. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative pedestrian impacts.
  - e. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative loading impacts.

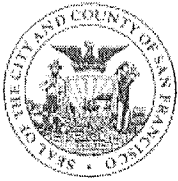
- f. Central SoMa development, including the proposed street network changes and open space improvements, would result in cumulative noise impacts.
- g. Central SoMa development, including the proposed street network changes, but not open space improvements, would contribute considerably to criteria air pollutant impacts under cumulative 2040 conditions.
- h. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes but not open space improvements, would result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial levels of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and toxic air contaminants under 2040 cumulative conditions.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Motion was ADOPTED by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of May 10, 2018.



Jonas P. Iorin  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Moore, Koppel, Johnson, Richards, Hillis, Melgar, and Fong  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None  
ADOPTED: May 10, 2018



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

---

## Planning Commission Resolution No. 20183 HEARING DATE MAY 10, 2018

*Project Name:* Central SoMa Plan – CEQA Findings  
*Record No.:* 2011.1356EMTZU  
*Staff Contact:* Steve Wertheim, Principal Planner, Citywide Planning  
(415) 558-6612; [steve.wertheim@sfgov.org](mailto:steve.wertheim@sfgov.org)

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
415.558.6378

Fax:  
415.558.6409

Planning  
Information:  
415.558.6377

ADOPTING ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS PURSUANT TO THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT, INCLUDING FINDINGS OF FACT, FINDINGS REGARDING SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS, EVALUATION OF MITIGATION MEASURES AND ALTERNATIVES, AND A STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO APPROVALS FOR THE CENTRAL SOUTH OF MARKET AREA PLAN (“CENTRAL SOMA PLAN”).

### PREAMBLE

The San Francisco Planning Department, the Lead Agency responsible for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), has undertaken a planning and environmental review process for the proposed Central SoMa Plan and related approval actions (“Project”) and provided appropriate public hearings before the Planning Commission.

The desire for a Central SoMa Plan began during the Eastern Neighborhoods planning process. In 2008 the City adopted the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan, including new land use controls and proposed community improvements for the eastern part of the South of Market neighborhood (SoMa), as well as the Central Waterfront, Mission, and Showplace Square/Potrero Hill neighborhoods. At that time, the City determined that the development potential of the industrially zoned part of East SoMa, coupled with the improved transit to be provided by the Central Subway, necessitated a subsequent, focused planning process that took into account the city’s growth needs and City and regional environmental goals. The Central SoMa Plan is the result of that subsequent process.

The Western SoMa Area Plan, adopted in 2013, also explicitly recognized the need to increase development capacity near transit in Objective 1.5, which states that the City should “Support continued evaluation of land uses near major transit infrastructure in recognition of citywide and regional sustainable growth needs.” The explanatory text in Objective 1.5 concludes that “The City must continue evaluating how it can best meet citywide and regional objectives to direct growth to transit-oriented locations and whether current controls are meeting identified needs.”

The Objective's implementing Policy 1.5.1 states that the City should "Continue to explore and re-examine land use controls east of 6th Street, including as part of any future evaluation along the 4th Street corridor." The Central SoMa Plan is intended to fulfill the Western SoMa Plan's Objective 1.5 and Policy 1.5.1.

The process of creating the Central SoMa Plan began in 2011. Throughout the process, the Central SoMa Plan has been developed based on robust public input, including ten public open houses; ten public hearings at the Planning Commission; two public hearings at the Board of Supervisor's Land Use & Transportation Committee; additional hearings at the Historic Preservation Commission, Arts Commission, and Youth Commission; a "technical advisory committee" consisting of multiple City and regional agencies; a "storefront charrette" (during which the Planning Department set up shop in a retail space in the neighborhood to solicit community input on the formulation of the plan); two walking tours, led by community members; two community surveys; an online discussion board; meetings with over 30 neighborhoods groups and other community stakeholders; and thousands of individual meetings, phone calls, and emails with stakeholders.

The Central SoMa Plan Area runs from 2nd Street to 6th Street, Market Street to Townsend Street, exclusive of those areas that are part of the Downtown Plan that comprise much of the area north of Folsom Street. The vision of the Central SoMa Plan is to create a sustainable neighborhood by 2040, where the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Central SoMa Plan seeks to achieve sustainability in each of its aspects – social, economic, and environmental. The Plan's philosophy is to keep what is already successful about the neighborhood, and improve what is not. Utilizing the Plan's philosophy to achieve the Plan's vision will require implementing the following three strategies:

- Accommodate growth;
- Provide public benefits; and
- Respect and enhance neighborhood character.

Implementing the Plan's strategies will require addressing all the facets of a sustainable neighborhood. To do so, the Plan seeks to achieve eight Goals:

1. Accommodate a Substantial Amount of Jobs and Housing
2. Maintain the Diversity of Residents
3. Facilitate an Economically Diversified and Lively Jobs Center
4. Provide Safe and Convenient Transportation that Prioritizes Walking, Bicycling, and Transit
5. Offer an Abundance of Parks and Recreational Opportunities
6. Create an Environmentally Sustainable and Resilient Neighborhood
7. Preserve and Celebrate the Neighborhood's Cultural Heritage
8. Ensure that New Buildings Enhance the Character of the Neighborhood and the City.

The Plan would implement its vision, philosophy, and goals by:

- Accommodating development capacity for up to 33,000 jobs and 8,300 housing units by removing much of the area's industrially-protective zoning and increasing height limits on many of the area's parcels;
- Maintaining the diversity of residents by requiring that over 33% of new housing units are affordable to low- and moderate-income households and requiring that these new units are built in SoMa;
- Facilitating an economically diversified and lively jobs center by requiring most large sites to be jobs-oriented, by requiring production, distribution, and repair uses in many projects, and by allowing retail, hotels, and entertainment uses in much of the Plan Area;
- Providing safe and convenient transportation by funding capital projects that would improve conditions for people walking, bicycling, and taking transit;
- Offering an abundance of parks and recreational opportunities by funding the construction and improvement of parks and recreation centers in the area and requiring large non-residential projects to provide publicly-accessible open space;
- Creating an environmentally sustainable and resilient neighborhood by requiring green roofs and use of non-greenhouse gas energy sources, while funding projects to improve air quality, provide biodiversity, and help manage stormwater;
- Preserving and celebrating the neighborhood's cultural heritage by helping fund the rehabilitation and maintenance of historic buildings and funding social programs for the neighborhood's existing residents and organizations; and
- Ensuring that new buildings enhance the character of the neighborhood and the city by implementing design controls that would generally help protect the neighborhood's mid-rise character and street fabric, create a strong street wall, and facilitate innovative yet contextual architecture.

These core policies and supporting discussion have been incorporated into the Central SoMa Plan, which is proposed to be added as an Area Plan in the General Plan. The Central SoMa Plan and conforming amendments to the General Plan, together with proposed Planning Code, Administrative Code, and Zoning Map Amendments and an Implementation Document, provide a comprehensive set of policies and implementation programming to realize the vision of the Plan. The Implementation Document describes how the Plan's policies will be implemented, outlines public improvements, funding mechanisms, and interagency coordination that the City must pursue to implement the Plan, and provides controls for key development sites and key streets and design guidance for new development.

Since the Central SoMa Plan process began in 2011, the Planning Department has undertaken the environmental review process required by CEQA. Pursuant to and in accordance with the requirements of Section 21083.9 of the Public Resources Code and Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Department, as lead agency, published and circulated a Notice of Preparation ("NOP") on April 24, 2013, which notice solicited comments regarding the scope of the environmental impact report ("EIR") for the proposed project. The NOP and its 30-day public review comment period were advertised in a newspaper of general circulation in San Francisco and mailed to governmental agencies, organizations and persons interested in the potential

impacts of the proposed project. The Department held a public scoping meeting on May 15, 2013 at The Mendelson House, located at 737 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94107.

During the approximately 30-day public scoping period that ended on May 24, 2013, the Department accepted comments from agencies and interested parties that identified environmental issues that should be addressed in the EIR. Comments received during the scoping process were considered in preparation of the Draft EIR.

Pursuant to Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Department published an Initial Study on February 12, 2014 in order to focus the scope of the EIR. The Department made the Initial Study available for a 30-day public review period beginning on February 12, 2014 and ending on March 14, 2014. The Department considered the comments received on the Initial Study when preparing the Draft EIR.

The Department prepared the Draft EIR, which describes the Draft EIR Project and the environmental setting, analyzes potential impacts, identifies mitigation measures for impacts found to be significant or potentially significant, and evaluates alternatives to the Draft EIR Project. The Draft EIR assesses the potential construction and operational impacts of the Draft EIR Project on the environment, and the potential cumulative impacts associated with the Draft EIR Project in combination with other past, present, and future actions with potential for impacts on the same resources. The analysis of potential environmental impacts in the Draft EIR utilizes significance criteria that are based on the guidance prepared by Department's Environmental Planning Division regarding the environmental effects to be considered significant. The Environmental Planning Division's guidance is, in turn, based on CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, with some modifications.

The Department published a Draft EIR on December 14, 2016, and circulated the Draft EIR to local, state, and federal agencies and to interested organizations and individuals for public review. On December 14, 2016, the Department also distributed notices of availability of the Draft EIR; published notification of its availability in a newspaper of general circulation in San Francisco; posted the notice of availability at the San Francisco County Clerk's office; and posted notices at locations within the project area. The Commission held a public hearing on January 26, 2017, to solicit testimony on the Draft EIR during the public review period. A court reporter, present at the public hearing, transcribed the oral comments verbatim, and prepared written transcripts. The Department also received written comments on the Draft EIR, which were sent through mail, fax, hand delivery, or email. The Department accepted public comment on the Draft EIR until February 13, 2017.

The Department then prepared the Comments and Responses to Comments on Draft EIR document ("RTC"). The RTC document was published on March 28, 2018, and includes copies of all of the comments received on the Draft EIR and written responses to each comment. In addition to describing and analyzing the physical, environmental impacts of the revisions to the Project, the RTC document provided additional, updated information, clarification, and modifications on issues raised by commenters, as well as Planning Department staff-initiated text changes to the Draft EIR.



The Final Environmental Impact Report ("Final EIR"), which includes the Draft EIR, the RTC document, the errata dated May 3, 2018, the Appendices to the Draft EIR and RTC document, and all of the supporting information, has been reviewed and considered. The RTC documents and appendices and all supporting information do not add significant new information to the Draft EIR that would individually or collectively constitute significant new information within the meaning of Public Resources Code Section 21092.1 or CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 so as to require recirculation of the Final EIR (or any portion thereof) under CEQA. The RTC documents and appendices and all supporting information contain no information revealing (1) any new significant environmental impact that would result from the Project or from a new mitigation measure proposed to be implemented, (2) any substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified environmental impact, (3) any feasible project alternative or mitigation measure considerably different from others previously analyzed that would clearly lessen the environmental impacts of the Project, but that was rejected by the project sponsor, or (4) that the Draft EIR was so fundamentally and basically inadequate and conclusory in nature that meaningful public review and comment were precluded.

On May 10, 2018, by Motion No. 20182, the Commission reviewed and considered the Final EIR for the Project and found the contents of said report and the procedures through which the Final EIR was prepared, publicized, and reviewed complied with CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code.

On May 10, 2018, by Motion No. 20182, the Commission found that the Final EIR was adequate, accurate, and objective, that it reflected the independent analysis and judgment of the Department and the Planning Commission, and that the summary of comments and responses contained no significant revisions to the Draft EIR, and certified the completion of the Final EIR for the Project in compliance with CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, and Chapter 31.

The Planning Department prepared proposed Findings, as required by CEQA, regarding the alternatives, mitigation measures, and significant impacts analyzed in the Final EIR, and overriding considerations for approving the Project and a proposed mitigation monitoring and reporting program ("MMRP"), attached as Exhibit B, which material was made available to the public and this Planning Commission for the Planning Commission's review, consideration, and actions.

The Commission, in certifying the Final EIR, found that the Project described in the Final EIR:

- A. Will result in the following significant and unavoidable project-specific environmental impacts, which cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance:
  - a. Central SoMa Plan development, including proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating and environmental effect. Specifically, the Plan could result in traffic noise along Howard Street (under the two-way option

- for Howard and Folsom streets) that exceeds the noise standards in the General Plan's Environmental Protection Element.
- b. Central SoMa Plan development would result in the demolition or substantial alteration of individually identified historic architectural resources and/or contributors to a historic district or conservation district located in the Plan area, including as-yet unidentified resources, a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5.
  - c. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in a substantial increase in transit demand that would not be accommodated by local transit capacity, and would cause a substantial increase in delays resulting in adverse impacts on local and regional transit routes.
  - d. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in crosswalk overcrowding at the following intersections:
    - i. Third/Mission
    - ii. Fourth/Mission
    - iii. Fourth/Townsend
  - e. Central SoMa Plan development would result in an increased demand for on-street commercial and passenger loading and a reduction in on-street loading supply such that the loading demand during the peak hour of loading activities would not be accommodated within on-street loading supply, would impact existing passenger loading/unloading zones, and may create hazardous conditions or significant delay that may affect transit, other vehicles, bicycles, or pedestrians.
  - f. Construction activities associated with Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in substantial interference with pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicle circulation and accessibility to adjoining areas, and would result in potentially hazardous conditions.
  - g. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes, would generate noise that would result in exposure of persons to noise levels in excess of standards in the *San Francisco General Plan* or Noise Ordinance (Article 29 of the *Police Code*), and would result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise above existing levels.

- h. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes and open space improvements, would result in construction activities in the Plan Area that could expose persons to substantial temporary or periodic increase in noise levels substantially in excess of ambient levels.
  - i. The operation of subsequent individual development projects in the Central SoMa Plan Area and the proposed street network changes (but not the proposed open space improvements) would violate an air quality standard, contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, and/or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.
  - j. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes, would result in operational emissions of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and toxic air contaminants that would result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
  - k. Subsequent future development under the Plan could alter wind in a manner that substantially affects public areas.
- B. Will contribute considerably to the following cumulative environmental impacts, which cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance:
- a. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to a significant cumulative land use impact. Specifically, one-way and two-way options for Folsom and Howard Streets could make a considerable contribution to cumulative traffic noise levels, which would exceed the noise standards in the General Plan's Environmental Protection Element.
  - b. Central SoMa Plan development would contribute considerably to significant cumulative historical resources impacts because the Plan could result in demolition and/or alteration of historical resources.
  - c. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative transit impacts on local and regional transit providers.
  - d. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative pedestrian impacts.
  - e. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative loading impacts.

- f. Central SoMa development, including the proposed street network changes and open space improvements, would result in cumulative noise impacts.
- g. Central SoMa development, including the proposed street network changes, but not open space improvements, would contribute considerably to criteria air pollutant impacts under cumulative 2040 conditions.
- h. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes but not open space improvements, would result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial levels of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and toxic air contaminants under 2040 cumulative conditions.

The Planning Commission Secretary is the custodian of records for the Planning Department materials, located in the File for Case No. 2011.1356EMTZU, at 1650 Mission Street, Fourth Floor, San Francisco, California, 94103.

On May 10, 2018, the Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting on Case No. 2011.1356EMTZU to consider the various approvals necessary to implement the Project, including approvals of General Plan, Planning Code, Administrative Code, and Zoning Map Amendments, and approval of the Implementation Program. The Commission has heard and considered the testimony presented to it at the public hearing and has further considered written materials and oral testimony presented on behalf of the Project, the Planning Department staff, expert consultants, and other interested parties.

**MOVED**, that the Planning Commission has reviewed and considered the Final EIR and the entire record of this proceeding, including the comments and submissions made to the Commission and the Department's responses to those comments and submissions, and, based on substantial evidence, hereby adopts these Environmental Findings required by CEQA attached hereto as Exhibit A, including a Statement of Overriding Considerations and rejecting alternatives as infeasible, and adopts the MMRP, included as Exhibit B, as a condition of approval for each and all of the approval actions described above.

I hereby certify that the Planning Commission ADOPTED the foregoing Motion on May 10, 2018.



Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Hillis, Melgar, Fong, Johnson, Koppel, Moore, Richards  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None  
ADOPTED: May 10, 2018

# REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE, LLP

February 13, 2017

## Via E-mail and Messenger

Lisa M. Gibson  
Acting Environmental Review Officer  
San Francisco Planning Department  
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
[Lisa.Gibson@sfgov.org](mailto:Lisa.Gibson@sfgov.org)

**Re: Central SoMa Plan DEIR Comments – One Vassar Project**  
**Our File No.: 10009.01**

Dear Ms. Gibson:

Our office represents One Vassar, LLC (“**Project Sponsor**”), the developer of a proposed mixed-use office, hotel, and residential project comprised of multiple parcels located on the south side of Harrison Street between Second and Third Streets (the “**One Vassar Project**”) in the proposed Central SoMa Plan area.

This letter contains comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“**DEIR**”) for the Central SoMa Plan, published on December 14, 2016. The comments are arranged below by DEIR section and page number.

## Chapter III - Plans and Policies

| <b>Page:</b> | <b>Comment:</b>   |
|--------------|---|
| III-10       | <u>Urban Design Element</u> : Text provides that “In addition, several parcels north of the I-80 freeway and east of Fourth Street would be zoned to a maximum of 300-feet.” This should be changed to 350 feet, to be consistent with the proposed height increase map in Figure II-7. |

James A. Reuben | Andrew J. Junius | Kevin H. Rose | Daniel A. Frattin | John Kevlin  
Tuija I. Catalano | Jay F. Drake | Lindsay M. Petrone | Sheryl Reuben<sup>1</sup> | Thomas Tunny  
David Silverman | Melinda A. Sarjapur | Mark H. Loper | Jody Knight | Chloe V. Angelis  
Louis J. Sarmiento, Jr. | Corie A. Edwards | Jared Eigerman<sup>2,3</sup> | John McInerney III<sup>2</sup>

1. Also admitted in New York 2. Of Counsel 3. Also admitted in Massachusetts

**San Francisco Office**  
One Bush Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94104  
tel: 415-567-9000 | fax: 415-399-9480

**Oakland Office**  
827 Broadway, Suite 205, Oakland, CA 94607  
tel: 510-257-5589

[www.reubenlaw.com](http://www.reubenlaw.com)

Lisa Gibson  
 Acting Environmental Review Officer  
 San Francisco Planning Department  
 February 13, 2017  
 Page 2

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| III-20 | The discussion of anticipated Section 321 office allocations on this page should include the One Vassar projects' anticipated 421,000 gsf allocation, as reflected in the application filed with the Planning Department in April 2016. |
|--------|---|

**Chapter IV – Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures**

| Page:   | Comment:  |
|---------|---|
| IV-9    | The 400 Second Street project description should be amended to better reflect the full scope of the One Vassar project, as provided in the current environmental application. The project would merge multiple parcels on the south side of Harrison Street, retain one of the existing buildings (645 Harrison), demolish the remaining four structures, and construct two new buildings and an addition above the existing 645 Harrison structure. The project anticipates construction of two towers reaching heights of approximately 350, and an additional building reaching a height of approximately 200 feet. The project will result in the creation of a mid-block passage way connection Harrison and Perry Streets, improvement of the existing Vassar Place, and a new connection from Second Street to Vassar Place and Perry Street. The project would create approximately 380 dwelling units, 500 hotel rooms, and 535,000 gross square feet of office use. |
| IV.B-38 | This section states that the tallest new vertical elements (at parcels on Fourth Street at Townsend Street, Fourth Street at Brannan Street, and Harrison Street at Third Street) would partially obscure views of the Bay. Please ensure that the anticipated development of the Key Development Site #3 structures are incorporated within this discussion.   |
| IV.C-28 | <u>Table IV.C-4</u> . This section identifies 645 Harrison Street as a potential Article 10 Landmark. While the Project Sponsor acknowledges that the building is a historic resource under the California Environmental Quality Act, we do not believe the record includes sufficient facts or analysis to conclude that the building's architecture or cultural importance rises to the level of being considered a landmark building under Planning Code Article 10.   |

San Francisco Office  
 One Bush Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94104  
 tel: 415-567-9000 | fax: 415-399-9480

Oakland Office  
 827 Broadway, Suite 205, Oakland, CA 94607  
 tel: 510-257-5589

www.reubenlaw.com

**REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE** LLP

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| IV.C-55        | The first full paragraph on this page lists properties containing historic resources that may be affected by anticipated Plan area development. This list should include the existing structures at 400 Second Street and 665 Harrison.  |
| IV.D – General | The draft Central SoMa Plan has identified the potential for a transit-only lane on Harrison. In order to accommodate this transit-only lane, one traffic lane from each direction is proposed to be removed. However, the DEIR does not seem to address the additional lane width lost from the anticipated sidewalk widening proposed by the Plan. The DEIR should address the interaction of these two proposals and potential impacts on vehicular circulation along Harrison. |
| IV.D-68        | <u>Loading Impacts.</u> Given the scope of development proposed for the One Vassar Project, the DEIR should acknowledge a need for flexibility in loading access along the south side of Harrison Street and Perry Street. The One Vassar Project may include a lay-by located on Harrison Street, just west of the Hawthorn crosswalks to serve as a drop-off for the residential building.   |
| IV.H-38-39     | <u>Shadow on Plan-Proposed Open Spaces.</u> The One Vassar Project is anticipated to include a 45'-wide pedestrian alley between its residential and hotel buildings which may constitute privately-accessible public open space. This section should reflect the potential development of this pedestrian alley and note that permitted development on adjacent parcels would necessarily result in significant shadow to this area.  |

**General Comments**

| Page: | Comment:   |
|-------|--|
| N/A   | The DEIR should reflect any anticipated transportation, circulation, air quality, shadow, or construction-related impacts of the TJPA's current proposal to locate a bus storage facility on Lot 112 of Block 3763, adjacent to the One Vassar Project site. |

San Francisco Office  
 One Bush Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94104  
 tel: 415-567-9000 | fax: 415-399-9480

Oakland Office  
 827 Broadway, Suite 205, Oakland, CA 94607  
 tel: 510-257-5589

www.reubenlaw.com

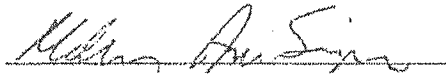
**REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE, LLP**

Lisa Gibson  
Acting Environmental Review Officer  
San Francisco Planning Department  
February 13, 2017  
Page 4

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

**REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE, LLP**



Melinda A. Sarjapur

**San Francisco Office**  
One Bush Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94104  
tel: 415-567-9000 | fax: 415-399-9480

**Oakland Office**  
827 Broadway, Suite 205, Oakland, CA 94607  
tel: 510-257-5589

**REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE, LLP**

[www.reubenlaw.com](http://www.reubenlaw.com)





# DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

## Central SoMa Plan

PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
CASE NO. 2011.1356E

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2013042070



SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING  
DEPARTMENT

|                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Draft EIR Publication Date:      | DECEMBER 14, 2016                     |
| Draft EIR Public Hearing Date:   | JANUARY 26, 2017                      |
| Draft EIR Public Comment Period: | DECEMBER 14, 2016 – FEBRUARY 13, 2017 |

*Written comments should be sent to:*

Lisa M. Gibson, Acting Environmental Review Officer | [lisa.gibson@sfgov.org](mailto:lisa.gibson@sfgov.org) |  
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400 | San Francisco, CA 94103

TABLE S-1 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS OF THE PLAN — IDENTIFIED IN THE EIR

| Impact   | Level of Significance Before Mitigation | Mitigation and Improvement Measures  | Level of Significance After Mitigation |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Impact TR-2:</b> Development under the Plan, including the proposed open space improvements and the street network changes, would not result in traffic hazards.</p>   | LTS                                     | None required.   | NA                                     |
| <p><b>Impact TR-3:</b> Development under the Plan, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in a substantial increase in transit demand that would not be accommodated by local transit capacity, and would cause a substantial increase in delays resulting in adverse impacts on local and regional transit routes.</p> | S                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mitigation Measure M-TR-3a: Transit Enhancements.</b> The following are City actions that would reduce local and regional transit impacts associated with implementation of the Central SoMa Plan and proposed street network changes.</li> <li>• <i>Enhanced Transit Funding.</i> To accommodate project transit demand, the City shall ensure that sufficient operating and capital funding is secured, including through the following measures:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish fee-based sources of revenue such as parking benefit districts.</li> <li>• Establish a congestion-charge scheme for downtown San Francisco, with all or a portion of the revenue collected going to support improved local and regional transit service on routes that serve Downtown and the Central SoMa Plan Area.</li> <li>• Seek grant funding for specific capital improvements from regional, State and federal sources.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Transit Corridor Improvement Review.</i> During the design phase, the SFMTA shall review each street network project that contains portions of Muni transit routes where significant transit delay impacts have been identified (routes 8 Bayshore, 8AX Bayshore Express, 8BX Bayshore Express, 10 Townsend, 14 Mission, 14R Mission Rapid, 27 Bryant, 30 Stockton, 45 Union-Stockton, and 47 Van Ness). Through this review, SFMTA shall incorporate feasible street network design modifications that would meet the performance criteria of maintaining accessible transit service, enhancing transit service times, and offsetting transit delay. Such features could include, but shall not be limited to, transit-only lanes, transit signal priority, queue jumps, stop consolidation, limited or express service, corner or sidewalk bulbs, and transit boarding islands, as determined by the SFMTA, to enhance transit service times and offset transit delay. Any subsequent changes to the street network designs shall be subject to a similar review process.</li> <li>• <i>Transit Accessibility.</i> To enhance transit accessibility, the Planning Department and the SFMTA shall establish a coordinated planning process to link land use planning and development in Central SoMa to transit and other alternative transportation mode planning. This shall be achieved through some or all of the following measures:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement recommendations of the <i>Better Streets Plan</i> that are designed to make the pedestrian environment safer and more comfortable for walk trips throughout the day, especially in areas where</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | SUM                                    |

LEGEND:

NI = No impact  
S = Significant

LTS = Less than significant or negligible impact; no mitigation required  
LTSM = Less than significant or negligible impact; after mitigation

SU = Significant and unavoidable adverse impact, no feasible mitigation  
SUM = Significant and unavoidable adverse impact, after mitigation

NA = Not Applicable

## III.A.4 Other General Plan Policies

### Air Quality Element

The goal of the Air Quality Element is to “Give high priority to air quality improvement in San Francisco to protect its population from adverse health and other impacts of air pollutants.” The Element seeks to achieve this goal through achieving adherence to air quality standards; improvements related to mobile sources; land use planning; public awareness; reduction of dust; and energy conservation. Among the key policies in the Air Quality Element is the following:

- Policy 3.5:** Continue existing growth management policies in the city and give consideration to the overall air quality impacts of new development including its impact on the local and regional transportation system in the permit review process. Ensure that growth will not outpace improvements to transit or the circulation system.

The Air Quality Element further contains a policy to exercise air quality modeling in building design for sensitive land uses to protect residents; this is implemented in *Health Code* Article 38 and further addressed in Section IV.F, Air Quality (Air Objective 3, Policy 3.7). As described in Section IV.D, Transportation and Circulation, growth pursuant to the Plan would result in Muni ridership that would exceed Muni’s capacity utilization standard on one corridor crossing the southeast screenline, as well as on two corridors crossing Plan-specific cordon lines. As described in Chapter II, Project Description, the Plan would also result in transit delay on a number of Muni lines, due to increased congestion. On the other hand, the Plan would include a number of street network changes, such as dedicated transit lanes and new boarding islands, which would improve transit operations compared to conditions without the Plan. The Plan also would encourage growth along transit lines and would promote other modes of travel. Moreover, it is arguably the case that increased development adjacent and near to a rich variety of transit options and in proximity to other uses, as would occur in the Plan Area with implementation of the Plan, would result in lesser vehicle emissions per job and per housing unit than would be the case for a comparable amount of new development in a part of the Bay Area that is less well-served by transit and has less variety of land uses. This is borne out by the fact that the Plan would result in a decrease in automobile travel, as a percentage of all trips and would also result in a decrease in vehicle miles traveled per resident and per job compared to the regional average vehicle miles traveled. As described in Chapter II, Project Description, the Plan would also improve travel conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists through street network changes that would add mid-block crosswalks at a number of locations, prohibit new curb cuts on many block faces, and create new bicycle lanes.

Compatibility of the Plan with objectives and policies in the Air Quality Element will be considered by decision-makers as part of their decision whether to approve or disapprove the Plan. However, based on the above, the Plan appears to be substantially consistent with the overarching goals and principles of the Air Quality Element, in that it would achieve growth with lesser air quality impacts than a comparable degree of growth in an area less well-served by transit.

### Housing Element

The 2014 Housing Element is a component of the *General Plan* and establishes the City’s overall housing policies. California State Housing Element law (*California Government Code* Sections 65580 et seq.) requires local

jurisdictions to adequately plan for and address the housing needs of all segments of its population in order to attain the region's share of projected statewide housing goals. This law requires local governments to plan for their existing and projected housing needs by facilitating the improvement and development of housing and removing constraints on development opportunities. San Francisco's 2014 Housing Element was required to plan for an existing and projected housing need of 28,869 new dwelling units.

The objectives, principles, and implementation strategies of the Plan are founded, in part, upon the policy direction of the Housing Element, particularly with respect to provision of affordable housing, and do not present a potential conflict with those policies. The rezoning of the Plan Area would remove restrictions on residential development in some parts of the Plan Area and allow for increased residential development potential through changes in allowable building heights. Further, where the Plan would remove restrictions to residential development, the Plan also includes policies that propose to increase the percentage of affordable housing requirements imposed on new residential development, thereby expanding the amount of affordable housing in the area, or providing additional fees for affordable housing to the city. Although the Plan's emphasis is on accommodating employment uses, the more flexible zoning proposed throughout the Plan Area would allow residential development in many locations where it is now prohibited, with commensurately higher levels of affordable housing production or funding than is now achievable.

Therefore, no inconsistencies have been identified and Plan implementation would not conflict with the objectives and policies of the Housing Element.

## Urban Design Element

The Urban Design Element is concerned with the physical character and environment of the city with respect to development and preservation. The Urban Design Element addresses issues related to City Pattern, Conservation, Major New Development and Neighborhood Environment. Objective 3 of the Urban Design Element, "Moderation of major new development to complement the city pattern, the resources to be conserved, and the neighborhood environment," includes the following policies, among others:

- Policy 3.5:** Relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the city pattern and to the height and character of existing development; and
- Policy 3.6:** Relate the bulk of buildings to the prevailing scale of development to avoid an overwhelming or dominating appearance in new construction.

The Plan proposes to intensify development along and proximate to the new Central Subway line, currently under construction, including substantial increases in building heights at select locations—up to a maximum of 400 feet. In addition, several parcels north of the I-80 freeway and east of Fourth Street would be zoned to a maximum of 300 feet. While development in this area would not necessarily relate to the important attributes of the city pattern, it would function to reduce the visual prominence of the elevated freeway. As described in more detail in Section IV.B, Aesthetics, the Plan would not adversely affect public views. Therefore, no inconsistencies have been identified and the Plan would not conflict with the objectives and policies of the Urban Design Element.

## Overview

Plan's open space and street network improvements, this EIR considers the direct physical impacts of implementing these Plan components at a "project level" of review, unless otherwise noted.

TABLE IV-1 SUMMARY OF GROWTH PROJECTIONS

|                                       | Baseline (2010) | No Project (2040) | Central SoMa Plan (2040) |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Housing Units (Total)</b>          | 7,800           | 16,800            | 22,300                   |
| Change from Baseline                  | —               | 9,000             | 14,500                   |
| Change from No Project                | —               | —                 | 5,500                    |
| <b>Households (Total)<sup>a</sup></b> | 6,800           | 16,000            | 21,200                   |
| Change from Baseline                  | —               | 9,200             | 14,400                   |
| Change from No Project                | —               | —                 | 5,200                    |
| <b>Population (Total)<sup>b</sup></b> | 12,000          | 28,200            | 37,500                   |
| Change from Baseline                  | —               | 16,200            | 25,500 <sup>c</sup>      |
| Change from No Project                | —               | —                 | 9,300                    |
| <b>Employment (Jobs) (Total)</b>      | 45,600          | 72,800            | 109,200                  |
| Change from Baseline                  | —               | 27,200            | 63,600 <sup>c</sup>      |
| Change from No Project                | —               | —                 | 36,400                   |

SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department, 2016; Fehr & Peers, 2015.

## NOTES:

Numbers rounded to nearest 100; some columns and rows do not add due to rounding.

- Assumes an 87 percent occupancy rate for existing households (2010 Baseline) which is based on the 2010 Census Data and appears to reflect a large number of newly constructed but not yet occupied units. Assumes a 95 percent occupancy rate for all Plan Area households and existing households under future conditions in the remaining years.
- Assumes 1.77 persons per household.
- As described in Chapter VI, Alternatives, the Land Use Variant would result in about 10 percent fewer new housing units and about 4 percent more new employment than would the Plan in 2040.
- The 2016 Central SoMa Plan is contained entirely within the boundaries of the 2013 draft Plan Area. The Department analyzed projected growth in employment and residential uses for the 2013 draft Plan and determined that 95 to 97 percent of this projected growth is anticipated to occur in the 2016 draft Plan Area. Thus, the numbers presented in this table, are conservative (i.e., higher) and would not substantively alter the conclusions reached in this EIR. These modifications to the growth assumptions would not result in substantial or more severe physical impacts for topics evaluated in the Initial Study.

The EIR assumes that the amended land use regulations and policy programs associated with the Plan would apply to subsequent development projects, that if implemented could result in physical changes in the environment. Future changes in land uses would, thus, not be caused by Plan policies or zoning, but by subsequent development projects that could occur on individual sites within the Plan Area as a result of these policy and zoning changes. In parts of the Plan Area where amended regulations would result in increases to maximum building heights, this EIR anticipates subsequent development to be more likely to occur than without the Plan. This is because the regulatory changes and policies proposed by the Plan have been developed to incentivize subsequent development by expanding the types of land uses that may be permitted

# REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE, LLP

RECEIVED  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SAN FRANCISCO  
2018 JUN 11 PM 4:05  
BY          *mw*

February 13, 2017

## Via E-mail and Messenger

Lisa M. Gibson  
Acting Environmental Review Officer  
San Francisco Planning Department  
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
[Lisa.Gibson@sfgov.org](mailto:Lisa.Gibson@sfgov.org)

**Re: Central SoMa Plan DEIR Comments – One Vassar Project  
Our File No.: 10009.01**

Dear Ms. Gibson:

Our office represents One Vassar, LLC (“**Project Sponsor**”), the developer of a proposed mixed-use office, hotel, and residential project comprised of multiple parcels located on the south side of Harrison Street between Second and Third Streets (the “**One Vassar Project**”) in the proposed Central SoMa Plan area.

This letter contains comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“**DEIR**”) for the Central SoMa Plan, published on December 14, 2016. The comments are arranged below by DEIR section and page number.

### Chapter III - Plans and Policies

| <b>Page:</b> | <b>Comment:</b>  |
|--------------|--|
| III-10       | <u>Urban Design Element:</u> Text provides that “In addition, several parcels north of the I-80 freeway and east of Fourth Street would be zoned to a maximum of 300-feet.” This should be changed to 350 feet, to be consistent with the proposed height increase map in Figure II-7. |

James A. Reuben | Andrew J. Junius | Kevin H. Rose | Daniel A. Frattin | John Kevlin  
Tuija I. Catalano | Jay F. Drake | Lindsay M. Petrone | Sheryl Reuben<sup>1</sup> | Thomas Tunny  
David Silverman | Melinda A. Sarjapur | Mark H. Loper | Jody Knight | Chloe V. Angelis  
Louis J. Sarmiento, Jr. | Corie A. Edwards | Jared Eigerman<sup>2,3</sup> | John McInerney III<sup>2</sup>

1. Also admitted in New York 2. Of Counsel 3. Also admitted in Massachusetts

**San Francisco Office**  
One Bush Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94104  
tel: 415-567-9000 | fax: 415-399-9480

**Oakland Office**  
827 Broadway, Suite 205, Oakland, CA 94607  
tel: 510-257-5589

[www.reubenlaw.com](http://www.reubenlaw.com)

Lisa Gibson  
 Acting Environmental Review Officer  
 San Francisco Planning Department  
 February 13, 2017  
 Page 2

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| III-20 | The discussion of anticipated Section 321 office allocations on this page should include the One Vassar projects' anticipated 421,000 gsf allocation, as reflected in the application filed with the Planning Department in April 2016. |
|--------|---|

**Chapter IV – Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures**

| Page:   | Comment:  |
|---------|---|
| IV-9    | The 400 Second Street project description should be amended to better reflect the full scope of the One Vassar project, as provided in the current environmental application. The project would merge multiple parcels on the south side of Harrison Street, retain one of the existing buildings (645 Harrison), demolish the remaining four structures, and construct two new buildings and an addition above the existing 645 Harrison structure. The project anticipates construction of two towers reaching heights of approximately 350, and an additional building reaching a height of approximately 200 feet. The project will result in the creation of a mid-block passage way connection Harrison and Perry Streets, improvement of the existing Vassar Place, and a new connection from Second Street to Vassar Place and Perry Street. The project would create approximately 380 dwelling units, 500 hotel rooms, and 535,000 gross square feet of office use. |
| IV.B-38 | This section states that the tallest new vertical elements (at parcels on Fourth Street at Townsend Street, Fourth Street at Brannan Street, and Harrison Street at Third Street) would partially obscure views of the Bay. Please ensure that the anticipated development of the Key Development Site #3 structures are incorporated within this discussion.   |
| IV.C-28 | <u>Table IV.C-4.</u> This section identifies 645 Harrison Street as a potential Article 10 Landmark. While the Project Sponsor acknowledges that the building is a historic resource under the California Environmental Quality Act, we do not believe the record includes sufficient facts or analysis to conclude that the building's architecture or cultural importance rises to the level of being considered a landmark building under Planning Code Article 10.  |

San Francisco Office  
 One Bush Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94104  
 tel: 415-567-9000 | fax: 415-399-9480

Oakland Office  
 827 Broadway, Suite 205, Oakland, CA 94607  
 tel: 510-257-5589

[www.reubenlaw.com](http://www.reubenlaw.com)

**REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE, LLP**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| IV.C-55        | The first full paragraph on this page lists properties containing historic resources that may be affected by anticipated Plan area development. This list should include the existing structures at 400 Second Street and 665 Harrison.  |
| IV.D – General | The draft Central SoMa Plan has identified the potential for a transit-only lane on Harrison. In order to accommodate this transit-only lane, one traffic lane from each direction is proposed to be removed. However, the DEIR does not seem to address the additional lane width lost from the anticipated sidewalk widening proposed by the Plan. The DEIR should address the interaction of these two proposals and potential impacts on vehicular circulation along Harrison. |
| IV.D-68        | <u>Loading Impacts.</u> Given the scope of development proposed for the One Vassar Project, the DEIR should acknowledge a need for flexibility in loading access along the south side of Harrison Street and Perry Street. The One Vassar Project may include a lay-by located on Harrison Street, just west of the Hawthorn crosswalks to serve as a drop-off for the residential building.   |
| IV.H-38-39     | <u>Shadow on Plan-Proposed Open Spaces.</u> The One Vassar Project is anticipated to include a 45'-wide pedestrian alley between its residential and hotel buildings which may constitute privately-accessible public open space. This section should reflect the potential development of this pedestrian alley and note that permitted development on adjacent parcels would necessarily result in significant shadow to this area.  |

**General Comments**

| Page: | Comment:   |
|-------|--|
| N/A   | The DEIR should reflect any anticipated transportation, circulation, air quality, shadow, or construction-related impacts of the TJPA's current proposal to locate a bus storage facility on Lot 112 of Block 3763, adjacent to the One Vassar Project site. |

San Francisco Office  
 One Bush Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94104  
 tel: 415-567-9000 | fax: 415-399-9480

Oakland Office  
 827 Broadway, Suite 205, Oakland, CA 94607  
 tel: 510-257-5589

www.reubenlaw.com

**REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE, LLP**

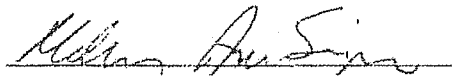


Lisa Gibson  
Acting Environmental Review Officer  
San Francisco Planning Department  
February 13, 2017  
Page 4

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

**REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE, LLP**



Melinda A. Sarjapur

**San Francisco Office**  
One Bush Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94104  
tel: 415-567-9000 | fax: 415-399-9480

**Oakland Office**  
827 Broadway, Suite 205, Oakland, CA 94607  
tel: 510-257-5589

**REUBEN, JUNIUS & ROSE, LLP**

[www.reubenlaw.com](http://www.reubenlaw.com)

# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING COMMISSION

## Meeting Minutes

Commission Chambers, Room 400  
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

**Thursday, May 10, 2018**  
**1:00 p.m.**  
**Regular Meeting**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards

**THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY PRESIDENT HILLIS AT 1:06 PM**

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:** John Rahaim – Director of Planning, Doug Vu, David Lindsay, Rich Sucre, Seema Adina, Elizabeth White, Steve Wertheim, Paolo Ikezoe, Joshua Switzky, Jonas P. Ionin –Commission Secretary

**SPEAKER KEY:**

- + indicates a speaker in support of an item;
- indicates a speaker in opposition to an item; and
- = indicates a neutral speaker or a speaker who did not indicate support or opposition.

### **A. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS PROPOSED FOR CONTINUANCE**

The Commission will consider a request for continuance to a later date. The Commission may choose to continue the item to the date proposed below, to continue the item to another date, or to hear the item on this calendar.

1. 2009.1011DRP (L. HOAGLAND: (415) 575-6823)  
1863 MISSION STREET – east side of Mission Street between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets; Lot 033 in the Assessor's Block 3548 (District 9) – Request for **Discretionary Review** of Building Permit Application 2006.03.27.7548 within the NCT (Mission Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit) and 40-X and 65-X Height and Bulk Districts. The proposal includes the construction of a four- to seven-story, 37,441 sq. ft. mixed-use building with 37

**G. DISCRETIONARY REVIEW CALENDAR**

The Commission Discretionary Review Hearing Procedures provide for presentations by staff; followed by the DR requestor team; followed by public comment opposed to the project; followed by the project sponsor team; followed by public comment in support of the project. Please be advised that the DR requestor and project sponsor teams include: the DR requestor and sponsor or their designee, lawyers, architects, engineers, expeditors, and/or other advisors.

13. 2017-005392DRP (B. BENDIX: (415) 575-9114)  
3941 SACRAMENTO STREET – south side of Sacramento Street between Cherry Street and Arguello Boulevard; Lot 043 in the Assessor's Block 1015 (District 1) – Request for **Discretionary Review** of Building Permit Application 2017.05.09.6076 within a RH-2 (Residential House, Two-Family) Zoning District and 40-X Height and Bulk Districts. The proposal includes a two-story vertical addition with roof decks, horizontal additions at the front and rear, a new façade, and the creation of a second dwelling unit. This action constitutes the Approval Action for the project for the purposes of CEQA, pursuant to San Francisco Administrative Code Section 31.04(h).  
 Staff Analysis: Abbreviated Discretionary Review  
*Preliminary Recommendation: Do Not Take DR and Approve as Revised*

SPEAKERS: = David Lindsey – Staff report  
 - David Cincotta – DR presentation  
 - Vivian Kaufmann – DR presentation  
 + Melinda Sarjapur – Project presentation  
 ACTION: Did NOT Take DR and Approved as Proposed  
 AYES: Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards  
 DRA: 0590

**H. 2:30 P.M.**

Items listed here may not be considered prior to the time indicated above. It is provided as a courtesy to limit unnecessary wait times. Generally, the Commission adheres to the order of the Agenda. Therefore, the following item(s) will be considered at or after the time indicated.

- 14a. 2011.1356E (E. WHITE: (415) 575-6813)  
CENTRAL SOMA PLAN – **Certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report** – The Central South of Market (SoMa) Plan is a comprehensive plan for the area surrounding much of the southern portion of the Central Subway transit line. The Plan includes roughly 230 acres that comprise 17 city blocks, as well as the streets and thoroughfares that connect SoMa to its adjacent neighborhoods: Downtown, Mission Bay, Rincon Hill, and the Mission District. The Central SoMa Plan seeks to encourage and accommodate housing and employment growth by (1) removing land use restrictions to support a greater mix of uses while also emphasizing office uses in portions of the Plan Area; (2) amending height and bulk districts to allow for taller buildings; (3) modifying the system of streets and circulation within and adjacent to the Plan Area to meet the needs and goals of a dense, transit-oriented, mix-use district; and (4) creating new, and improving existing, open spaces.

**Please Note: The public hearing on the Draft EIR is closed. The public comment period for the Draft EIR ended on February 13, 2017. Public comment will be received when the item is called during the hearing. However, comments submitted may not be included in the Final EIR.**

*Preliminary Recommendation: Certify the Final EIR*

(Continued from Regular hearing on April 12, 2018)

- SPEAKERS:
- + Steve Wertheim – Staff presentation
  - = Elizabeth White – CEQA presentation
  - + Paolo Ikezoe – Housing sustainability district
  - + John Rahaim – Conclusion
  - + Moses Corrette – Support
  - = Ian Fergossi – Jobs housing imbalance, no public school
  - + Yi Wen – Biking and transit
  - Richard Drury – Mid-rise alternative defects in the EIR
  - + Steven Buss – More housing
  - + Todd David – Public schools
  - Sharon Sherburn-Zimmer – Disaster for tenant mass displacement
  - = Scott Feeney – Housing
  - = Laura Clark – Jobs and housing
  - + Crispy Luppino – Flower Market
  - Brittany Grey – Water
  - Ligia Montano – Gentrification
  - Tony Robles – Eviction, displacement
  - = Steve Vettel – Housing sustainability district
  - Speaker – 4 to 1 ratio of jobs and housing will cause more displacement
  - = Cynthia Gomez – Proactive steps to protect tenants
  - + Alex Lansberg – Jobs housing
  - Denise Louie – Decline in my quality of life environment
  - + Katherine Petrin – Old Mint feeling
  - = Brett Gladstone – TDR's
  - = Rohan Kattouw – Upzone the west side
  - + Corey Smith – Support
  - = Kevin Ortiz – Pro development, pro affordable housing
  - + John Kevlin – Technical issues
  - + Mike Grisso – Support
  - Joseph Smoot – Impact fees
  - Speaker – Filipino Cultural District
  - David Wu – Recommendation to protect existing community
  - Diane Ruiz – Gentrification inequality
  - Sue Hestor – Housing sustainability district – Notice
  - + Christine Linenbach – Thank you
  - Speaker – Tuolumne fire, water resources
  - = Andrew – PoPoS
  - + Joshua Switzky – Responses to questions
  - = Amy Chan – Responses to questions
- ACTION: Certified

AYES: Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards  
 MOTION: 20182

- 14b. 2011.1356E (S. WERTHEIM: (415) 558-6612)  
CENTRAL SOMA PLAN – The Planning Commission will consider adoption of **CEQA Findings** for actions in connection with the Central South of Market (SoMa) Area Plan, generally bounded on its western portion by 6th Street, on its eastern portion by 2nd Street, on its northern portion by the border of the Downtown Plan Area, and on its southern portion by Townsend Street. The CEQA Findings include a statement of overriding considerations; reasons for rejection of alternatives to the proposed Plan; and a mitigation monitoring program associated with the approval of the Central SoMa Plan. For more information on the Central SoMa Plan, go to <http://centralsoma.sfplanning.org>.  
*Preliminary Recommendation: Adopt Findings*  
 (Continued from Regular hearing on April 12, 2018)

SPEAKERS: Same as item 14a.  
 ACTION: Adopted Findings  
 AYES: Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards  
 RESOLUTION: 20183

- 14c. 2011.1356M (S. WERTHEIM: (415) 558-6612)  
CENTRAL SOMA PLAN – Pursuant to San Francisco Planning Code 340, the Planning Commission will consider **General Plan Amendments** to add the Central South of Market (SoMa) Area Plan, generally bounded on its western portion by 6th Street, on its eastern portion by 2nd Street, on its northern portion by the border of the Downtown Plan Area, and on its southern portion by Townsend Street; making conforming amendments to the Commerce and Industry Element, the Housing Element, the Urban Design Element, the Land Use Index, and the East SoMa and West SoMa Area Plans; affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and making environmental findings, including adopting a statement of overriding considerations, and findings of consistency with the General Plan and the eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1. For more information on the Central SoMa Plan, go to <http://centralsoma.sfplanning.org>.  
*Preliminary Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution Recommending Approval*  
 (Continued from Regular hearing on April 12, 2018)

SPEAKERS: Same as item 14a.  
 ACTION: Approved GPA Amendments  
 AYES: Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards  
 RESOLUTION: 20184

- 14d. 2011.1356T (S. WERTHEIM: (415) 558-6612)  
CENTRAL SOMA PLAN – ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE PLANNING CODE AND ADMINISTRATIVE CODE – Pursuant to San Francisco Planning Code 302, the Planning Commission will consider **Planning Code** and **Administrative Code Amendments** to give effect to the Central South of Market (SoMa) Area Plan, generally bounded on its western portion by 6th Street, on its eastern portion by 2nd Street, on its northern portion by the

border of the Downtown Plan Area, and on its southern portion by Townsend Street. The Planning Code amendments include adding Sections 128.1, 132.4, 175.1, 249.78, 263.32, 263.33, 263.34, 413.7, 432, 433, and 848; revising Sections 102, 124, 134, 135, 135.3, 138, 140, 145.1, 145.4, 151.1, 152, 152.1, 153, 155, 163, 169.3, 181, 182, 201, 206.4, 207.5, 208, 211.2, 249.36, 249.40, 249.45, 260, 261.1, 270, 270.2, 303.1, 304, 307, 329, 401, 411A.3, 413.10, 415.3, 415.5, 415.7, 417.5, 419, 419.6, 423.1, 423.2, 423.3, 423.5, 426, 427, 429.2, 603, 608.1, 802.1, 802.4, 803.3, 803.4, 803.5, 803.9, 809, 813, 825, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 890.37, 890.116, 890.124; and deleting Sections 263.11, 425, 802.5, 803.8, 815, 816, 817, and 818. The Administrative Code amendments include revising Chapter 35. The Planning Commission will also consider affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; making approval findings under the California Environmental Quality Act, including adopting a statement of overriding considerations; and making findings of consistency with the General Plan and the eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1, and findings of public necessity, convenience, and welfare under Planning Code Section 302. For more information on the Central SoMa Plan, go to <http://centralsoma.sfplanning.org>.

*Preliminary Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution Recommending Approval with Modifications*  
(Continued from Regular hearing on April 12, 2018)

SPEAKERS: Same as item 14a.  
ACTION: Adopted a Recommendation for Approval with Modifications  
AYES: Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards  
RESOLUTION: 20185

- 14e. 2011.1356T (S. WERTHEIM: (415) 558-6612)  
CENTRAL SOMA COMMUNITY FACILITIES DISTRICT – Proposed **Planning Code Amendment** regarding a Community Facilities District in Central SoMa. Consideration of a proposed Ordinance adopting the Community Facilities District for the Central SoMa Plan; making approval findings under the California Environmental Quality Act, including adopting a statement of overriding considerations; and making findings of consistency with the General Plan and the eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1, and findings of public necessity, convenience, and welfare under Planning Code Section 302.  
*Preliminary Recommendation: Recommend Board of Supervisors Consideration*  
(Continued from Regular hearing on April 26, 2018)

SPEAKERS: Same as item 14a.  
ACTION: Adopted a Recommendation for BoS Consideration  
AYES: Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards  
RESOLUTION: 20185

- 14f. 2011.1356Z (S. WERTHEIM: (415) 558-6612)  
CENTRAL SOMA PLAN – Pursuant to San Francisco Planning Code 302, the Planning Commission will consider **Zoning Map Amendments**, to create the Central South of Market (SoMa) Special Use District and make other amendments to the Height and Bulk District Maps and Zoning Use District Maps consistent with the Central SoMa Area Plan, encompassing an area generally bounded on its western portion by 6th Street, on its eastern portion by 2nd Street, on its northern portion by the border of the Downtown Plan

Area, and on its southern portion by Townsend Street. The Zoning Map is proposed include amendments to Sheets ZN01, ZN08, HT01, HT08, SU01, and SU08 affecting all or part of the following Assessor's Blocks: 3725, 3732, 3733, 3750-3753, 3762, 3763, 3775-3778, 3785-3788; The Planning Commission will also consider affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and making findings of consistency with the General Plan and the eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1. For more information on the Central SoMa Plan, go to <http://centralsoma.sfplanning.org>.

*Preliminary Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution Recommending Approval*  
(Continued from Regular hearing on April 12, 2018)

SPEAKERS: Same as item 14a.  
ACTION: Approved  
AYES: Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards  
RESOLUTION: 20186

14g. 2011.1356U (S. WERTHEIM: (415) 558-6612)

CENTRAL SOMA PLAN – ADOPTION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM – The Planning Commission will consider adopting the **Implementation Program** to guide implementation of the Central South of Market (SoMa) Area Plan, generally bounded on its western portion by 6th Street, on its eastern portion by 2nd Street, on its northern portion by the border of the Downtown Plan Area, and on its southern portion by Townsend Street. The Implementation Program document includes five parts: 1) An "Implementation Matrix" document conveying how each of the Plan's policies would be implemented, including implementation measures, mechanism, timelines, and lead agencies, 2) A "Public Benefits Program" document containing the Plan's public benefits package, including a description of the range of infrastructure and services that will serve new growth anticipated under the Plan, a summary of how those benefits will be funded, and a description of how this program will be administered and monitored, 3) A "Guide to Urban Design" document containing design guidance that is specific to Central SoMa in a way that complements and supplements the requirements of the Planning Code and citywide Urban Design Guidelines, 4) A "Key Development Sites Guidelines" document that includes greater direction than available in the Planning Code to the development of the Plan Area's large, underutilized development opportunity sites, in an effort to maximize public benefits and design quality, and 5) A "Key Streets Guidelines" document that includes greater policy direction for each of the major streets in the Plan Area.

For more information on the Central SoMa Plan, go to <http://centralsoma.sfplanning.org>.

*Preliminary Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution Recommending Approval*  
(Continued from Regular hearing on April 12, 2018)

SPEAKERS: Same as item 14a.  
ACTION: Adopted a Recommendation for Approval  
AYES: Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards  
RESOLUTION: 20187

14h. 2018-004477PCA (P. IKEZOE: (415) 575-9137)

**CENTRAL SOMA HOUSING SUSTAINABILITY DISTRICT – Planning Code and Business and Tax Regulations Code Amendments** to create the Central South of Market Housing Sustainability District, encompassing an area generally bounded on its western portion by Sixth Street, on its eastern portion by Second Street, on its northern portion by the border of the Downtown Plan Area (an irregular border that generally jogs along Folsom, Howard and Stevenson Streets), and on its southern portion by Townsend Street, to provide a streamlined and ministerial approval process for certain housing projects meeting specific labor, on-site affordability, and other requirements; establishing a fee for applications for residential development permits within the District; making approval findings under the California Environmental Quality Act; making findings of public convenience, necessity, and welfare under Planning Code, Section 302; and making findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.

*Preliminary Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution Recommending Approval*

(Continued from Regular hearing on April 26, 2018)

- SPEAKERS: Same as item 14a.
- ACTION: Adopted a Recommendation for Approval with Modifications
- AYES: Fong, Hillis, Johnson, Koppel, Melgar, Moore, Richards
- RESOLUTION: 20188

ADJOURNMENT 8:54 PM

ADOPTED MAY 24, 2018





# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

---

## Central SoMa Plan Adoption Packet Table of Contents

HEARING DATE: MAY 10, 2018

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
415.558.6378

Fax:  
415.558.6409

Planning  
Information:  
415.558.6377

*Project Name:* Central SoMa Plan Amendments to the General Plan,  
Planning Code, Administrative Code, and Zoning Maps, and  
Implementation Program  
*Date:* May 3, 2018  
*Record Number:* 2011.1356EMTZU  
*Staff Contact:* Steve Wertheim, Principal Planner, Citywide Planning  
(415) 558-6612; [steve.wertheim@sfgov.org](mailto:steve.wertheim@sfgov.org)

### Executive Summary Memo

#### I. CEQA Findings – E Case

- I.1 – CEQA Findings Case Report
- I.2 – CEQA Findings Draft Motion
  - A – CEQA Findings
  - B – Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

#### II. General Plan Amendments – M Case

- II.1 – General Plan Amendments Case Report
- II.2 – General Plan Amendments Draft Resolution
- II.3 – General Plan Amendments Draft Ordinance
- II.4 – Central SoMa Plan
- II.5 – Maps of the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan Areas
- II.6 – Changes to the Central SoMa Plan Amendments Draft Ordinance since Initiation

#### III. Planning Code and Administrative Code Amendments – T Case

- III.1 – Planning Code and Administrative Code Amendments Case Report
- III.2 – Planning Code and Administrative Code Amendments Draft Resolution
- III.3 – Planning Code and Administrative Code Amendments Draft Ordinance
- III.4 – Summary of Planning Code and Administrative Code Amendments
- III.5 – Changes to the Planning Code and Administrative Code Amendments Draft Ordinance since Introduction
- III.6 – Planning Code and Administrative Code – Issues for Consideration

**I. CEQA FINDINGS -  
E CASE**

**EXHIBIT I.2 -  
CEQA FINDINGS  
DRAFT MOTION**



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

---

## Planning Commission Draft Motion No. XXXXX

HEARING DATE MAY 10, 2018

*Project Name:* Central SoMa Plan – CEQA Findings  
*Date:* May 3, 2018  
*Record No.:* 2011.1356EMTZU  
*Staff Contact:* Steve Wertheim, Principal Planner, Citywide Planning  
(415) 558-6612; [steve.wertheim@sfgov.org](mailto:steve.wertheim@sfgov.org)

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
415.558.6378

Fax:  
415.558.6409

Planning  
Information:  
415.558.6377

ADOPTING ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS PURSUANT TO THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT, INCLUDING FINDINGS OF FACT, FINDINGS REGARDING SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS, EVALUATION OF MITIGATION MEASURES AND ALTERNATIVES, AND A STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO APPROVALS FOR THE CENTRAL SOUTH OF MARKET AREA PLAN (“CENTRAL SOMA PLAN”).

### PREAMBLE

The San Francisco Planning Department, the Lead Agency responsible for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), has undertaken a planning and environmental review process for the proposed Central SoMa Plan and related approval actions (“Project”) and provided appropriate public hearings before the Planning Commission.

The desire for a Central SoMa Plan began during the Eastern Neighborhoods planning process. In 2008 the City adopted the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan, including new land use controls and proposed community improvements for the eastern part of the South of Market neighborhood (SoMa), as well as the Central Waterfront, Mission, and Showplace Square/Potrero Hill neighborhoods. At that time, the City determined that the development potential of the industrially zoned part of East SoMa, coupled with the improved transit to be provided by the Central Subway, necessitated a subsequent, focused planning process that took into account the city’s growth needs and City and regional environmental goals. The Central SoMa Plan is the result of that subsequent process.

The Western SoMa Area Plan, adopted in 2013, also explicitly recognized the need to increase development capacity near transit in Objective 1.5, which states that the City should “Support continued evaluation of land uses near major transit infrastructure in recognition of citywide and regional sustainable growth needs.” The explanatory text in Objective 1.5 concludes that “The

City must continue evaluating how it can best meet citywide and regional objectives to direct growth to transit-oriented locations and whether current controls are meeting identified needs." The Objective's implementing Policy 1.5.1 states that the City should "Continue to explore and re-examine land use controls east of 6th Street, including as part of any future evaluation along the 4th Street corridor." The Central SoMa Plan is intended to fulfill the Western SoMa Plan's Objective 1.5 and Policy 1.5.1.

The process of creating the Central SoMa Plan began in 2011. Throughout the process, the Central SoMa Plan has been developed based on robust public input, including ten public open houses; ten public hearings at the Planning Commission; two public hearings at the Board of Supervisor's Land Use & Transportation Committee; additional hearings at the Historic Preservation Commission, Arts Commission, and Youth Commission; a "technical advisory committee" consisting of multiple City and regional agencies; a "storefront charrette" (during which the Planning Department set up shop in a retail space in the neighborhood to solicit community input on the formulation of the plan); two walking tours, led by community members; two community surveys; an online discussion board; meetings with over 30 neighborhoods groups and other community stakeholders; and thousands of individual meetings, phone calls, and emails with stakeholders.

The Central SoMa Plan Area runs from 2nd Street to 6th Street, Market Street to Townsend Street, exclusive of those areas that are part of the Downtown Plan that comprise much of the area north of Folsom Street. The vision of the Central SoMa Plan is to create a sustainable neighborhood by 2040, where the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Central SoMa Plan seeks to achieve sustainability in each of its aspects – social, economic, and environmental. The Plan's philosophy is to keep what is already successful about the neighborhood, and improve what is not. Utilizing the Plan's philosophy to achieve the Plan's vision will require implementing the following three strategies:

- Accommodate growth;
- Provide public benefits; and
- Respect and enhance neighborhood character.

Implementing the Plan's strategies will require addressing all the facets of a sustainable neighborhood. To do so, the Plan seeks to achieve eight Goals:

1. Accommodate a Substantial Amount of Jobs and Housing
2. Maintain the Diversity of Residents
3. Facilitate an Economically Diversified and Lively Jobs Center
4. Provide Safe and Convenient Transportation that Prioritizes Walking, Bicycling, and Transit
5. Offer an Abundance of Parks and Recreational Opportunities
6. Create an Environmentally Sustainable and Resilient Neighborhood
7. Preserve and Celebrate the Neighborhood's Cultural Heritage
8. Ensure that New Buildings Enhance the Character of the Neighborhood and the City.

The Plan would implement its vision, philosophy, and goals by:

- Accommodating development capacity for up to 33,000 jobs and 8,300 housing units by removing much of the area's industrially-protective zoning and increasing height limits on many of the area's parcels;
- Maintaining the diversity of residents by requiring that over 33% of new housing units are affordable to low- and moderate-income households and requiring that these new units are built in SoMa;
- Facilitating an economically diversified and lively jobs center by requiring most large sites to be jobs-oriented, by requiring production, distribution, and repair uses in many projects, and by allowing retail, hotels, and entertainment uses in much of the Plan Area;
- Providing safe and convenient transportation by funding capital projects that would improve conditions for people walking, bicycling, and taking transit;
- Offering an abundance of parks and recreational opportunities by funding the construction and improvement of parks and recreation centers in the area and requiring large non-residential projects to provide publicly-accessible open space;
- Creating an environmentally sustainable and resilient neighborhood by requiring green roofs and use of non-greenhouse gas energy sources, while funding projects to improve air quality, provide biodiversity, and help manage stormwater;
- Preserving and celebrating the neighborhood's cultural heritage by helping fund the rehabilitation and maintenance of historic buildings and funding social programs for the neighborhood's existing residents and organizations; and
- Ensuring that new buildings enhance the character of the neighborhood and the city by implementing design controls that would generally help protect the neighborhood's mid-rise character and street fabric, create a strong street wall, and facilitate innovative yet contextual architecture.

These core policies and supporting discussion have been incorporated into the Central SoMa Plan, which is proposed to be added as an Area Plan in the General Plan. The Central SoMa Plan and conforming amendments to the General Plan, together with proposed Planning Code, Administrative Code, and Zoning Map Amendments and an Implementation Document, provide a comprehensive set of policies and implementation programming to realize the vision of the Plan. The Implementation Document describes how the Plan's policies will be implemented, outlines public improvements, funding mechanisms, and interagency coordination that the City must pursue to implement the Plan, and provides controls for key development sites and key streets and design guidance for new development.

Since the Central SoMa Plan process began in 2011, the Planning Department has undertaken the environmental review process required by CEQA. Pursuant to and in accordance with the requirements of Section 21083.9 of the Public Resources Code and Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Department, as lead agency, published and circulated a Notice of Preparation ("NOP") on April 24, 2013, which notice solicited comments regarding the scope of the environmental impact report ("EIR") for the proposed project. The NOP and its 30-day public review comment period were advertised in a newspaper of general circulation in San Francisco

and mailed to governmental agencies, organizations and persons interested in the potential impacts of the proposed project. The Department held a public scoping meeting on May 15, 2013 at The Mendelson House, located at 737 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94107.

During the approximately 30-day public scoping period that ended on May 24, 2013, the Department accepted comments from agencies and interested parties that identified environmental issues that should be addressed in the EIR. Comments received during the scoping process were considered in preparation of the Draft EIR.

Pursuant to Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Department published an Initial Study on February 12, 2014 in order to focus the scope of the EIR. The Department made the Initial Study available for a 30-day public review period beginning on February 12, 2014 and ending on March 14, 2014. The Department considered the comments received on the Initial Study when preparing the Draft EIR.

The Department prepared the Draft EIR, which describes the Draft EIR Project and the environmental setting, analyzes potential impacts, identifies mitigation measures for impacts found to be significant or potentially significant, and evaluates alternatives to the Draft EIR Project. The Draft EIR assesses the potential construction and operational impacts of the Draft EIR Project on the environment, and the potential cumulative impacts associated with the Draft EIR Project in combination with other past, present, and future actions with potential for impacts on the same resources. The analysis of potential environmental impacts in the Draft EIR utilizes significance criteria that are based on the guidance prepared by Department's Environmental Planning Division regarding the environmental effects to be considered significant. The Environmental Planning Division's guidance is, in turn, based on CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, with some modifications.

The Department published a Draft EIR on December 14, 2016, and circulated the Draft EIR to local, state, and federal agencies and to interested organizations and individuals for public review. On December 14, 2016, the Department also distributed notices of availability of the Draft EIR; published notification of its availability in a newspaper of general circulation in San Francisco; posted the notice of availability at the San Francisco County Clerk's office; and posted notices at locations within the project area. The Commission held a public hearing on January 26, 2017, to solicit testimony on the Draft EIR during the public review period. A court reporter, present at the public hearing, transcribed the oral comments verbatim, and prepared written transcripts. The Department also received written comments on the Draft EIR, which were sent through mail, fax, hand delivery, or email. The Department accepted public comment on the Draft EIR until February 13, 2017.

The Department then prepared the Comments and Responses to Comments on Draft EIR document ("RTC"). The RTC document was published on March 28, 2018, and includes copies of all of the comments received on the Draft EIR and written responses to each comment. In addition to describing and analyzing the physical, environmental impacts of the revisions to the Project, the RTC document provided additional, updated information, clarification, and

modifications on issues raised by commenters, as well as Planning Department staff-initiated text changes to the Draft EIR.

The Final Environmental Impact Report ("Final EIR"), which includes the Draft EIR, the RTC document, the errata dated May 3, 2018, the Appendices to the Draft EIR and RTC document, and all of the supporting information, has been reviewed and considered. The RTC documents and appendices and all supporting information do not add significant new information to the Draft EIR that would individually or collectively constitute significant new information within the meaning of Public Resources Code Section 21092.1 or CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 so as to require recirculation of the Final EIR (or any portion thereof) under CEQA. The RTC documents and appendices and all supporting information contain no information revealing (1) any new significant environmental impact that would result from the Project or from a new mitigation measure proposed to be implemented, (2) any substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified environmental impact, (3) any feasible project alternative or mitigation measure considerably different from others previously analyzed that would clearly lessen the environmental impacts of the Project, but that was rejected by the project sponsor, or (4) that the Draft EIR was so fundamentally and basically inadequate and conclusory in nature that meaningful public review and comment were precluded.

On May 10, 2018, by Motion No. \_\_\_\_\_, the Commission reviewed and considered the Final EIR for the Project and found the contents of said report and the procedures through which the Final EIR was prepared, publicized, and reviewed complied with CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code.

On May 10, 2018, by Motion No. \_\_\_\_\_, the Commission found that the Final EIR was adequate, accurate, and objective, that it reflected the independent analysis and judgment of the Department and the Planning Commission, and that the summary of comments and responses contained no significant revisions to the Draft EIR, and certified the completion of the Final EIR for the Project in compliance with CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, and Chapter 31.

The Planning Department prepared proposed Findings, as required by CEQA, regarding the alternatives, mitigation measures, and significant impacts analyzed in the Final EIR, and overriding considerations for approving the Project and a proposed mitigation monitoring and reporting program ("MMRP"), attached as Exhibit B, which material was made available to the public and this Planning Commission for the Planning Commission's review, consideration, and actions.

The Commission, in certifying the Final EIR, found that the Project described in the Final EIR:

- A. Will result in the following significant and unavoidable project-specific environmental impacts, which cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance:
  - a. Central SoMa Plan development, including proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for



the purpose of avoiding or mitigating and environmental effect. Specifically, the Plan could result in traffic noise along Howard Street (under the two-way option for Howard and Folsom streets) that exceeds the noise standards in the General Plan's Environmental Protection Element.

- b. Central SoMa Plan development would result in the demolition or substantial alteration of individually identified historic architectural resources and/or contributors to a historic district or conservation district located in the Plan area, including as-yet unidentified resources, a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5.
- c. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in a substantial increase in transit demand that would not be accommodated by local transit capacity, and would cause a substantial increase in delays resulting in adverse impacts on local and regional transit routes.
- d. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in crosswalk overcrowding at the following intersections:
  - i. Third/Mission
  - ii. Fourth/Mission
  - iii. Fourth/Townsend
- e. Central SoMa Plan development would result in an increased demand for on-street commercial and passenger loading and a reduction in on-street loading supply such that the loading demand during the peak hour of loading activities would not be accommodated within on-street loading supply, would impact existing passenger loading/unloading zones, and may create hazardous conditions or significant delay that may affect transit, other vehicles, bicycles, or pedestrians.
- f. Construction activities associated with Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in substantial interference with pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicle circulation and accessibility to adjoining areas, and would result in potentially hazardous conditions.
- g. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes, would generate noise that would result in exposure of persons to noise levels in excess of standards in the *San Francisco General Plan* or Noise Ordinance (Article

29 of the *Police Code*), and would result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise above existing levels.

- h. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes and open space improvements, would result in construction activities in the Plan Area that could expose persons to substantial temporary or periodic increase in noise levels substantially in excess of ambient levels.
  - i. The operation of subsequent individual development projects in the Central SoMa Plan Area and the proposed street network changes (but not the proposed open space improvements) would violate an air quality standard, contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, and/or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.
  - j. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes, would result in operational emissions of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and toxic air contaminants that would result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
  - k. Subsequent future development under the Plan could alter wind in a manner that substantially affects public areas.
- B. Will contribute considerably to the following cumulative environmental impacts, which cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance:
- a. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to a significant cumulative land use impact. Specifically, one-way and two-way options for Folsom and Howard Streets could make a considerable contribution to cumulative traffic noise levels, which would exceed the noise standards in the General Plan's Environmental Protection Element.
  - b. Central SoMa Plan development would contribute considerably to significant cumulative historical resources impacts because the Plan could result in demolition and/or alteration of historical resources.
  - c. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative transit impacts on local and regional transit providers.
  - d. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative pedestrian impacts.

- e. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would contribute considerably to significant cumulative loading impacts.
- f. Central SoMa development, including the proposed street network changes and open space improvements, would result in cumulative noise impacts.
- g. Central SoMa development, including the proposed street network changes, but not open space improvements, would contribute considerably to criteria air pollutant impacts under cumulative 2040 conditions.
- h. Central SoMa Plan development, including the proposed street network changes but not open space improvements, would result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial levels of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and toxic air contaminants under 2040 cumulative conditions.

The Planning Commission Secretary is the custodian of records for the Planning Department materials, located in the File for Case No. 2011.1356EMTZU, at 1650 Mission Street, Fourth Floor, San Francisco, California, 94103.

On May 10, 2018, the Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting on Case No. 2011.1356EMTZU to consider the various approvals necessary to implement the Project, including approvals of General Plan, Planning Code, Administrative Code, and Zoning Map Amendments, and approval of the Implementation Program. The Commission has heard and considered the testimony presented to it at the public hearing and has further considered written materials and oral testimony presented on behalf of the Project, the Planning Department staff, expert consultants, and other interested parties.

**MOVED**, that the Planning Commission has reviewed and considered the Final EIR and the entire record of this proceeding, including the comments and submissions made to the Commission and the Department's responses to those comments and submissions, and, based on substantial evidence, hereby adopts these Environmental Findings required by CEQA attached hereto as Exhibit A, including a Statement of Overriding Considerations and rejecting alternatives as infeasible, and adopts the MMRP, included as Exhibit B, as a condition of approval for each and all of the approval actions described above.

I hereby certify that the Planning Commission **ADOPTED** the foregoing Motion on May 10, 2018.

Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSENT:  
ADOPTED:

**EXHIBIT I.2A -  
CEQA FINDINGS**

adversely affected in the Plan Area with implementation of the Plan. Therefore, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable with mitigation.

## **IV.B.2 Impact C-CP-1**

**Impact C-CP-1: Development under the Plan, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the vicinity, could result in demolition and/or alteration of historic resources, thereby contributing considerably to significant cumulative historical resources impacts.**

The EIR finds that development under the Plan may contribute to the loss of individual historic resources and contributors to historic districts by encouraging demolition and alteration of such resources in the Plan Area. These impacts could combine with similar impacts in areas outside the Plan Area to result in significant cumulative impacts in the number of individually eligible historic resources within the SoMa neighborhood and cumulative effects to historic districts that overlap within the Plan Area and adjacent areas. The proposed Plan could contribute considerably to this impact, and several mitigation measures have been identified and analyzed that could mitigate this impact to less than significant, including **Mitigation Measures M-CP-1a through M-CP-1e**, as noted above. However, because it is uncertain whether or not these mitigation measures could reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable with mitigation.

## **IV.C Transportation and Circulation**

### **IV.C.1 Impact TR-3**

**Impact TR-3: Development under the Plan, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in a substantial increase in transit demand that would not be accommodated by local transit capacity, and would cause a substantial increase in delays resulting in adverse impacts on local and regional transit routes.**

Development associated with the Plan would generate 4,160 transit trips during the a.m. peak hour, and 4,430 transit trips during the p.m. peak hour. The EIR finds that development under the Plan, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in significant adverse transit impacts on Muni capacity and East Bay regional transit screenlines, and would result in transit delays for Muni, Golden Gate Transit, and SamTrans buses. The EIR identifies and analyzes **Mitigation Measures M-TR-3a: Transit Enhancements, M-TR-3b: Boarding Improvements, and M-TR-3c, Signalization and Intersection Restriping at Townsend/Fifth Streets** to address this impact. The EIR finds that even with implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts would not be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Implementation of Mitigation Measures M-TR-3a, M-TR-3b, and M-TR-3c would reduce the effect of increased ridership and could reduce the travel time impacts or mitigate them to less-than-significant levels. However, because it is not known how much additional funding would be generated for transit service as part of these mitigation measures, or whether SFMTA would provide additional service on the impacted routes to fully mitigate the Plan's impacts, the impacts remain significant and unavoidable with mitigation.

## IV.C.2 Impact TR-4

**Impact TR-4: Development under the Plan, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would not result in pedestrian safety hazards nor result in a substantial overcrowding on sidewalks or at corner locations, but would result in overcrowding at crosswalks.**

Development associated with the Plan would generate about 10,550 pedestrian trips (4,430 transit and 6,120 walk and other modes trips) during the p.m. peak hour. New development under the Plan would result in a substantial increase in pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle trips in Central SoMa, which could increase the potential for conflicts between modes. However, some of the development projects would include pedestrian improvements, as required under the *Better Streets Plan*, and ongoing City projects such as the Vision Zero effort focused on eliminating traffic deaths by 2024. The proposed street network changes include numerous improvements to the pedestrian network including sidewalk widening to meet the standards in the *Better Streets Plan* where possible, corner sidewalk extensions, pedestrian signal timing upgrades, signalized midblock pedestrian crossings, and opening currently closed crosswalks. Impacts of the Plan related to pedestrian safety hazards would be less than significant.

Implementation of the street network changes, in combination with the additional pedestrians generated by development under the Plan, would result in significant pedestrian LOS impacts at the west and east crosswalks at the intersections of Third/Mission and Fourth/Mission, and at the west crosswalks at the intersections of Fourth/Townsend and Fourth/King during the midday and/or p.m. peak hours. The EIR identifies and analyzes **Mitigation Measure M-TR-4: Upgrade Central SoMa Area Crosswalks**, to address this impact. The EIR finds that even with implementation of this mitigation measure, because the feasibility of the crosswalk widening beyond the current width is uncertain due to roadway or other physical constraints (e.g., presence of bus stops or platforms), the pedestrian impact at the crosswalks due to implementation of the Plan would remain significant and unavoidable with mitigation.

## IV.C.3 Impact TR-6

**Impact TR-6: Development under the Plan, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in an increased demand of on-street commercial and passenger loading and a reduction in on-street commercial loading supply such that the loading demand during the peak hour of loading activities would not be accommodated within on-street loading supply, would impact existing passenger loading/unloading zones, and may create hazardous conditions or significant delay that may affect transit, other vehicles, bicycles, or pedestrians.**

Implementation of the street network changes associated with the Plan would remove on-street commercial loading spaces and passenger loading/unloading zones on a number of streets either permanently or during peak periods. The EIR finds that development under the Plan, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would result in significant impacts on commercial vehicle loading/unloading activities and passenger loading/unloading activities.

### **IV.D.3 Impact C-NO-1**

**Impact C-NO-1: Development under the Plan, including the proposed street network changes and open space improvements, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, would result in cumulative noise impacts.**

Noise modeling was undertaken for 149 street segments to evaluate changes in traffic noise between 2040 conditions and each of the three development scenarios: (1) 2040 Cumulative + Growth Attributed to the Plan; (2) 2040 Cumulative + Growth Attributed to the Plan with Street Improvements (Folsom/Howard one-way); and (3) 2040 Cumulative + Growth Attributed to the Plan with Street Improvements (Folsom/Howard two-way). The results of the traffic noise modeling revealed that effects of Plan-generated and cumulative traffic growth would be relatively minimal overall.

Under the 2040 Cumulative + Growth Attributed to the Plan scenario, traffic noise increases would generally be less than three dBA. One street segment on Fifth Street between Bryant and Brannan Streets would experience a noise increase greater than three dBA; this would be a significant cumulative impact. However, the Plan contribution would be minimal (less than 0.5 dBA) and thus not a considerable contribution to the significant cumulative impact.

Under the 2040 Cumulative + Growth Attributed to the Plan with Street Improvements (Folsom/Howard one-way) scenario, a significant cumulative impact would occur on Fourth Street between Bryant and Brannan Streets and on Bryant Street east of Fourth Street. Under the 2040 Cumulative + Growth Attributed to the Plan with Street Improvements (Folsom/Howard two-way) scenario, significant cumulative impacts would occur on Howard Street west of Fifth Street, Fourth Street between Bryant and Brannan Streets, and on Bryant Street east of Fourth Street. Therefore, the Plan growth plus the street network changes with both one-way and two-way options for Folsom and Howard Streets would make a considerable contribution to cumulative significant traffic noise impacts. Therefore, this impact remains significant and unavoidable.

### **IV.E Air Quality**

**Impact AQ-3: Operation of subsequent individual development projects in the Plan Area and street network changes, but not proposed open space improvements, would violate an air quality standard, contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, and/or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard.**

Development of individual development projects within the Plan Area could generate vehicle trips and other operational emissions, such as emissions from natural gas combustion, landscape maintenance activities, and painting that would result in a significant increase in criteria air pollutants. With regard to proposed street network changes, these projects would include conversion of Howard and Folsom Streets to accommodate additional travel modes including bicycles and transit, reduction in travel lanes and installation of transit only lanes and bicycle facilities on Third Street and Fourth Street, creation of transit only lanes on Bryant Street and Harrison Street and minor reconfiguration to Brannan Street. Given the number of proposed street network changes, it is conservatively judged that the street network changes would result in significant criteria air pollutant emissions as a result of slower moving vehicle speeds, which would result in an increase in vehicle

emissions. The EIR identifies and analyzes **Mitigation Measures M-NO-1a: Transportation Demand Management for New Development Projects, M-AQ-3a: Education for Residential and Commercial Tenants Concerning Low-VOC Consumer Products, and M-AQ-3b: Reduce Operational Emissions**, to address this impact.

The EIR finds that implementation of these mitigation measures is required for future individual development projects in the Plan Area that would exceed BAAQMD screening criteria. However, without specific detail on the size and extent of these projects, it is not possible to estimate emissions or the effectiveness or feasibility of the mitigation measures. Additionally, local government has no authority over vehicle emissions standards, which are established by federal and state law. Existing emissions laws and regulations, including the federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy requirements and California's Clean Car (Pavley) Standards to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, would result in declining vehicle emissions over time. However, no feasible mitigation exists for criteria air pollutant emissions resulting from slower vehicle speeds (and increased idling times) that may occur as a result of the proposed street network changes. Therefore, this impact remains significant and unavoidable with mitigation. It should be noted that the identification of this significant impact does not preclude the finding of future less-than-significant impacts for subsequent projects that comply with applicable screening criteria or meet applicable thresholds of significance.

**Impact AQ-5: Development under the Plan, including proposed street network changes, would result in operational emissions of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and toxic air contaminants that would result in exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.**

The EIR finds that Plan traffic would incrementally expand the geographic extent of the Air Pollutant Exposure Zone (APEZ), adding to the APEZ all of the approximately 40 parcels north of the I-80 freeway that are currently outside the zone (these parcels are largely concentrated near Second and Folsom Streets and along Shipley Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets), and also adding to the APEZ a large number of parcels south of the freeway, including South Park. As a result of Plan-generated traffic, including the proposed street network changes, excess cancer risk within the APEZ would increase by as much as 226 in a million and PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations would increase by up to 4.54 µg/m<sup>3</sup> at individual receptor points, which substantially exceed the thresholds identified in the EIR. The EIR also finds that both existing and new stationary sources, as well as other non-permitted sources in the Plan Area, could result in potential health risks (primarily lifetime cancer risk) to sensitive receptors, which would be expected to consist mostly of persons living in residential projects developed in the Plan Area, particularly if these projects were to include sources of TACs. Among these sources would be diesel-powered emergency generators, which are generally required to be installed in buildings with occupiable floors above 75 feet in height. Finally, the EIR finds that indirect traffic generated by the Plan, as well as the reconfiguration of the street network in the Plan Area, would add and relocate vehicle emissions that would change the geographic extent and severity of the APEZ, significantly exacerbating existing localized air quality conditions. With Plan traffic, the additional parcels that would be added to the APEZ are not currently subject to *Health Code* Article 38; therefore, new sensitive use projects proposed on these lots would be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations resulting from Plan-generated traffic, which would result in a significant impact. The EIR identifies and analyzes **Mitigation Measure M-NO-1a: Transportation Demand Management for New Development Projects**, to address the impact associated with Plan-generated traffic. Additionally, the EIR identifies and analyzes **Mitigation Measures M-AQ-5a: Best Available Control Technology for Diesel Generators and Fire Pumps; M-AQ-5b: Siting of Uses that Emit**



associated with the Plan's street network changes, including widening sidewalks, creating new crosswalks, and improving existing crossings. Nor would it allow the City to provide protected bicycle lanes on many of the neighborhood's streets. Finally, the City would not facilitate transit enhancements in the neighborhood, such as transit-only lanes.

## **VI.A.6 Alternatives Considered but Rejected**

The TODCO Group submitted its TODCO Plan to the City for consideration in October 2016 after the draft Central SoMa Plan was revised in August 2016. All aspects of the October 2016 TODCO Plan were included and analyzed as the "Modified TODCO Plan" in the Alternatives Chapter of the Draft EIR, with the exception of the TODCO Plan's proposed height limits. The October 2016 TODCO Plan proposed changes in height limits at certain major development sites within the Central SoMa Plan Area that would be greater than that proposed for those same sites in the Central SoMa Plan. Specifically, under the TODCO Plan, the proposed 250-foot height limits at the Academy of Art Student Housing site and the Fourth and Harrison Streets site would be greater than the height limit for those sites proposed under the Central SoMa Plan (160 feet, and 240 feet, respectively). In addition, at the Second and Harrison Street site, the proposed height limits of 400 feet under the TODCO Plan would be greater than the 350-foot height limit for that site proposed under the Central SoMa Plan.

The TODCO Plan alternative was not selected because it could result in greater shadow and wind impacts than the Plan, the No Project Alternative, and the Reduced Heights Alternative. Specifically, given that the TODCO Plan proposes higher height limits on two parcels on Harrison Street as compared to the Plan, shadow effects on Yerba Buena Gardens, Alice Street Community Gardens, Jessie Square, Yerba Buena Lane, and Mint Plaza may be greater than under the Plan. These higher heights could also result in greater pedestrian-level winds.

Furthermore, this alternative would not avoid any of the significant and unavoidable effects associated with the Plan and would not meet several of the basic project objectives to the same extent that the Project would. Under this alternative, the capacity of the Plan Area to accommodate jobs and housing would be increased, but would be approximately 80% of the amount allowed by the Plan. By accommodating less growth in this high-demand area, this alternative would not alleviate the demand for housing or the pressure on rents to the same degree as the Plan. Increasing housing capacity is necessary to accommodate some of the City and region's substantial demand for growth in a transit-rich, walkable, and bike-able location.

## **SECTION VII**

---

### **Statement of Overriding Considerations**

Pursuant to CEQA Section 21081 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15093, the City hereby finds, after consideration of the Final EIR and the evidence in the record, that each of the specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological and other benefits of the Project as set forth below independently and collectively outweighs these significant and unavoidable impacts and is an overriding consideration warranting approval of the Project. Any one of the reasons for approval cited below is sufficient to justify approval of the Project. Thus, even if a court were to conclude that not every reason is supported by substantial evidence, this

determination is that each individual reason is sufficient. The specific reasons for this finding, based on substantial evidence in the record, constitute the following Statement of Overriding Considerations. The substantial evidence supporting the various benefits can be found in the Final EIR and the preceding findings, which are incorporated by reference into this Section, and in the documents found in the administrative record, as described in Section I.

On the basis of the above findings and the substantial evidence in the whole record of this proceeding, the Planning Commission specifically finds that there are significant benefits of the Project in spite of the unavoidable significant impacts. The Commission further finds that, as part of the process of obtaining project approval, all significant effects on the environment from implementation of the Project have been eliminated or substantially lessened where feasible. The Planning Commission acknowledges that if any of the mitigation measures identified in Exhibit B herein that fall within the authority of other City agencies are not adopted and implemented, the Project may result in other significant unavoidable impacts, in addition to those identified in Section IV, above. For these reasons the Planning Commission is adopting a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Furthermore, the Commission has determined that any remaining significant effects on the environment found to be unavoidable are acceptable due to the following specific overriding economic, technical, legal, social, and other considerations:

A. Central SoMa is a 230-acre area that sits adjacent to downtown, has excellent transit access, and contains a substantial amount of developable land. As such, the neighborhood is well positioned to accommodate needed employment, housing, and visitor facilities in the core of the city and Bay Area region. It is also a neighborhood with an incredible history and a rich, ongoing, cultural heritage. As it grows and evolves over the next 25 years, Central SoMa has the opportunity to become a complete, sustainable, and vital neighborhood without losing what makes it special and unique today. The Central SoMa Plan (the "Plan") contains the goals, objectives, and policies to guide this growth and evolution such that the results serve the best interests of San Francisco – in the present and the future.

B. The Plan is an important evolution in the planning of this neighborhood. The desire for a Central SoMa Plan began during the Eastern Neighborhoods planning process. In 2008 the City adopted the Eastern Neighborhoods Plan, including new land use controls and proposed community improvements for the eastern part of the South of Market neighborhood (SoMa), as well as the Central Waterfront, Mission, and Showplace Square/Potrero Hill neighborhoods. At that time, the City determined that the development potential of the industrially zoned part of East SoMa, coupled with the improved transit to be provided by the Central Subway, necessitated a subsequent, focused planning process that took into account the city's growth needs and City and regional environmental goals. The Central SoMa Plan is the result of that subsequent process, and is an important tool to guide development in the Central SoMa area.

Similarly, the Western SoMa Area Plan, adopted in 2013, explicitly recognized the need to increase development capacity near transit in Objective 1.5, which states that the City should "Support continued evaluation of land uses near major transit infrastructure in recognition of citywide and regional sustainable growth needs." The explanatory text in Objective 1.5 concludes that "The City must continue evaluating how it can best meet citywide and regional objectives to direct growth to transit-oriented locations and whether current controls are meeting identified needs." The Objective's implementing Policy 1.5.1 states that the City

should “Continue to explore and re-examine land use controls east of 6th Street, including as part of any future evaluation along the 4th Street corridor.” The Central SoMa Plan is intended to fulfill the Western SoMa Plan’s Objective 1.5 and Policy 1.5.1 and is important to allow development near major transit infrastructure.

C. The Plan accommodates a substantial amount of jobs and housing. Specifically, the Plan would enable up to 8,300 new housing units and approximately 30,000 new jobs. Currently, the City and region are undergoing tremendous growth pressure. Economically, there is the continuing national and regional shift from an economy based on things to one based on ideas. These knowledge sector businesses tend to cluster in regions – and the Bay Area is the world’s leading knowledge region. The result is that job growth in the Bay Area the past several years has nearly doubled that of the rest of the nation, and commensurately so has the demand for housing. Simultaneously, there is increasing demand among both younger and older generations to live in walkable, transit-oriented, amenity-rich locations. In this largely suburban and auto-dependent region, many of the accessible and dynamic urban neighborhoods are in San Francisco. This Plan facilitates this kind of development in the Central SOMA area.

D. Cumulatively, demands for urban neighborhoods have created an ongoing and strong demand for space in San Francisco – one that outstrips the supply of new space. When demand is high relative to supply, the price inevitably goes up. In 2018, prices have risen to a level that is socially unsustainable – rents for housing are the highest in the country, and greatly exceed what can be afforded by the majority of today’s San Franciscans. Rents for commercial space are similarly unaffordable, pushing out non-profit organizations, mom-and-pop businesses, artists and industrial businesses. Fortunately, Central SoMa is an appropriate location for such development. The area is served by some of the region’s best transit, including BART and Caltrain, Muni Metro and many bus lines, in addition to the Central Subway currently under construction. Flat streets and a regular grid pattern can make destinations easy to reach for people walking and bicycling. There is already an incredibly strong cluster of technology companies that new and growing companies want to locate near. There is also a diversity of other uses, including thousands of residential units, local- and regional-serving retail, cultural and entertainment facilities, hotels, and production/distribution/repair businesses. Simultaneously, there is substantial opportunity to increase density in Central SoMa. There are numerous undeveloped or underdeveloped sites, such as surface parking lots and single-story commercial buildings. Recognizing this opportunity, the Plan facilitates approximately 16 million square feet in new development, relatively evenly split between space for housing and jobs. Such an increase in development, at this appropriate location, is an important and necessary step towards accommodating the demand for growth in San Francisco. By doing so, the Plan can help increase the upward pressure on rents for residential and non-residential uses and thereby foster a more economically and socially sustainable neighborhood, city, and region.

E. The Plan strives to maintain the existing diversity of residents and encourage continuing diversity. SoMa already has an incredibly diverse population, in terms of race, income, unit size, and ownership status. Implementation of this Plan would maintain that diversity by ensuring that at least 33% of new units are affordable to low- and moderate-income families. In doing so, the Plan meets the City’s target for provision of such units established in 2014’s Proposition K. The Plan would enable production of at least 2,700 affordable units. Such units would be expected to be provided through a range of mechanisms, including direct provision by new development on-site and off-site, and provision by the City through in-lieu and Jobs-Housing Linkage Fees. Whereas typically City-funded projects could be built anywhere within the City, the

Plan requires that these units would be built within SoMa, therefore supporting the diversity of residents. The Plan maintains the City's requirements that a mix of unit sizes be created in new development, thus supporting a range from smaller units to family-sized units. Finally, the Plan includes strategies meant to create a balance of rental and for-sale units.

F. The Plan facilitates an economically diversified and lively jobs center. By requiring its large sites to be commercially-oriented, the implementation of this Plan would create a jobs center in this location, expected to result in at least 30,000 new jobs. Locating jobs in this transit-rich location is a more effective use of our transit investments, given jobs are of greater density than housing, that people are more likely to walk from transit to their jobs than to their homes, and because lower-paid workers can save on not having to purchase their own vehicles. Locating jobs here can also support the economic synergies of co-location by bridging the job centers of Downtown and Mission Bay. Locating jobs in new buildings will also relieve pressure on other spaces citywide – particularly for non-profit offices and other organizations that cannot compete for rent with technology companies. It is also important to locate jobs at this location because only ten percent of San Francisco's land is zoned to allow office, whereas 90 percent can accommodate housing. While many of these jobs would be expected to be for office workers, the Plan would support the diversity of jobs by requiring Production, Distribution, and Repair uses in many new developments, requiring ground floor retail and other commercial uses on many of the major streets, and allowing hotel and entertainment uses that facilitate a 24-hour neighborhood with accompanying amenities.

G. The Plan provides safe and convenient transportation that prioritizes walking, bicycling, and transit. The neighborhood's streets were built to accommodate industrial uses and move trucks and cars through quickly by having many lanes of fast-moving traffic, narrow sidewalks, limited street crossings, and almost no bicycle lanes and transit-protected lanes. Implementation of this Plan would redistribute the street right-of-way to better serve people walking, bicycling, and taking transit by widening sidewalks on all of the neighborhood's major thoroughfares, increasing the number of and safety of street crossings by facilitating signalized mid-block crossings and sidewalk bulbouts that shorten the length of crosswalks, creating protected bicycle on Howard, Folsom, Brannan, Townsend, and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets, and transit-only lanes on Folsom, Brannan, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets.

H. The Plan offers parks and recreational opportunities. Implementation of the Plan would facilitate a variety of improvements to offer additional public parks and recreational opportunities, from improving and expanding Gene Friend Recreation Center to creating multiple new parks, including a new one-acre park in the block bounded by 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, Bryant, and Brannan Streets; a new ½ acre linear park on Bluxome Street between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets; and new recreational amenities (such as skate ramps and basketball courts) underneath the I-80 freeway between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets. The Plan also helps fund construction of a new recreation center, and up to four acres of privately-owned public open space.

I. The Plan creates an environmentally sustainable and resilient neighborhood. Implementation of this Plan will result in a substantial number of new buildings, infrastructure investment, and public benefits within the Plan Area, leading to dramatic opportunities for significant improvements to environmental quality. Given current State and City regulations, new buildings are required to be greener and more resilient than buildings from earlier eras. The Plan would further require additional cost-effective regulations for new development, such as living roofs and the use of 100 percent greenhouse gas-free electricity. Implementation of the Plan's street improvements would shift mode share away from personal vehicles. Finally, directing

regional development to this central, transit-rich location will result in a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from driving as well as reduction of pressure on undeveloped greenfield locations that have high environmental benefit.

J. The Plan ensures that new buildings enhance the character of the neighborhood and the city. The Plan's height and bulk requirements ensure that the area largely maintain the feel of a mid-rise district, where the perceived height of the building is similar to the width of the street it faces. Towers would be allowed in select locations along the edge of Downtown/Rincon Hill and around the Caltrain station, and would ensure that the overall development pattern is complementary to the overall city skyline. Where towers are permitted, they will be required to be slender and appropriately spaced from other towers. Design guidance contained in the Plan is intended to ensure that new buildings are in keeping with the best aspects of SoMa's design heritage.

K. The Plan preserves and celebrates the neighborhood's cultural heritage by supporting the designation and protection of historically significant and contributory buildings under *Planning Code* Articles 10 and 11. Pursuant to Article 10, the following buildings are under consideration for City landmark status: 228-248 Townsend Street, and 457 Bryant Street, 500-504 Fourth Street. In addition, pursuant to Article 10, creation of the Clyde and Crooks Warehouse Historic District and the designation of numerous properties in that district as contributory is being considered. Pursuant to Article 11, expansion of the boundaries of the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District and designation of 55 Fifth Street as a contributory building in that district are being considered; and creation of the Mint-Mission Conservation District and designation of a number of properties in that district as contributory and significant are being considered. In addition, the designation of 27 other properties as significant and contributory pursuant to Article 11 is being considered. Eligible historic properties will be able to sell their Transferable Development Rights, which would help to fund the rehabilitation and preservation of those properties.

L. If the City decides to include a Community Facilities District, implementation of the Plan will result in a re-envisioning of the streets, sidewalks, and open spaces of the Plan Area—not only to be more vibrant and safer, but also to complement the neighborhood's environmental health and resilience. Strategies include supporting maintenance and operations of Victoria Manalo Draves park and other new parks and recreation centers in the Plan Area and the incorporation of elements beneficial to environmental sustainability and resilience, such as trees, green infrastructure for stormwater management, and energy efficient street lights. With the CFD, the Plan would also preserve and celebrate the neighborhood's cultural heritage. Implementation of the Plan will help preserve the neighborhood's tangible heritage by helping fund the rehabilitation of the Old Mint. It will also help the neighborhood's intangible resources continue to thrive by funding ongoing social and cultural programming, helping fund the rehabilitation and/or creation of new cultural facilities, and require space for industrial and arts uses.

Having considered these Project benefits and considerations, the Planning Commission finds that the Project's benefits outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, and that the adverse environmental effects that cannot be mitigated to insignificant levels are therefore acceptable.

**EXHIBIT III.3 -  
PLANNING CODE  
AND ADMINISTRATIVE  
CODE AMENDMENTS  
DRAFT ORDINANCE**

1 structure, any use not classified in Section 825(c)(1)(C) below as accessory will be considered  
2 separately as an independent permitted, conditional, temporary or not permitted use.

3 (1) **Permitted Uses.**

4 (A) **Principal Uses.** All uses are permitted as principal uses as of right  
5 in a Downtown Residential district unless otherwise indicated as a Conditional Use or Not  
6 Permitted in this Section 825 of this Code or any other Section governing an individual DTR  
7 District. Additional requirements and conditions may be placed on particular uses as provided  
8 pursuant to Section 803.5 and other applicable provisions of this Code.

9 (B) **Conditional Uses.** Conditional uses are permitted in a Downtown  
10 Residential District, when authorized by the Planning Commission; whether a use is  
11 conditional in a given district is indicated in the Section of this Code governing the individual  
12 DTR District. Conditional uses are subject to the applicable provisions set forth in Sections  
13 178, 179, ~~263.11~~, 303, 316, and 803.5 of this Code.

14 \* \* \* \*

15 **SEC. 840. MUG – MIXED USE-GENERAL DISTRICT.**

16 The Mixed Use-General (MUG) District is largely comprised of the low-scale,  
17 production, distribution, and repair uses mixed with housing and small-scale retail. The MUG  
18 is designed to maintain and facilitate the growth and expansion of small-scale light industrial,  
19 wholesale distribution, arts production and performance/exhibition activities, general  
20 commercial and neighborhood-serving retail and personal service activities while protecting  
21 existing housing and encouraging the development of housing at a scale and density  
22 compatible with the existing neighborhood.

23 Housing is encouraged over ground floor commercial and production, distribution, and  
24 repair uses. New residential or mixed use developments are encouraged to provide as much  
25 mixed-income family housing as possible. Existing group housing and dwelling units would be

1 protected from demolition or conversion to nonresidential use by requiring conditional use  
 2 review. Accessory Dwelling Units are permitted within the district pursuant to subsection  
 3 207(c)(4) of this Code.

4 Hotels, nighttime entertainment, movie theaters, adult entertainment and heavy  
 5 industrial uses are not permitted. Office is restricted to the upper floors of multiple story  
 6 buildings.

| 7 <b>Table 840</b>   |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| 8 <b>MUG – MIXED USE – GENERAL DISTRICT ZONING CONTROL TABLE</b> |  |  |  |
| 9 <b>No.</b>   | <b>Zoning Category</b>   | <b>§ References</b>  | <b>Mixed Use – General District Controls</b>   |
| 11 <b>Building and Siting Standards</b>                          |  |  |  |
| 12 * * * *   |  |  |  |
| 13 840.09  | Residential to non-residential ratio   | 14 § 803.8(e) <del>9</del> (a)                             | None   |
| 15 * * * *   |  |  |  |
| 16 <b>Retail Sales and Services</b>                              |  |  |  |
| 17 840.45  | 18 All Retail Sales and Services <del>which</del> <u>that</u> are not listed below | 19 §§ 121.6,<br>20 803.9(ig),<br>21 890.104,<br>22 890.116 | P up to 25,000 gross sq.ft. per lot; above 25,000 gross sq. ft. permitted only if the ratio of other permitted uses to retail is at least 3:1. |
| 23 * * * *   |  |  |  |
| 24 <b>Office</b>   |  |  |  |
| 25 * * * *   |  |  |  |
| 840.65A  | Services, Professional;  | §§ 890.108,  | Subject to vertical control of Sec.  |



1 underdeveloped and represent opportunities for new residential and low-intensity commercial  
 2 uses.

3 \* \* \* \*

| Table 847  |                 |                                  |  |
|--|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|
| RED-MX – RESIDENTIAL ENCLAVE-MIXED DISTRICT ZONING CONTROL TABLE |                 |                                  |  |
| No.  | Zoning Category | § References                     | Residential Enclave-Mixed Controls                       |
| * * * *  |                 |                                  |  |
| <b>Other Uses</b>  |                 |                                  |  |
| 847.66   | Open Air Sales  | §§ 803.9( <i>ed</i> ),<br>890.38 | P up to 1,250 gsf per lot;<br>C above;<br>NP above 1 FAR |
| * * * *  |                 |                                  |  |

14 \* \* \* \*

15 **SEC. 848. CMUO – CENTRAL SOMA MIXED USE-OFFICE DISTRICT.**

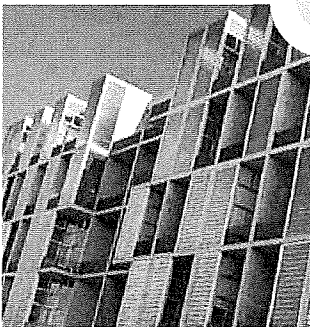
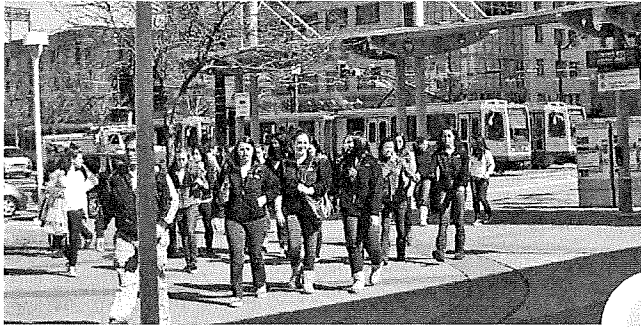
16 *The Central SoMa Mixed Use-Office (CMUO) extends predominantly between 2nd Street and*  
 17 *6th Street in the South of Market area. The CMUO is designed to encourage a mix of residential and*  
 18 *non-residential uses, including office, retail, light industrial, arts activities, nighttime entertainment,*  
 19 *and tourist hotels.*

20 **Table 848. CMUO – CENTRAL SOMA MIXED USE-OFFICE DISTRICT ZONING CONTROL**

21 **TABLE**

| <b><u>Central SoMa Mixed Use-Office District Controls</u></b> |                     |                 |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|
| <u>Zoning Category</u>  | <u>§ References</u> | <u>Controls</u> |
| <b><u>BUILDING STANDARDS</u></b>                              |                     |                 |

# CENTRAL CORRIDOR PLAN



SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

DRAFT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW  
APRIL 2013

## Contributing Factors

There are both regional and local factors that contribute to the need for this plan at this time. Regionally, we are facing a need to plan near transit. In the Bay Area, transportation is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), with passenger travel in cars and light trucks causing more than 40% of those emissions. Transforming some of that passenger travel to transit, biking or walking will not only support environmental goals like reduction of energy consumption, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and less air pollution, but also economic and social ones such as increased physical activity, lower vehicle accident rates, and lower household transportation expenses.

Locating jobs near transit will be a critical component of reducing GHGs. That is, commuters are most likely to use transit when stations are very close to their jobs, more so than when transit is close to their homes. While concentrating both jobs and housing near major transit centers reduces auto travel, research has consistently shown a notably stronger correlation between transit usage and the proximity of jobs to transit than housing to transit.<sup>1</sup> Research has also shown significant ridership increases with increases in employment density along rail lines.

Locally, we need more transit-accessible job space. The City's 2007 Economic Strategy, currently undergoing an update, set a path for more economic development and opportunity, more and better jobs for middle- and lower-income residents, and growing tax revenue to fund City services. Its key recommendations relating to land use are to 1) provide sufficient real estate for strategic priorities, 2) maximize San Francisco's accessibility to a local and regional workforce, and 3) work to reduce the cost of residential and commercial development.

Attracting more jobs is a challenge - San Francisco's job base has been growing more slowly than the rest of the Bay Area for the last forty years; and despite a few finite periods of major job growth in the late 1970's

and late 1990's, San Francisco hasn't seen a significant net increase in jobs over the past half century. But there are signs of hope - San Francisco's percentage of regional jobs has increased since 2005<sup>2</sup>; and that increase coincides with a national movement of businesses back to transit-oriented locations in center cities. While the overall number of jobs in the City hasn't substantially increased, the makeup of the job base has, with a substantial decline in traditional industrial and manufacturing jobs and compensating substantial increase in the number of office-based "knowledge" sector jobs which are partial to transit-oriented locations that provide access to a workforce from around the City and region. This explains why, though overall jobs have not increased much, downtown and SoMa have grown substantially over the past 25 years.

The success in build-out under the Downtown Plan means there is little capacity left for growth in that area. And companies are demonstrating a growing preference for flexibly designed space that supports team-based work styles over the typical executive office suite model provided in traditional Financial District high-rise buildings. Among San Francisco's districts, the Central Corridor area provides a unique opportunity to create more job space at locations readily accessible to both regional and local transit. Its location, framed by BART to the north, Caltrain on the south and connected by new Central Subway as well as other local bus routes, represents an almost ideal intersection of local and regional transit. Its adjacency to the major job centers of Downtown and Mission Bay make it a natural next step to focus job growth, and it is already home to some of technology's biggest players, which is a strong attraction for new and growing companies in that sector. Finally, its capacity for new development combined with its existing building stock provides the opportunity to expand not only the amount, but the types of workspace San Francisco has to offer.

<sup>1</sup> For instance, "Making the Most of Transit," (Kolkko, 2011, Public Policy Institute of California); "Characteristics of Rail and Ferry Station Area Residents in the San Francisco Bay Area: Evidence From the 2000 Bay Area Travel Survey," (Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2006); "Land Use Impacts on Transport" (Litman, 2012, Victoria Transport Policy Institute).

<sup>2</sup> San Francisco Commerce & Industry Inventory, November 2012.



# California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan

The strategy for achieving California's  
2030 greenhouse gas target

## Chapter 5

### ACHIEVING SUCCESS

Meeting, and exceeding, our mandated GHG reduction goals in 2020 and through 2030 requires building on California's decade of success in implementing effective climate policies. State agencies are increasingly coordinating planning activities to align with overarching climate, clean air, social equity, and broader economic objectives.

However, to definitely tip the scales in favor of rapidly declining emissions, we also need to reach beyond State policy-making and engage all Californians. Further progress can be made by supporting innovative actions at the local level—among governments, small businesses, schools, and individual households. Ultimately, success depends on a mix of regulatory program development, incentives, institutional support, and education and outreach to ensure that clean energy and other climate strategies are clear, winning alternatives in the marketplace—to drive business development and consumer adoption.

#### Ongoing Engagement with Environmental Justice Communities

---

CARB continues seek ways to improve implementation of AB 32 and the unique set of impacts facing environmental justice communities. However, CARB's environmental justice efforts reach far beyond climate change. In 2001, the Board approved CARB's "Policies and Actions for Environmental Action,"<sup>234</sup> which expresses a broad commitment to environmental justice and makes it integral to all of CARB's programs, consistent with State directives at the time. Though over the years CARB has taken on a wide array of activities aimed at reducing environmental burdens on environmental justice communities, it has not knitted its various efforts together in a coherent narrative or maximized the impact of these activities by leveraging them off of each other.

This year, CARB appointed its first executive-level environmental justice liaison. Under her leadership, CARB will lay a roadmap for better serving California's environmental justice communities in the design and implementation of its programs, and identifying new actions CARB can take to advance environmental justice and social equity in all of its functions.

The extensive legislative framework addressing climate change, air quality, and environmental justice that has emerged since the passage of AB 32 has prompted CARB to step up its environmental justice efforts and articulate a vision that reflects the current context. CARB will initiate a public process, seeking advice and input from environmental justice advocates and other key stakeholders to inform the development of a new strategic plan for further institutionalizing environmental justice and social equity.

CARB understands that in addition to our programs to address climate change and reduce emissions of GHGs, more needs to be done to reduce exposure to toxic air and criteria pollutants and improve the quality of life in communities surrounding our largest emissions sources. To this end, and consistent with AB 617, AB 197, AB 1071, SB 535 and AB 1550, we will actively engage EJ advocates, communities, and relevant air districts in the development of programs that improve air quality and quantify the burdens placed on air quality in local communities. Measuring and monitoring air quality conditions over time and ongoing community engagement are integral to the success of CARB's efforts. This engagement will include substantive discussions with EJ stakeholders, gathering their input and providing adequate time for review before matters are taken to the Board for decision.

---

234 [www.arb.ca.gov/ch/programs/ej/ejpolicies.pdf](http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/programs/ej/ejpolicies.pdf)

CARB's approach to environmental justice will be grounded in five primary pillars: transparency, integration, monitoring, research, and enforcement.

- **Transparency:** CARB must improve communication and engagement with environmental justice stakeholders and deepen partnerships with local communities impacted by air pollution. CARB will continue to prioritize transparency in its decision-making processes and provide better access to the air quality, toxics, and GHG data CARB collects and stewards.
- **Integration:** Besides integrating environmental justice throughout all of CARB's programs, those programs must complement each other. To that end, CARB will endeavor to break down programmatic silos so that it is able to leverage its work and achieve more effective and timely results. Focused resources in individual communities can accelerate reduction in emissions, proliferation of clean vehicles and creation of jobs in the clean energy economy, while concurrently improving public health.
- **Monitoring:** Communities should be engaged in CARB's monitoring work. They can play a critical role in collecting their own data and adding to the coverage of other air monitoring efforts (e.g., CARB, local air districts). CARB has already invested in research on low-cost monitors that are accessible by communities, and it will continue to evaluate how community monitoring can make CARB more nimble in identifying and addressing "hotspots." Mobile monitoring projects similarly will allow CARB to better serve and protect residents of disadvantaged communities. CARB will continue to build partnerships with local communities and help build local capacity through funding and technical assistance.
- **Research:** CARB's research agenda is core to achieving its mission. To ensure that the research done by CARB responds to environmental justice concerns and has the greatest potential to improve air quality and public health in disadvantaged communities, CARB will engage communities groups early in the development of its research agenda and the projects that flow out from that agenda.
- **Enforcement:** Disadvantaged communities are often impacted by many sources of pollution. In order to improve air quality and protect public health, CARB will prioritize compliance with legal requirements, including enforcement actions if necessary, in environmental justice communities to ensure emissions of toxic and criteria pollutants in these communities are as low as possible.

Our inclusive approaches to further environmental justice in California's local communities may include an array of direct regulation, funding, and community capacity-building. CARB will continue to actively implement the provisions of AB 617, AB 197, AB 1071, SB 535, AB 1550, and other laws to better ensure that environmental justice communities see additional benefits from our clean air and climate policies. Our inclusive approaches to further environmental justice in California's local communities may include an array of direct regulation, funding, and community capacity-building.

## Enabling Local Action

---

Local governments are essential partners in achieving California's goals to reduce GHG emissions. Local governments can implement GHG emissions reduction strategies to address local conditions and issues and can effectively engage citizens at the local level. Local governments also have broad jurisdiction, and sometimes unique authorities, through their community-scale planning and permitting processes, discretionary actions, local codes and ordinances, outreach and education efforts, and municipal operations. Further, local jurisdictions can develop new and innovative approaches to reduce GHG emissions that can then be adopted elsewhere. For example, local governments can develop land use plans with more efficient development patterns that bring people and destinations closer together in more mixed-use, compact communities that facilitate walking, biking, and use of transit. Local governments can also incentivize locally generated renewable energy and infrastructure for alternative fuels and electric vehicles, implement water efficiency measures, and develop waste-to-energy and waste-to-fuel projects. These local actions complement statewide measures and are critical to supporting the State's efforts to reduce emissions. Local efforts can deliver substantial additional GHG and criteria emissions reductions beyond what State policy can alone, and these efforts will sometimes be more cost-effective and provide more cobenefits than relying exclusively on top-down statewide regulations to achieve the State's climate stabilization goals. To ensure local and regional engagement, it is also recommended local jurisdictions make readily available information regarding ongoing and proposed actions to reduce GHGs within their region.

Many cities and counties are already setting GHG reduction targets, developing local plans, and making progress toward reducing emissions. The Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative recently released a report, *The State of Local Climate Action: California 2016*,<sup>235</sup> which highlights local government efforts, including:

- In California, 60 percent of cities and over 70 percent of counties have completed a GHG inventory, and 42 percent of local governments have completed a climate, energy, or sustainability plan that directly addresses GHG emissions. Many other community-scale local plans, such as general plans, have emissions reduction measures incorporated as well (see Governor's Office of Planning and Research [OPR] Survey questions 23 and 24).<sup>236</sup>
- Over one hundred California local governments have developed emissions reduction targets that, if achieved, would result in annual reductions that total 45 MMTCO<sub>2e</sub> by 2020 and 83 MMTCO<sub>2e</sub> by 2050.<sup>237</sup>

Local air quality management and air pollution control districts also play a key role in reducing regional and local sources of GHG emissions by actively integrating climate protection into air quality programs. Air districts also support local climate protection programs by providing technical assistance and data, quantification tools, and even funding.<sup>238</sup> Local metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) also support the State's climate action goals via sustainable communities strategies (SCSs), required by the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375, Chapter 728, Statutes of 2008). Under SB 375, MPOs must prepare SCSs as part of their regional transportation plan to meet regional GHG reduction targets set by CARB for passenger vehicles in 2020 and 2035. The SCSs contain land use, housing, and transportation strategies that allow regions to meet their GHG emissions reductions targets.



To engage communities in efforts to reduce GHG emissions, CARB has partnered with Energy Upgrade California on the CoolCalifornia Challenge. It is a competition among California cities to reduce their carbon footprints and build more vibrant and sustainable communities. Three challenges have been completed. Most recently, the 2015–2016 Challenge included 22 cities and engaged nearly 3,200 households, each of which took actions to reduce energy use and carbon GHG emissions. In total, the participants reported savings of 5,638 MTCO<sub>2</sub> from completed actions, equivalent to emissions from more than 1,000 cars or from electricity used by more than 2,500 California homes in a year.

State agencies support these local government actions in several ways:

- *CoolCalifornia.org* is an informational website that provides resources that assist local governments, small businesses, schools, and households to reduce GHG emissions. The local government webpage includes carbon calculators, a climate planning resource guide, a Funding Wizard that outlines grant and loan programs, and success stories. It also features ClearPath California, a no-cost GHG inventory, climate action plan development, and tracking tool developed through the Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative in coordination with CARB and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR).
- Chapter 8 of OPR's General Plan Guidelines<sup>239</sup> provides guidance for climate action plans and

<sup>235</sup> Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative. 2016. *State of Local Climate Action: California 2016*.

[californiaseec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/State-of-Local-Climate-Action-California-2016\\_Screen.pdf](http://californiaseec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/State-of-Local-Climate-Action-California-2016_Screen.pdf)

<sup>236</sup> Governor's Office of Planning and Research. 2016. 2016 Annual Planning Survey Results. November.

[www.opr.ca.gov/docs/2016\\_APS\\_final.pdf](http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/2016_APS_final.pdf)

<sup>237</sup> These reductions include reductions from both state and local measures.

<sup>238</sup> Examples include: (1) Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). 2016 Clean Air Plan and Regional Climate Protection Strategy. Available at: [www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/air-quality-plans/plans-under-development](http://www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/air-quality-plans/plans-under-development); (2) California Air Pollution Control Officers Association. California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod). Available at: [www.caleemod.com/](http://www.caleemod.com/); (3) San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. Grants and Incentives. Available at: [valleyair.org/grants/](http://valleyair.org/grants/); (4) BAAQMD. Grant Funding. Available at: [www.baaqmd.gov/grant-funding](http://www.baaqmd.gov/grant-funding); (5) South Coast Air Quality Management District. Funding. Available at: [www.aqmd.gov/grants-bids/funding](http://www.aqmd.gov/grants-bids/funding); (6) Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District. Incentive Programs. Available at: [www.airquality.org/Residents/Incentive-Programs](http://www.airquality.org/Residents/Incentive-Programs).

<sup>239</sup> <http://opr.ca.gov/planning/general-plan/>

other plans linked to general plans, which address the community scale approach outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b), Plans for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

- OPR hosts the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program, which is developing resources and case studies that outline the co-benefits of implementing emissions reduction strategies and addressing the impacts of climate change.
- CARB is developing a centralized database and interactive map that will display the current statewide status of local government climate action planning. Users can view and compare the details of emission inventories, planned GHG reduction targets and strategies, and other climate action details specific to each local government. This information will help jurisdictions around California identify what climate action strategies are working in other, similar jurisdictions across the State, and will facilitate collaboration among local governments pursuing GHG reduction strategies and goals. This database and map will be featured on the *CoolCalifornia.org* website and are anticipated to be available in 2017.
- Additional information on local government activities is available on Cal-Adapt ([www.cal-adapt.org](http://www.cal-adapt.org)) and OPR ([www.opr.ca.gov](http://www.opr.ca.gov))

Further, a significant portion of the \$3.4 billion in cap-and-trade expenditures has either directly or indirectly supported local government efforts to reduce emissions, including, for example, the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program and approximately \$142 million for project implementation and planning grants awarded under the Transformative Climate Communities program.

## Climate Action through Local Planning and Permitting

---

Local government efforts to reduce emissions within their jurisdiction are critical to achieving the State's long-term GHG goals, and can also provide important co-benefits, such as improved air quality, local economic benefits, more sustainable communities, and an improved quality of life. To support local governments in their efforts to reduce GHG emissions, the following guidance is provided. This guidance should be used in coordination with OPR's General Plan Guidelines guidance in Chapter 8, Climate Change.<sup>240</sup> While this guidance is provided out of the recognition that local policy makers are critical in reducing the carbon footprint of cities and counties, the decision to follow this guidance is voluntary and should not be interpreted as a directive or mandate to local governments.

### Recommended Local Plan-Level Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Goals

CARB recommends statewide targets of no more than six metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>e per capita by 2030 and no more than two metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>e per capita by 2050.<sup>241</sup> The statewide per capita targets account for all emissions sectors in the State, statewide population forecasts, and the statewide reductions necessary to achieve the 2030 statewide target under SB 32 and the longer term State emissions reduction goal of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.<sup>242</sup> The statewide per capita targets are also consistent with Executive Order S-3-05, B-30-15, and the Under 2 MOU that California originated with Baden-Württemberg and has now been signed or endorsed by 188 jurisdictions representing 39 countries and six continents.<sup>243,244</sup> Central to the Under 2 MOU is that all signatories agree to reduce their GHG emissions to two metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>e per capita by 2050. This limit represents California's and these other governments' recognition of their "fair share" to reduce GHG emissions to the scientifically based levels to limit global warming below two degrees Celsius. This limit is also consistent with the Paris Agreement, which sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to below 2°C.<sup>245</sup>

CARB recommends that local governments evaluate and adopt robust and quantitative locally-appropriate

---

240 <http://opr.ca.gov/planning/general-plan/>.

241 These goals are appropriate for the plan level (city, county, subregional, or regional level, as appropriate), but not for specific individual projects because they include all emissions sectors in the State.

242 This number represents the 2030 and 2050 targets divided by total population projections from California Department of Finance.

243 <http://under2mou.org/> California signed the Under 2 MOU on May 19, 2015. See [under2mou.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/California-appendix-English.pdf](http://under2mou.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/California-appendix-English.pdf) and [under2mou.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/California-Signature-Page.pdf](http://under2mou.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/California-Signature-Page.pdf).

244 The Under 2 MOU signatories include jurisdictions ranging from cities to countries to multiple-country partnerships. Therefore, like the goals set forth above for local and regional climate planning, the Under 2 MOU is scalable to various types of jurisdictions.

245 UNFCCC. The Paris Agreement. [unfccc.int/paris\\_agreement/items/9485.php](http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php)



goals that align with the statewide per capita targets and the State's sustainable development objectives and develop plans to achieve the local goals. The statewide per capita goals were developed by applying the percent reductions necessary to reach the 2030 and 2050 climate goals (i.e., 40 percent and 80 percent, respectively) to the State's 1990 emissions limit established under AB 32.

Numerous local governments in California have already adopted GHG emissions reduction goals for year 2020 consistent with AB 32. CARB advises that local governments also develop community-wide GHG emissions reduction goals necessary to reach 2030 and 2050 climate goals. Emissions inventories and reduction goals should be expressed in mass emissions, per capita emissions, and service population emissions. To do this, local governments can start by developing a community-wide GHG emissions target consistent with the accepted protocols as outlined in OPR's General Plan Guidelines Chapter 8: Climate Change. They can then calculate GHG emissions thresholds by applying the percent reductions necessary to reach 2030 and 2050 climate goals (i.e., 40 percent and 80 percent, respectively) to their community-wide GHG emissions target. Since the statewide per capita targets are based on the statewide GHG emissions inventory that includes all emissions sectors in the State, it is appropriate for local jurisdictions to derive evidence-based local per capita<sup>246</sup> goals based on local emissions sectors and population projections that are consistent with the framework used to develop the statewide per capita targets. The resulting GHG emissions trajectory should show a downward trend consistent with the statewide objectives. The recommendation for a community-wide goal expands upon the reduction of 15 percent from "current" (2005-2008) levels by 2020 as recommended in the 2008 Scoping Plan.<sup>247</sup>

In developing local plans, local governments should refer to "The U.S. Community Protocol for Accounting and Reporting of Greenhouse Gas Emissions,"<sup>248</sup> (community protocol) which provides detailed guidance on completing a GHG emissions inventory at the community scale in the United States – including emissions from businesses, residents, and transportation. Quantification tools such as ClearPath California, which was developed with California agencies, also support the analysis of community-scale GHG emissions. Per the community protocol, these plans should disclose all emissions within the defined geographical boundary, even those over which the local government has no regulatory authority to control, and then focus the strategies on those emissions that the jurisdiction controls. For emissions from transportation, the community protocol recommends including emissions from trips that extend beyond the community's boundaries. Local plans should also include the carbon sequestration values associated with natural and working lands, and the importance of jurisdictional lands for water, habitat, agricultural, and recreational resources. Strategies developed to achieve the local goals should prioritize mandatory measures that support the Governor's "Five Pillars" and other key state climate action goals.<sup>249</sup> Examples of plan-level GHG reduction actions that could be implemented by local governments are listed in Appendix B. Additional information and tools on how to develop GHG emissions inventories and reduction plans tied to general plans can be found in OPR's General Plan Guidelines and at *CoolCalifornia.org*.

These local government recommendations are based on the recognition that California must accommodate population and economic growth in a far more sustainable manner than in the past. While state-level investments, policies, and actions play an important role in shaping growth and development patterns, regional and local governments and agencies are uniquely positioned to influence the future of the built environment and its associated GHG emissions. Greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies in Climate Action Plans (CAPs) and other local plans can also lead to important co-benefits, such as improved air quality, local economic benefits such as green jobs, more mobility choices, improved public health and quality of life, protection of locally, statewide, and globally important natural resources, and more equitable sharing of these benefits across communities.

Contributions from policies and programs, such as renewable energy and energy efficiency, are helping to achieve the near-term 2020 target, but longer-term targets cannot be achieved without land use decisions that allow more efficient use and management of land and infrastructure. Local governments have primary authority to plan, zone, approve, and permit how and where land is developed to accommodate population growth, economic growth, and the changing needs of their jurisdictions. Land use decisions affect GHG emissions associated with transportation, water use, wastewater treatment, waste generation and treatment, energy consumption, and conversion of natural and working lands. Local land use decisions play a particularly

---

246 Or some other metric that the local jurisdiction deems appropriate (e.g., mass emissions, per service population)

247 2008 Scoping Plan, page 27, [www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/document/scopingplandocument.htm](http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/document/scopingplandocument.htm)

248 <http://iclei.usa.org/publications/us-community-protocol/>

249 [www.arb.ca.gov/cc/pillars/pillars.htm](http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/pillars/pillars.htm)

critical role in reducing GHG emissions associated with the transportation sector, both at the project level, and in long-term plans, including general plans, local and regional climate action plans, specific plans, transportation plans, and supporting sustainable community strategies developed under SB 375.

While the State can do more to accelerate and incentivize these local decisions, local actions that reduce VMT are also necessary to meet transportation sector-specific goals and achieve the 2030 target under SB 32. Through developing the Scoping Plan, CARB staff is more convinced than ever that, in addition to achieving GHG reductions from cleaner fuels and vehicles, California must also reduce VMT. Stronger SB 375 GHG reduction targets will enable the State to make significant progress toward needed reductions, but alone will not provide the VMT growth reductions needed; there is a gap between what SB 375 can provide and what is needed to meet the State's 2030 and 2050 goals. In its evaluation of the role of the transportation system in meeting the statewide emissions targets, CARB determined that VMT reductions of 7 percent below projected VMT levels in 2030 (which includes currently adopted SB 375 SCSs) are necessary. In 2050, reductions of 15 percent below projected VMT levels are needed. A 7 percent VMT reduction translates to a reduction, on average, of 1.5 miles/person/day from projected levels in 2030. It is recommended that local governments consider policies to reduce VMT to help achieve these reductions, including: land use and community design that reduces VMT; transit oriented development; street design policies that prioritize transit, biking, and walking; and increasing low carbon mobility choices, including improved access to viable and affordable public transportation and active transportation opportunities. It is important that VMT reducing strategies are implemented early because more time is necessary to achieve the full climate, health, social, equity, and economic benefits from these strategies.

Once adopted, the plans and policies designed to achieve a locally-set GHG goal can serve as a performance metric for later projects. Sufficiently detailed and adequately supported GHG reduction plans (including CAPs) also provide local governments with a valuable tool for streamlining project-level environmental review. Under CEQA, individual projects that comply with the strategies and actions within an adequate local CAP can streamline the project-specific GHG analysis.<sup>250</sup> The California Supreme Court recently called out this provision in CEQA as allowing tiering from a geographically specific GHG reduction plan.<sup>251</sup> The Court also recognized that GHG determinations in CEQA should be consistent with the statewide Scoping Plan goals, and that CEQA documents taking a goal-consistency approach may soon need to consider a project's effects on meeting the State's longer term post-2020 goals.<sup>252</sup> The recommendation above that local governments develop local goals tied to the statewide per capita goals of six metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030 and no more than two metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>e per capita by 2050 provides guidance on CARB's view on what would be consistent with the 2017 Scoping Plan and the State's long-term goals.

Production based inventories and emissions reduction programs are appropriate for local communities wanting to mitigate their emissions pursuant to CEQA Section 15183.5(b). Consumption based inventories are complementary to production based inventories and are appropriate as a background setting, disclosure, and as an outreach tool to show how personal decisions may change a person's or household's contribution to climate change. For additional information, see the OPR General Plan Guidelines.<sup>253</sup>

## **Project-Level Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Actions and Thresholds**

Beyond plan-level goals and actions, local governments can also support climate action when considering discretionary approvals and entitlements of individual projects through CEQA. Absent conformity with an adequate geographically-specific GHG reduction plan as described in the preceding section above, CARB recommends that projects incorporate design features and GHG reduction measures, to the degree feasible, to minimize GHG emissions. Achieving no net additional increase in GHG emissions, resulting in no contribution to GHG impacts, is an appropriate overall objective for new development. There are recent examples of land use development projects in California that have demonstrated that it is feasible to design projects that achieve zero net additional GHG emissions. Several projects have received certification from the Governor under AB 900, the Jobs and Economic Improvement through Environmental Leadership Act (Buchanan, Chapter 354, Statutes of 2011), demonstrating an ability to design economically viable projects that create jobs while contributing no net additional GHG emissions.<sup>254</sup> Another example is the Newhall

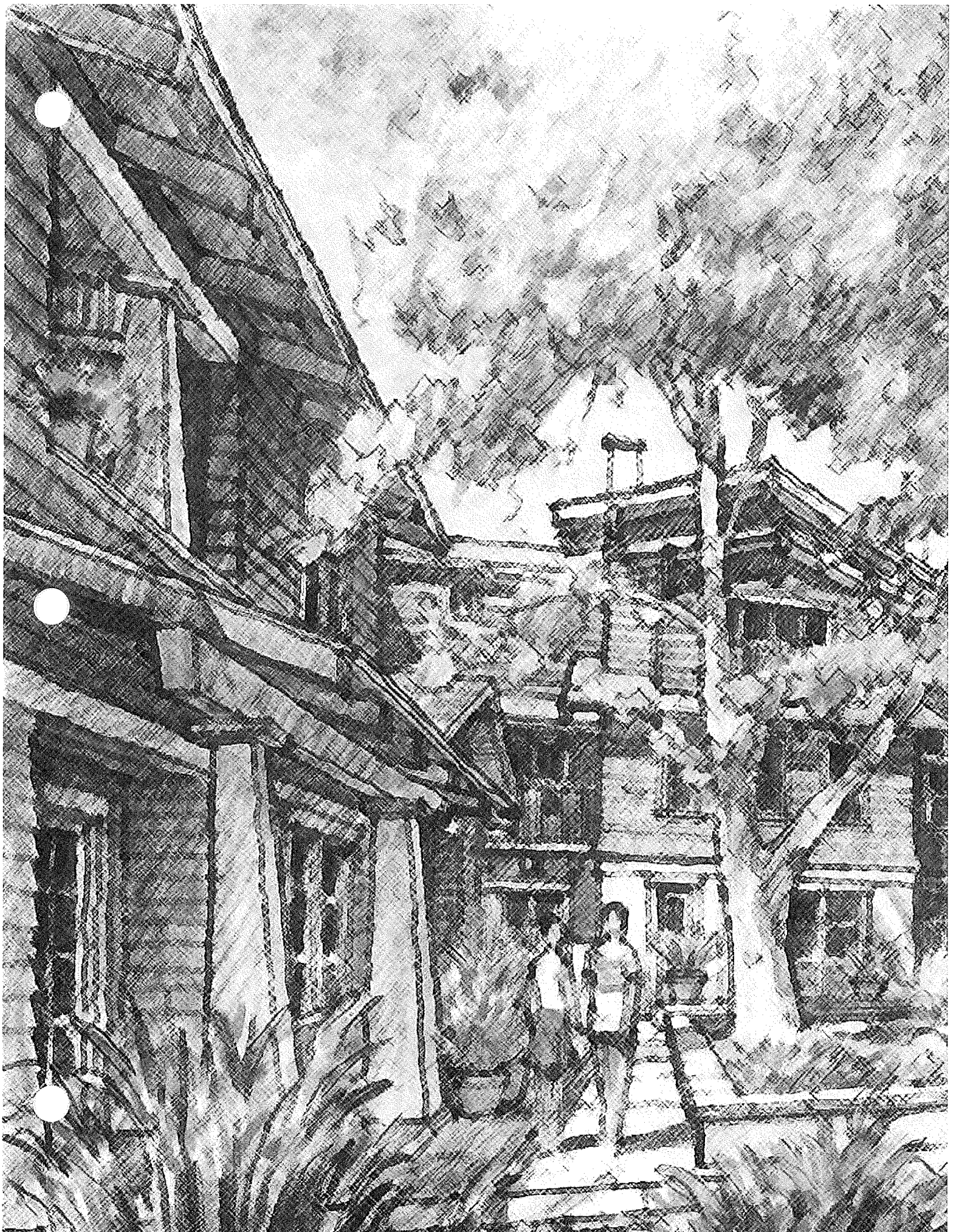
250 CEQA Guidelines, § 15183.5, sub. (b).

251 *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 204, 229–230.

252 *Id.* at pp. 223–224.

253 <http://opr.ca.gov/planning/general-plan/>.

254 Governor's Office of Planning and Research. California Jobs. <http://www.opr.ca.gov/ceqa/california-jobs.html>





MYTHS  
AND  
FACTS

*About Affordable & High Density*

HOUSING

*A Report by*

California Planning Roundtable  
California Department of Housing & Community Development

**I**N THE PAST 30 YEARS, CALIFORNIA'S HOUSING PRICES HAVE STEADILY OUTPACED ITS RESIDENTS' INCOMES. Housing production hasn't kept up with job and household growth within the State.<sup>1</sup> The location and type of new housing does not meet the needs of many new California households. As a result, only one in five households can afford a typical home, overcrowding doubled in the 1990's, and more than three million California households pay more than they can afford for their housing.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, the federal government has dramatically cut back programs that used to help local governments accommodate new growth. Voter-imposed property tax and spending freezes have further constrained local governments from responding effectively to new growth. And affordable housing development, while still funded in part by the federal government, requires a larger local commitment than ever before.

Against this backdrop, it should surprise no one that many communities no longer accept population growth with open arms. When anyone proposes the development of affordable or multifamily housing, ambivalence about growth often shifts to hostility. Hostility feeds and strengthens certain myths, and deep emotional perceptions of how the world works. *Myths—important sources of meaning in all societies—provide shared rationales for community members to behave in common ways, having a strong moral component, with clear lines between right and wrong.* Although myths are sometimes positive, they can also serve as shields for deeper and uglier motivations: racism, fear of outsiders, and/or greed. When people argue against new high-density and affordable housing, often myths are used to convince decision-makers that the new development and its residents don't belong there. Traffic will be too heavy; schools will become

overcrowded; buildings will clash with existing neighborhoods; people won't fit in; and maybe even a criminal element.

Opponents often believe these myths. But it's essential to counter these myths with facts. California desperately needs new affordable housing to reverse recent increases in overcrowding and overpayment. We also need new high-density housing to support economic stability and prosperity. We need housing to accommodate new workers and their families and to economize on infrastructure costs, while preserving open space and reducing the distance between homes and jobs.

Fortunately, the facts of California's recent experiences with high-density and affordable housing often contradict the myths. We can now begin to rely on this recent experience to reassure concerned residents that the myths don't have to come true.

## Myth #1

**High-density housing is affordable housing; affordable housing is high-density housing.**

## Fact #1

**Not all high density housing is affordable to low-income families.**

households will continue to rent single-family homes because they offer more space in low-density neighborhoods.

For the most part, of course, low-density neighborhoods offer more expensive housing than high-density areas. Detached homes cost much more than most apartments and condominiums. Among new units, the difference is even more striking; new high-density units are much more likely to be affordable than new single-family units.

Density is not always enough, however. To ensure affordability, local governments must intervene with programs and additional concessions if the new high-density units are also to be affordable. For a list of resources on affordable housing techniques, see Resources: *Making Housing More Affordable*, at the end of this report.

**T**his myth expresses an essential truth: more units per acre mean lower land costs per unit, especially if local governments allow builders meaningful density bonuses; smaller units cost less to build than larger ones. To encourage housing affordability, California cities do need to promote higher densities.

But we also know from experience and observation that not all high-density housing is affordable to low-income families. San Francisco's Nob and Telegraph Hills, Los Angeles' Wilshire Corridor, and high-rises in

downtown San Diego are all examples of upper-income areas where housing densities are quite high. Similarly, most Californians know that low-density neighborhoods often accommodate people of modest means. The residents of these neighborhoods often moved in shortly after the homes were built (several decades ago)—and before the huge escalation in California's home values that began in the early 1970's. With assistance, many families with limited incomes will continue to buy homes in these neighborhoods. Many other low-income

## Myth #2

High-density and affordable housing will cause too much traffic.

## Fact #2

People who live in affordable housing own fewer cars and drive less.

*In many high-density neighborhoods, and in most neighborhoods with a mix of housing types, traffic isn't a big problem.*

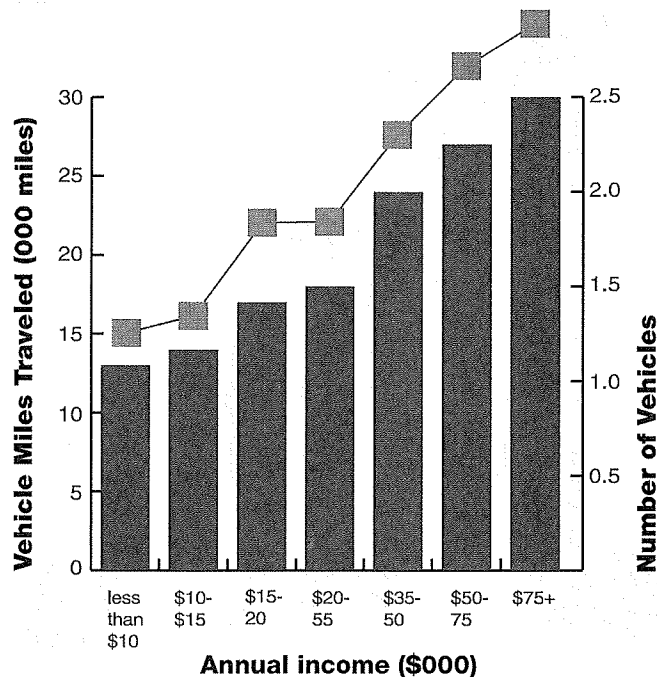
In California's six largest metropolitan areas, two-thirds of renters and over three-fourths of the households living below the poverty line own no vehicles or only one car, compared to 54 percent of all households and 44 percent of homeowner households.<sup>3</sup> With lower car ownership rates come fewer trips, and fewer single occupant auto commutes. According to the National Personal Transportation Survey in 1995, low-income households make 40 percent fewer trips per household than other households. Recent traffic growth owes much to existing development.

In many high-density neighborhoods, and in most neighborhoods with a mix of housing types, traffic isn't a big problem. Fewer auto trips occur in higher-density areas. In a neighborhood of 15 homes to the acre, one-third fewer auto trips occur, compared to a standard suburban tract.<sup>4</sup> A 1990 survey by the Sierra Club's Transportation Committee found that for every doubling of neighborhood density, vehicle miles traveled are reduced by 20 to 30 percent.

Car ownership rates are less in higher density areas. According to recent American Housing Survey data, multifamily developments have lower car ownership rates than single-family home tracts.

*To encourage housing affordability, California cities need to promote higher densities.*

## Low-income households own fewer cars, drive less



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, Residential Transportation Energy Consumption Survey, Household Vehicles Energy Consumption, 1994

High-density housing can encourage nearby retail development, along with ease of walking and transit use. Mixing housing with commercial development is ever more crucial for traffic control, since non-work trips constitute the largest number of trips.

Over three-fourths of trips in Southern California are non-work trips. With high-density

housing, stores serving neighborhood residents move in, allowing residents to walk to buy groceries or to the dry cleaner instead of driving.

Transit connections also become more common when neighborhood density increases, as transit is only cost-effective at densities above eight or 10 units per acre.<sup>5</sup>

### Myth #3

High-density development strains public services and infrastructure.

### Fact #3

Compact development offers greater efficiency in use of public services and infrastructure.

*Librarians, sheriffs' deputies, nurses, fire fighters, and many other vital members of our communities all need affordable housing.*

Higher-density residential development requires less extensive infrastructure networks than does sprawl. California developers must usually pay for sufficient infrastructure capacity to serve their own projects. When communities cannot take advantage economies of scale in providing infrastructure, extension costs rise. High-density housing helps provide economies of scale both in trunk lines and in treatment plants. The cost savings can be passed on to new residents, and the smaller debt load can help ensure fiscal stability throughout the community.

Infill development can sometimes take advantage of unused capacity in public services and infrastructure. Communities can save taxpayers and new residents money when housing construction is allowed in areas where infrastructure and service capacity has already been paid for and is underutilized. Infill development can also make use of a transit and provide better access to services, while improving economic viability.

Higher-density infill residential development can translate to higher retail sales. By approving new high-density development in infill locations, communities can revitalize stagnant

commercial districts and increase taxable sales—the primary source of revenue in most California jurisdictions.

According to the American Housing Survey, the development of single-family homes is much more likely to cause strain on local schools than high-density development. In most cases, a single-family home can have two to three times the numbers of school aged children per household.<sup>6</sup>

### Myth #4

People who live in high-density and affordable housing won't fit into my neighborhood.

### Fact #4

People who need affordable housing already live and work in your community.

spouse and a child, the family would be a very low-income household. A starting air-traffic controller in San Diego County, with income barely higher than \$31,000 a year, would also qualify for affordable housing. Librarians, sheriffs' deputies, nurses, fire fighters, and many other vital members of our communities all need affordable housing.

According to government definitions of affordable housing, families should devote no more than 30% of their income to rent or mortgage payments and utilities. Affordable housing often means housing whose residents don't pay too large a share of their incomes on rent or a mortgage.

Households earning lower incomes can have a variety of occupational and educational backgrounds. Families earning less

than four-fifths (80%) of the area's median income are officially lower-income households; families earning less than half of the median are known as very low-income households. For example, a starting elementary or high-school teacher in Mountain View (Santa Clara County), with a gross monthly income of around \$3,200, can afford to pay \$960 a month in rent, which qualifies as low-income if the teacher lives alone; if the salary must support a

People motivated by these concerns may just need to "meet" the residents of high-density and affordable housing. Residents often have been long time members of the community, and will continue to make contributions to their neighborhoods. For a list of resources that can introduce people to those who live in high-density and affordable housing, see Resources: *Meeting the Residents of Affordable Housing*, at the end of this report.

## Myth #5

Affordable housing reduces property values.

## Fact #5

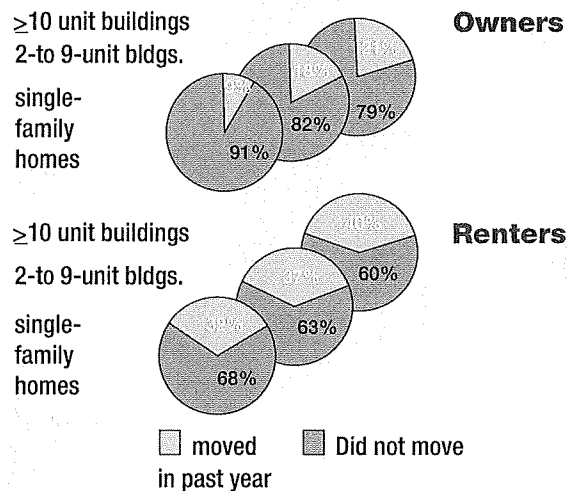
No study in California has ever shown that affordable housing developments reduce property values.<sup>7</sup>

*Architectural standards and adequate maintenance also strongly influence property values*

Many studies have been done. The truth is the single most significant factor affecting property values is the pre-existing value of the land in a given community or area. This in turn is based on supply and demand, proximity to major urban centers, nearby attractions (beachfront property, panoramic views), any negative factors such as environmental contaminants, and availability of adequate infrastructure and services.

Architectural standards and adequate maintenance also strongly influence property values, particularly as they apply to affordable rental properties. Properly maintained affordable housing developments, designed and built with sensitivity to the architectural and aesthetic standards desired by the community, may even increase property values.<sup>8</sup>

## Tenure much more important than density in recent moves



The majority of both renters and homeowners in California metropolitan areas move less than once a year. Homeowners move less often than renters, but even renters move seldom enough to form long-term ties to neighbors.

\* Source: U.S. Dept. of HUD, American Housing Surveys for San Francisco-Oakland, San Jose, Los Angeles-Long Beach, San Diego, Riverside-San Bernardino, and Anaheim-Santa Ana.

## Myth #6

Residents of affordable housing move too often to be stable community members.

## Fact #6

When rents are guaranteed to remain stable, tenants move less often.

*Affordable housing tenants invest in a neighborhood and community just as much as any other resident*

According to San Francisco's BRIDGE Housing, annual turnover in their affordable housing projects is less than 10 percent annually. This turnover rate is approximately the same as most single-family homeowners, around 10

percent, and much less than market-rate renters.

Affordable housing tenants invest in a neighborhood and community just as much as any other resident. Affordable housing tenants include families with school

age children, where the mother and father attend PTA meetings, and spend their spare time enjoying parks and other community facilities. These families and other affordable housing tenants are concerned for the public's health and safety just like other residents of the community.



## Myth #7

**High-density and affordable housing undermine community character.**

## Fact #7

**New affordable and high-density housing can always be designed to fit into existing communities.**

**D**ensity, as measured in units per acre, can be a deceiving measurement, but new housing at between 20 and 50 units per acre can be designed to fit in most California communities. The best way to convince people of this is to show them how well new housing can fit into their neighborhoods. see Resources: *Increasing housing densities*, at the end of this part, for a list of slide shows and videos.

Communities can also achieve higher densities by filling in the existing urban fabric with second units, duplexes, and conversion of outmoded or abandoned commercial

buildings. Local governments most often encourage infill by reducing regulations and restrictions.

New affordable housing differs little or not at all from any other development. When BRIDGE Housing opened its affordable *Pickleweed* housing development in upscale Mill Valley, potential buyers for neighboring condominiums mistook *Pickleweed* for the market-rate project. And when Habitat for Humanity built its self-help project in Rancho Santa Margarita, local developers and subcontractors contributed materials identical to those used in nearby market-rate

*High-density doesn't mean high-rise. When most people hear high-density housing, they imagine high-rise housing. But in most California cities, the market won't even support high-rise housing. More often than not, high-density development now means two- and three-story wood frame garden apartments that frequently are similar in scale to large home luxury housing.*

homes. Thanks to sensitive work by experienced architects, the new townhomes fit in perfectly (see case study). These developments are proof that affordable housing doesn't mean high-rise slums.

## Myth #8

**High-density and affordable housing increase crime.**

## Fact #8

**The design and use of public spaces has a far more significant affect on crime than density or income levels.**

**D**ensity does not cause crime. For many years social scientists have asked whether high-density housing causes crime. Not one study has shown any relationship between population or housing density and violent crime rates; once residents' incomes are taken into account, the effect of density on non-violent crime decreases to non-significance.

After studying housing and neighborhoods throughout the country, Oscar Newman concluded that the design and use of public spaces, and

particularly the sense of ownership and control that residents have over these areas, has far more significant affect on crime than density or income levels.

In neighborhoods suffering from disinvestment, particularly those areas lacking jobs and community services, crime can be higher.

Local governments can help address legitimate concerns about crime by working with existing residents and law enforcement to develop community-based strategies to reduce crime.

*Management & Design are Key.*

Local governments can also help protect the entire community, including new affordable housing residents themselves, by attending to details at the project level. Most important is effective professional onsite management, with strong tenant-screening and good security systems. Design, too, can play an important role in protecting residents and neighbors of high-density or affordable housing, especially by ensuring visibility. New developments should also contain a mix of unit types to accommodate different kinds of households. When residents have different occupations and family types, someone will probably be home in the development almost all the time.

## In Conclusion

In this decade, California's persistent affordable housing shortage has become so commonplace that it seems natural. Planners and elected officials must stop believing another pervasive myth: *that they can do nothing to create affordable housing*. This report shows that many California communities now believe they have the creativity, resources, and will to house all those who need shelter. As a result, they have established that, in fact, California communities can become more open, more accepting, and better places for old-timers, new immigrants, or their children.

## Case Studies

### Renaissance

High-Density and Affordable Housing Help Balance Silicon Valley



High-technology firms create thousands of jobs in Silicon Valley, but housing construction does not keep pace. New workers have to commute long distances to reach their jobs. As a result, Silicon Valley suffers from some of the worst traffic in California and from the State's highest housing prices. In the late 1980s, San Jose set out to clear traffic and ease the housing shortfall by changing its land-use policies. The Renaissance project, on a 56-acre site in north San Jose, was originally designated for research and development. It had enough infrastructure -- including a wide road and convenient access to

planned light rail to handle a large number of new jobs.

In 1991, Renaissance Associates, a partnership between General Atlantic Development and Forest City Development, proposed with the landowners that San Jose rezone the site for over 1,500 moderate -- and high-density rental apartments and for-sale town homes, neighborhood retail, and a day-care center. San Jose readily agreed.

The project developers started work early with neighbors living in an existing single-family development on the site's northern boundary to provide appropriate transitions into Renaissance, while making best use of the large existing road. In response to neighbors' concerns, the developers located the lowest-density town home component adjacent to the existing residences, and provided ample setbacks between the new attached homes & the 1950s-vintage single-family homes.

The developers responded to concerns about traffic by canceling initial plans for a through street that would connect the existing neighborhood with Renaissance Village.

This high-density development shows that often repeated myths about the effects of high-density housing on public services and transportation aren't always true. San Jose's ambitious plans for employment development in the area led the City to require the construction of more infrastructure than was eventually necessary both on the site itself and in neighboring areas of the City. Later, the City determined that it could alleviate traffic throughout its road network by shifting the location of new residences and workplaces.

The composition of the project itself, with over 250 affordable apartments, market-rate apartments, and attached ownership units, further assures balance between the

housing and Silicon Valley's new jobs. The site design, which features pedestrian-friendly walkways and easy connections to the Tasman Light Rail, will allow Renaissance Village residents to leave their cars—in their garages altogether.

The development also shows that, with advance planning and sensitivity to neighbors' concerns, NIMBY sentiments can be prevented. The neighbors and the developers displayed an attitude of openness that ensured both a smooth approval process and a better project.

## San Paulo

Good Design Beats NIMBYism in Irvine



The City of Irvine, one of California's largest planned communities, added tens of thousands of new jobs as the information economy boomed. But the City's housing supply—especially housing for families with modest incomes—could not keep up with its job creation. In late 1990s, the City and The Irvine Company, which owns all the undeveloped land in the City, identified a 15-acre multifamily site as appropriate for new affordable housing.

To ensure that such a large and prominent new development would fit into West Park Village, the Irvine neighborhood that surrounds it, The Irvine Company contacted the Costa Mesa-based architecture firm of McLarand Vasquez & Partners (MV&P). MV&P, which had also designed the dense and highly popular Corte Bella town homes across the street from the project site,

designed San Paulo's 382 units in 27 separate buildings, with flats and town homes of various sizes. San Paulo's overall density reaches about 25 units per acre, with room left over for two swimming pools, generous landscaping, a tot lot, and numerous features to smooth the transition from San Paulo's surroundings into its highest-density areas.

To show the City's residents that affordable housing and its residents belong in Irvine, The Irvine Company also met early with West Park Village residents. The neighbors were won over by the open process and the high-quality design. The Irvine Company and the City emphasized that San Paulo's residents would be members of the Irvine community. Teachers, firefighters, and other essential contributors to the City's life previously forced out of the City by its high housing prices would find an affordable place to live if San Paulo were approved.

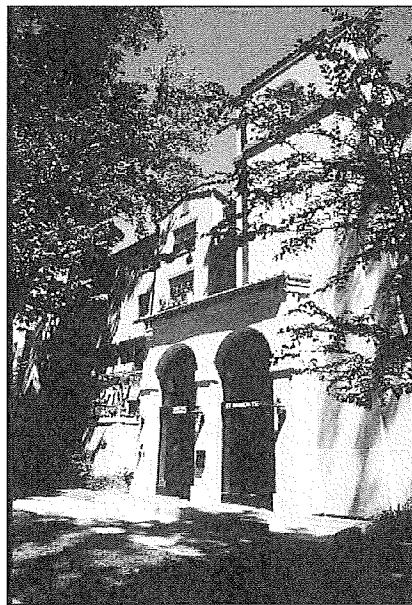
Also key to the project's success was the participation of its non-profit partner, San Francisco's BRIDGE Housing. BRIDGE provided vital advice on affordable housing to the other members of the development team, assisted in the City's approval process, and coordinated the project's financing, which came from City & county sources and State-authorized bonds and tax credits, with credit enhancement by Sumitomo Bank, Ltd. Forty percent of the units are affordable to families earning less than half of Orange County's median income of \$56,500; another 50 units are also designated as affordable to low- and moderate-income families.

In Irvine, the developer, architect, non-profit partner, and City staff needed to overcome one key obstacle: unfamiliarity. Residents' preconceptions fit the myths—and not the reality—of today's mixed-income, non-profit sponsored affordable housing. By being sensitive to both the design of

surrounding developments and neighboring residents' desires to feel included in decisions, the development team has created a successful model for emulation throughout southern California.

## Midtown Sacramento

### Residents Play a Role in Creating Affordable Family Housing in Neighborhood



Midtown Sacramento boasts a diverse mix of housing and small businesses. Midtown streets are lined with early 1900 Victorian houses, some of which are occupied by high-income families, others have been converted into multiple rental units and more still are occupied by office-type businesses, primarily law firms.

Building family housing in an established downtown isn't easy, but Mercy Housing California demonstrates that when the lines of communication are opened, a dense multifamily project can gain public support.

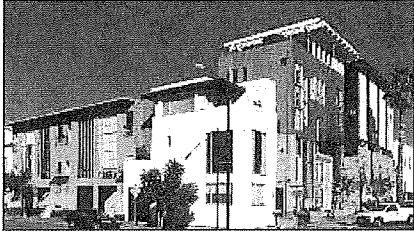
Saint Francis of Assisi Elementary School and Church is located in a midtown neighborhood, a block from historic Sutter's Fort

and nearby a number of boutiques interspersed in a largely residential neighborhood. The School and Church occupied over half of a city block and the Church had rights to the entire block. The bishop was interested in developing housing on the underutilized area of the block. One of the famous Victorian houses succumbed to a fire by transients. The Church had the remains removed and was left with an eyesore and potentially hazardous attraction next to the School playground. Although there are high-rises housing elderly residents in the midtown neighborhood, community members and Saint Francis parishioners didn't perceive an affordable multifamily housing project fitting in to the existing residential neighborhood. There was significant opposition to building such a project.

Mercy Housing California enlisted the assistance of Michael Friedman, an experienced in fill development architect with Tong and Bottomly, to conduct a series of workshops to listen to community and parishioner concerns. To build the desired number of family units composed of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, the architectural firm designed the building from the inside out. Conscientious of local resident concerns, the project saved the School playground while preserving the privacy of the new 46 affordable family housing units. Additionally, local input resulted in new public space for the community to enjoy. The project has been built and occupied for several years and has become an integral part of the midtown neighborhood. Residents and parishioners, who at first feared the project, now point with pride to the community asset they had a hand in creating.

## San Diego

### Small Scale, Mixed-Income Housing is good fit for Little Italy Neighborhood Development



The sloping landscape at the northern downtown edge of San Diego Bay was once home to the many Italian families who derived a living from the highly successful tuna fishing industry. Although large-scale commercial fishing is now a memory, the district's

southern European character remains. Always a neighborhood first and then a commercial and light industrial center, Little Italy's spirit is perhaps best typified by the rebuilt Washington Elementary School and development of the adjacent Amici Park, which serves both as a playground for the school and a park including a bocce ball court for the community. Its lovely vistas now offer an urban neighborhood with single-family homes, condominiums, lofts and apartments. The India Street commercial strip is alive with Italian restaurants, small cafes, art and graphic studios/galleries, specialty shops and low-rise offices.

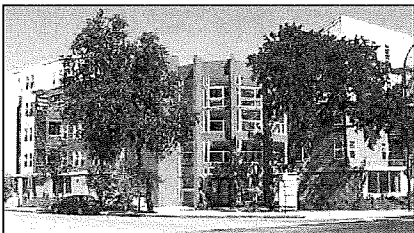
Little Italy Neighborhood Development (LIND), one of the region's most innovative residential

ideas, was one of six new successful affordable housing projects that has received the State Housing Director's Award for Housing Development Excellence in 2000. The Little Italy development consists of 16 row homes, 12 affordable rental lofts and 37 low- and moderate-income apartments. This successful development demonstrates that smaller scale, mixed-income housing can be infilled in an urban setting.

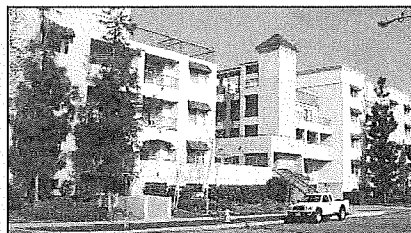
Continuing infill for-sale and rental residential projects is further reinforcing little Italy's distinctive character. Property has been acquired recently by the Redevelopment Agency for future housing developments.

## What Does Density Look Like?

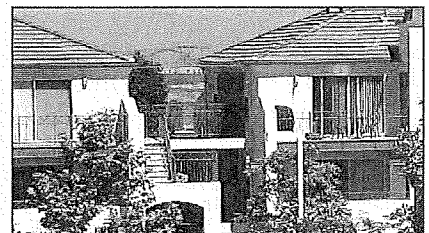
Providing a broad range of housing densities is key to ensuring housing opportunities for all residents. Density is calculated by determining the number of dwelling units per acre (du/ac). But, what do different housing densities look like?



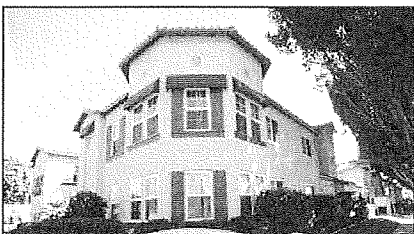
**Coggins Square Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, CA**  
42 Units/Acre



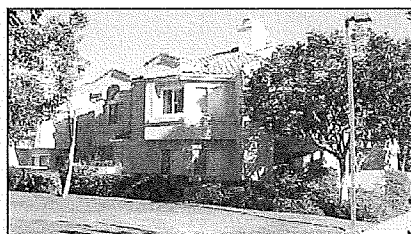
**Chesnut Place, Orange, CA**  
100 Unit/Acre



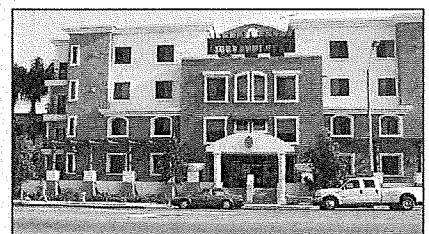
**Woodpark Apartments, Aliso Viejo, CA**  
24 Units/Acre



**Casa San Juan, Oxnard, CA**  
64 Units/Acre of Family Housing



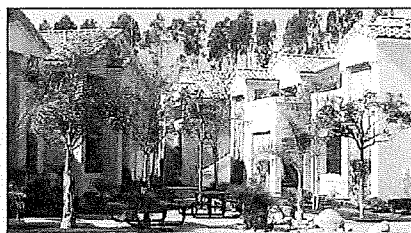
**San Marcos Apartments, Irvine, CA**  
64 Units/Acre



**Fullerton City Lights, Fullerton, CA**  
83 Units/Acre



**Russell Manor, Sacramento, CA**  
66 Unites/Acre of Elderly Housing



**Arroyo Vista Apartments, Mission Viejo, CA**  
14 Units/Acre



**San Paulo Apartments, Irvine, CA**  
25 Unit/Acre

# Resources

Some communities will need to see more specific examples of good high-density and affordable housing before being convinced that they can live with it. In other cases, residents may need to meet people who live in affordable housing. Almost universally, local governments and planners need advice and information about how best to ensure the design of quality affordable and high-density housing in their communities. Luckily, more and more resources--books, pamphlets, handbooks, slide shows, and videos--are becoming available. This list includes only a few resources; those interested are encouraged to contact the California Department of Housing and Community Development (916/445-4728) for ordering information on most of these publications and for additional suggestions.

## Making Housing More Affordable

*Blue Print 2001: Housing Element Ideas and Solutions for a Sustainable and Affordable Future*, Bay Area Housing, 2001. Blue Print 2001 includes a large directory of housing programs and strategies with a wealth of case studies, including adaptive reuse, air rights development, infill development, second units and density bonus developments.

*There Goes the Neighborhood? The Impact of Subsidized Multi-Family Housing on Urban Neighborhoods*, by Edward Goetz, Hin Kin Lam and Anne Heitlinger. Center for Urban and Regional Affairs and Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1996

*Affordable Housing Slide Show*. This 1989 slide show, also from LHEAP, focuses on the San Francisco Bay Area, on techniques for achieving housing affordability; available on loan from HCD for the cost of mailing plus a deposit. For more information, call HCD at 916/445-4728.

*Affordable Housing Handbook*. A 1991 publication of the California Coalition for Rural Housing. This handbook offers an exhaustive list of programs and policies that local governments can use to ensure the construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable housing. \$5.00 To order, call CCRH at 916/443-4448.

*Creating a Local Advisory Commission on Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing*. This 1992 publication by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development guides local governments that want to establish committees to identify and reform ordinances and policies that reduce the supply of housing and increase its costs. \$4. To order, call HUD User at 800/245-2691.

*Affordable Housing: Proactive & Reactive Planning Strategies*. This recent publication discusses both "affirmative" measures such as, inclusionary zoning, linkage, affordable housing finance, affordable housing preservation, and infill-and reactive measures, including

zoning and subdivision reform, growth management, impact fees, environmental legislation, and administrative reform. \$29 includes shipping and handling. To order, call the Planners' Bookstore at 312/955-9100.

*Affordable Housing: Restoring the Dream*. 15-minute video (1989) by the Urban Land Institute promotes cost savings in single-family housing through flexible development standards and expedited processing. \$34.95 for non-ULI members. Order number A-17. To order, call 800/321-5011.

*The Effects of Subsidized and Affordable Housing on Property Values: A Survey of Research*. Out of 15 published papers on subsidized housing, group homes for the handicapped, and manufactured housing, 14 concluded that this housing had no significant negative effects on the values of neighboring properties. Some reported positive property value effects. Free. To order, call HCD at 916/445-4728.

*Second Units*. This paper, updated to reflect 1990 amendments to State law increasing the permissible size of second units, describes the advantages of and statutory requirements for the development of second units. Free. To order, call HCD at 916/445-4728.

## Meeting the Residents of Affordable Housing

*California Homeless and Housing Coalition: A 42-minute video*, Neighbors in Need, documents the experiences of three organizations in establishing facilities for the homeless. The 1991 video features interviews with residents and clients, as well as with one-skeptical neighbor who now advocate for other similar facilities, in Hayward, San Mateo County, and Los Angeles. \$15. To order, call 916/447-0390.

*Realize the Dream*. The City of Fremont Housing Department produced a five-minute video, now available through HCD introducing decision-makers and citizens to the residents of three of the City's bond-financed mixed-income apartment projects. Features interviews with residents of both subsidized and unsubsidized units. For information on how to obtain, call HCD at 916/445-4728.

*We Call It Home: A Tour of Affordable Housing*. 16-minutes. Recent video produced by Marin County's Ecumenical Association for Housing (EAH) introduces several of EAH's projects and the people who live there, in Marin and Contra Costa counties. \$15 to purchase, postage costs to borrow. Call Betty Pagett at 415/258-1800.

*NIMBY fears, community perceptions: Analysis of Affordable and Market Rate Housing Developments in Oakland, California*, by Cathy Cha. Dept. of City and Regional Planning, University of California at Berkeley, 1996

HCD offers a website with a section titled: NIMBY Resources at [www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/nimby](http://www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/nimby). The page includes resources and tools for addressing NIMBY concerns about housing

and especially affordable housing and/or high-density housing.

## Increasing Housing Densities in New and Existing Development

*Good Neighbors: Affordable Family Housing (Design for Living)* by Tom Jones, William Pettus (Contributor), Michael Pyatok, and R. Thomas Jones. 1996. McGraw-Hill Professional Publishing. Based on the acclaimed AIA Design for Housing initiative and supported by and NEA grant. This is an authoritative guide to modern affordable housing design. This landmark book provides architects, landscape architects, planners, developers, advocates, government officials, and policy makers with workable answers for the design of affordable, aesthetically pleasing housing.

*Density by Design: New Directions in Residential Development* by Steven D. Fader, Vincent Scully. 137 pages 2nd edition, March 15, 2000, Urban Land Institute (ULI). This document provides innovative solutions to the challenge of developing higher density housing that will be successful in the marketplace. Case studies of 14 projects show how others have implemented the best new ideas in residential development and design. Projects covered range in density from single-family subdivisions to downtown high-rise apartments and illustrate many up-to-the minute concepts: new urbanism, transit-oriented development, mixed-income and mixed-housing types, urban infill, and adaptive use. They also reveal trends and standards for developing projects that provide a sense of place, use land efficiently without compromising livability, and that can pass the twin tests of governmental approval and marketability.

*Compact Development Presentation*. This presentation with 39 slides from the Local Government Commission highlights some of the needs, myths and misconceptions about compact housing and its role in helping to create more livable communities. Slide shows may be purchased or rented. \$50.00 for complete set, \$2.50 for individual slides, or rent for \$15.00 plus \$50.00 deposit.

*Multifamily Residential Design Principles*. The City of Sacramento published this excellent guidebook November 19, 1999 to provide multifamily design guidelines for the City Planning Commission.

*Big Blue Book of Affordable Housing Case Studies*, Alexander and Edwards Publishing, 2000 Compact and Balanced Development: Designs for California Living. This 15-minute video by the American Institute of Architects California Council provides tangible examples of infill and higher-density developments that enjoy community support, and highlights the role of local governments in their approval and construction. AIA members: \$25; non-members: \$40. To order, call 916/448-9082. In late 1993, the AIACC will release a follow-up urban design video demonstrating how to respond to community concerns, increase density, encourage mixed-use transit-oriented development, and obtain innovative financing.

*Room Enough.* This publication, by San Francisco's Greenbelt Alliance, discusses five strategies using vacant land more effectively, building more housing along major streets, bringing homes and people downtown, adding second units on existing home sites, and recycling lands no longer needed for industry that communities can use to accommodate more housing while meeting concerns about community character and open space. \$9. To order, call Greenbelt Alliance at 415/543-4291.

### **Transit-Oriented, Mixed-Use and Infill Development**

*Building Livable Communities: A Policymaker's Guide to Infill Development.* The January 2001 publication from the Local Government Commission helps to answer two of a policymaker's most frequently asked questions: "Why build in town?" and "What can local government do to encourage infill development?" This guidebook suggests a number of ways to create infill development in your community. These include: planning proactively; assuring public participation; using public facilities and development to attract investment; assisting with project financing; zoning for mixed-use and higher-density development; encouraging rehabilitation; providing in-kind assistance; streamlining the permit process; providing public services; and addressing toxic contamination.

*Building Livable Communities: A Policymaker's Guide to Transit-Oriented Development.* This is a companion guidebook on transit-oriented development from the Local Government Commission. More and more, community leaders are recognizing that building residences, stores and work places near transit stops can play a major role in creating places where we enjoy living, working and playing. The guidebook addresses the questions of "why build near transit?" and "why should elected officials, land-use agencies and developers pay more attention to development near transit than to any other kind of development?" The guidebook has helpful advice, model examples, and resources to help create livable, transit-oriented communities in your region.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>[Statewide Housing Plan: Raising the Roof. California Housing Development Projections and Constraints 1997-2020](#), California Department of Housing and Community Development, May 2000

<sup>2</sup>[Still Locked Out: New Data Confirm that California's Housing Affordability Crisis Continues](#), California Budget Project, March 2001

<sup>3</sup>American Housing Survey

<sup>4</sup>John Holtzclaw, 1997m Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 1990 Household Travel Survey

<sup>5</sup>Cambridge Systematics and Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas. Making the Land Use Transportation Air Quality Connection: Analysis of Alternatives. Vol. 5 Friends of Oregon

<sup>6</sup>American Housing Survey, 1999; National Multi Housing Council, Research Notes, August 24, 2000

<sup>7</sup>Paul Cummings and John Landis, "Relationships between Affordable Housing Developments and Neighboring Property Values" (Berkeley: University of California Institute of Urban & Regional Development, 1993)

<sup>8</sup>California Department of Housing and Community Development, "The Effects of Subsidized and Affordable Housing on Property Values: A Survey of Research" (Sacramento: DHCD, 1988), 2

### **Published by the California Planning Roundtable**

The California Planning Roundtable is an organization of experienced planning professionals who are members of the American Planning Association. Membership is balanced between the public and private sectors, and between Northern and Southern California. The mission of the Roundtable is to promote creativity and excellence in planning by providing leadership in addressing important, unresolved planning issues in California.

### **Members of the California Planning Roundtable, May 2002:**

**Jeff Carpenter**  
*AICP, Community Redevelopment Agency, City of Los Angeles*

**Elaine Costello**  
*AICP, City of Mountain View*

**Paul C. Crawford**  
*FAICP, Crawford Multari & Clark Associates, San Luis Obispo*

**Cathy E. Creswell**  
*Calif Dept. Housing and Community Development*

**Linda C. Dalton**  
*PhD, AICP, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo*

**Susan A. DeSantis**  
*IBI Group, Irvine*

**Michael Dyett**  
*AICP, Dyett and Bhatia, San Francisco*

**David Early**  
*Design, Community & Environment, Berkeley*

**Janet Fairbanks**  
*AICP, San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego*

**Joanne Freilich**  
*AICP, UCLA Extension Public Policy Program, Los Angeles*

**Wayne Goldberg**  
*AICP, City of Santa Rosa*

**Al Herson**  
*FAICP, SAIC, Sacramento*

**Sharon Hightower**  
*Hightower/Associates, Claremont*

**Stan Hoffman**  
*FAICP, Stanley R. Hoffman Associates, Los Angeles*

**M. Thomas Jacobson**  
*JD, AICP, Sonoma State University*

**Vivian Kahn**  
*FAICP, Kahn/Mortimer/Associates, Oakland*

**Sandra Massa-Lavitt**  
*Palm Desert*

**Mike McCoy**  
*University of California, Davis*

**Michael Moore**  
*City of Petaluma*

**John W. McKenna**  
*San Clemente*

**Roberta Mundie**  
*AICP, Mundie & Associates, San Francisco*

**Steve Preston**  
*FAICP, City of San Gabriel*

**Marvin D. Roos**  
*AICP, Mainiero, Smith and Associates, Palm Springs*

**Janet Ruggiero**  
*FAICP, City of Citrus Heights*

**David Salazar**  
*AICP, Claremont Graduate University*

**R. Ann Siracusa**  
*AICP, Santee*

**Richard B. Stephens**  
*The AEI-CASC Companies, Colton*

**Susan Stoddard, PhD**  
*FAICP, InfoUse, Berkeley*

**Woodie Tescher**  
*EIP Associates, Los Angeles*

**Frank Wein**  
*FAICP, DPDS, URS Corporation, Los Angeles*

**Mark Winogrand**  
*AICP, City of Culver City*

### **Project Team**

*Project Manager:*  
**Susan DeSantis**

*California Planning Roundtable project team:*

**David Early**  
**Wayne Goldberg**  
**Vivian Kahn**  
**Marvin Roos**  
**Janet Ruggiero**

*California Department of Housing & Community Development project team:*

**Cathy Creswell**  
**Paul McDougall**  
**Paul Dirksen**

*Report Design and Production:*  
**Pierre Rademaker Design**  
[www.rademakerdesign.com](http://www.rademakerdesign.com)

*Cover Rendering © 2002 :*  
**Elizabeth Moule & Stefanos Polyzoides**  
**Architects and Urbanists**  
*Pasadena, CA*

# 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT



# Preface

The Housing Element is a major part of San Francisco's General Plan that seeks to ensure adequate housing for current and future San Franciscans. Housing element law requires local governments plan for their existing and projected housing need, by providing opportunities for housing development, rather than constraining opportunities. The State allocates the region's share of the statewide housing need to regional agencies; in the San Francisco Bay Area, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) provides this allocation, based on the region's forecast for population, households, and employment. San Francisco's share of the regional housing need for 2015 through 2022 has been pegged at 28,870 new units, with almost 60% to be affordable. Since 2002, the regional population, household and job forecast has been "policy-based," meaning that it promotes policy objectives which increase housing development and alternative transportation modes, specifically by increasing the proportion of growth near transit and in existing urban areas. Furthermore, with the adoption of SB375 and its requirement that regional planning agencies create a plan to meet targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction tied to land use, the City can expect to see further development directed towards existing urban areas like San Francisco to increase housing near jobs, reduce urban sprawl, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This Housing Element details objectives and policies that address this growing housing demand, focusing on strategies that can be accomplished within the city's limited land supply and that meet the housing goals developed during the outreach for this document, which include 1) prioritizing permanently affordable housing; 2) recognizing and preserving neighborhood character; 3) integrating housing, jobs, transportation and infrastructure; and 4) continuing to be a regional model of sustainability.

The Housing Element consists of two parts. Part I contains the background data and needs analysis, forming the basis for policy formulation. Part II lists objectives and policies and describes the programs to be carried out over the next five years to implement these objectives and policies.

1. Part I describes and analyzes changes in San Francisco population, households, and housing stock characteristics. It analyzes existing and projected housing needs resulting from job growth and population and household projections. It identifies the needs of special user groups such as the homeless, physically disabled, elderly, minorities, families with children, and artists, and specifies the housing affordability levels needed by these households. Part I also contains an inventory of land suitable for residential development and examines potential constraints to meeting the City's housing needs. It notes that meeting the estimated housing need will require a rate of housing production far greater than what has been achieved in previous years.

2. Part II contains a comprehensive set of housing objectives and policies that are the framework for decision-making, priority setting and program implementation. It continues many existing City housing policies that emphasize affordable housing production, permanent affordability, and the protection of the existing housing stock. New policies strive to create a range of new housing to meet spatial needs of all of our residents, particularly those who cannot afford market-rate housing; ensure development is appropriate to the unique needs of individual neighborhood they are located within; use community planning processes to ensure that the best qualities of neighborhoods are not only maintained, but strengthened; link new housing to public infrastructure such as transit, open space and community facilities, and privately provided infrastructure such as retail and neighborhood services; and prioritize housing development that reduces the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions.



These objectives and policies are followed by related Implementation Actions that will implement the Housing Element including timelines, steps, projected outcomes and entities responsible for each action. They are also followed by a series of Strategies For Further Review, which require further examination and study prior to their implementation. Implementation involves various City agencies, including the Planning Department, the Mayor's Office of Housing, the Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure (formerly known as the Redevelopment Agency), the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission, the San Francisco Housing Authority, the Department of Building Inspection, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Public Health, the City Attorney's Office, the Rent Stabilization Board, and the Human Rights Commission; but it also depends on the work of community housing organizations, non-profit and for-profit housing developers, and the community organizations and citizens of San Francisco.

#### Consistency with San Francisco's General Plan

The San Francisco General Plan, including this Housing Element, is an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of objectives and policies. The other elements of the City's General Plan, as well as the area plans which cover specific geographic areas of the city, are consistent with this Housing Element.

San Francisco Charter Section 4.105 of the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco provides to the Planning Commission the opportunity to periodically recommend Planning Code amendments to the Board of Supervisors. It states: "The General Plan shall consist of goals, policies and programs for the future physical development of the City and County that take into consideration social, economic and environmental factors. In developing their recommendations, the Commission shall consult with commissions and elected officials, and shall hold public hearings as part of a comprehensive planning process. The Planning Department, in consultation with other departments and the City Administrator, shall periodically prepare special area, neighborhood and other plans designed to carry out the General Plan, and periodically prepare implementation programs and schedules which link the General Plan to the allocation of local, state and federal resources."

This section requires that proposed General Plan amendments are consistent across the General Plan and the eight priority policies of the Planning Code Section 101.1. As such, the San Francisco General Plan is regularly updated to ensure consistency. Any amendment to the General Plan, including adoption of this Housing Element, is accompanied by a comprehensive review of the General Plan for consistency. Where necessary, Planning staff will recommend conforming amendments to the General Plan, so that the General Plan is aligned across its elements and area plans.

Section 101.1(b) of the San Francisco Planning Code provides the City's eight Priority Policies, and designates these policies as the basis upon which inconsistencies in the General Plan are resolved, should they occur. Two General Plan Priority Policies relate specifically to housing, and are supported directly by this Housing Element. These are:

- That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced (See Objectives 1-3, Objectives 7-9, and all related policies under those objectives).
- That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods (See Objective 2, Objective 11, and all related policies under those objectives).

The other Priority Policies are supported by, and not impacted by, this Housing Element.



# 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT



## PART I: DATA AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

# I. Population, Employment and Income Trends

San Francisco continues to grow and has surpassed its population peak of the 1950s; by 2012, some 808,000 people called San Francisco home. A slight shift in the city's racial composition was noted in the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012 American Community Survey (ACS) estimate but San Francisco continues to be a culturally and racially diverse place. San Francisco households are generally better off and median incomes are rising; the 2012 ACS estimated San Francisco's median income at about \$73,802. San Francisco is also growing older. The median age of San Francisco residents has been rising since 2000, especially as the baby boom generation ages. In 2012, the estimated median age was 38.5 years. Families with children constitute a small portion of San Francisco households. Under 12% of the city's total population is 14 years old and younger, giving San Francisco the distinction of having the fewest children per capita of all major U.S. cities.

## A. POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

### 1. Population Change

San Francisco has seen an increase in population and jobs in recent years. The 2010 Census counted over 805,235 San Franciscans while the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimated some 568,720 jobs in the city.

The 2012 American Community Survey estimated San Francisco’s population to be about 807,755. ABAG projects continued population growth to 981,800 by 2030 or an overall increase of about 174,045 people who will need to be housed over the next 18 years (Table I-1 and Figure I-1). Household growth, an approximation of the demand for housing, indicates a need for some 72,530 new units in the 18 years to 2030 just to accommodate projected population and household growth (Table I-1).

|                        | 2000    | 2010    | 2020*   | 2030*   | 2040*     |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Total Population       | 776,733 | 805,235 | 890,400 | 981,800 | 1,085,700 |
| Population Change      | 52,774  | 28,502  | 85,165  | 91,400  | 103,900   |
| % Population Change    | 7.3%    | 3.7%    | 10.6%   | 10.3%   | 10.6%     |
| Household Population   | 756,976 | 780,971 | 863,800 | 952,500 | 1,051,100 |
| % HH Population Change | 8.2%    | 3.2%    | 10.6%   | 10.3%   | 10.4%     |
| Households             | 329,700 | 345,811 | 379,600 | 413,370 | 447,350   |
| Households Change      | 24,116  | 16,111  | 33,789  | 33,770  | 33,980    |
| % Households Change    | 7.9%    | 4.9%    | 9.8%    | 8.9%    | 8.2%      |

Table I-1  
Population Trends and ABAG Projections, San Francisco, 2000–2040

SOURCES: Census Bureau, ABAG, *Projections 2013*

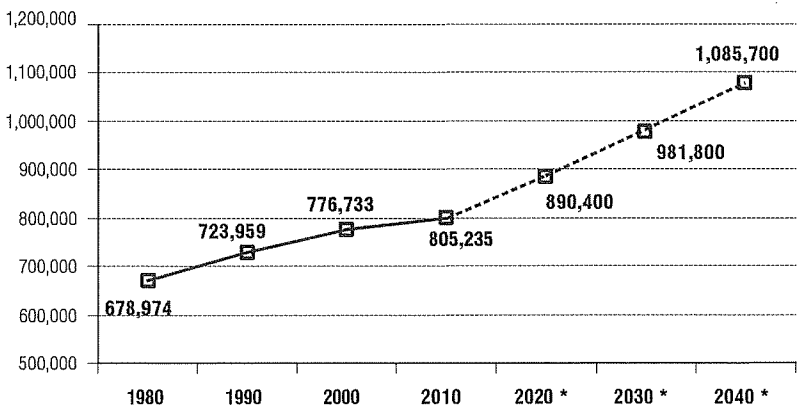


Figure I-1  
Population Trends and ABAG Projections, San Francisco, 1980–2040

SOURCES: Census Bureau, ABAG *Projections 2013*

## B. EMPLOYMENT

### 1. Jobs

Employment growth in San Francisco and the region directly affects the demand for housing as new jobs attract new residents. As shown in Table I-8, total employment in San Francisco is recovering from the economic crisis of the late 2000s. The crash of dot-com ventures and the 2008 great recession show a net job loss in the years between 2000 and 2010 of approximately 65,700 (see Table I-8). ABAG forecasts a recovery in San Francisco, with employment steadily increasing to 759,000 by 2040. During the 2020 to 2030 period, the ABAG model shows 36,440 new jobs (5.4% increase) in San Francisco; from 2030-2040, 51,830 additional jobs are projected—a 7.3% gain.

| Year   | Total No. of Jobs | Growth (Loss) | % Change |
|--------|-------------------|---------------|----------|
| 2000   | 634,430           | 55,250        | 9.5%     |
| 2010   | 568,720           | (65,710)      | -10.4%   |
| 2020 * | 671,230           | 102,510       | 18.0%    |
| 2030 * | 707,670           | 36,440        | 5.4%     |
| 2040 * | 759,500           | 51,830        | 7.3%     |

SOURCES: Census Bureau; \* ABAG, *Projections 2013*

*Table I-8*  
**San Francisco Employment Trends and Projections, 2000–2040**

From 2020 through 2040, the entire nine-county Bay Area is expected to add almost 518,080 jobs. Of that total, about 88,270 will be created in San Francisco and the city's share of regional employment will remain at about 17% (Table I-9). Maintaining this job share ensures San Francisco's continuing role as an employment hub, making full use of existing infrastructure. Future targeted infrastructure enhancements to core job centers such as San Francisco will support overall reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the region.

| Year   | San Francisco | Bay Area Total | San Francisco as % of Bay Area |
|--------|---------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 2000   | 634,430       | 3,753,460      | 16.9%                          |
| 2010   | 568,720       | 3,385,300      | 16.8%                          |
| 2020 * | 671,230       | 3,987,150      | 16.8%                          |
| 2030 * | 707,670       | 4,196,580      | 15.9%                          |
| 2040 * | 759,500       | 4,505,230      | 16.9%                          |

SOURCE: ABAG, *Projections 2013*

*Table I-9*  
**San Francisco and Bay Area Regional Employment Projections, 2000–2040**

Job growth in the next 20 years is expected to be strongest in the “Professional and Managerial Services” industry (53,830 new jobs), followed by the “Health and Educational Services” category (23,800), and the “Arts, Recreation, and Other Services” segment (25,460) (see Table I-10). In terms of percentage growth for the 2020-2040 period, “Health and Educational Services” (25.7%) and “Professional and Managerial Services” (25%) industries lead the way. Almost all sectors of the local economy will have experienced net employment gains between the decennial censuses. Only the “Transportation and Utilities” (2,050 less jobs) sector will see job loss. By 2020, “Professional and Managerial Services” will have experienced the largest gain – some 35,840 or 25% of this sector’s jobs. “Arts, Recreation, and Other Services” employment will have gained some 18,270 jobs during that time—a gain of 19%.

*Table I-10*  
**Employment Trends and Projections by Industry, San Francisco, 2010–2040**

| Industry                           | 2010    | 2020*   | 2030*   | 2040*   | 2010 - 2040 |          |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|----------|
|                                    |         |         |         |         | Change      | % Change |
| Agriculture & Natural Resources    | 420     | 440     | 400     | 350     | (70)        | -16.7%   |
| Construction                       | 14,860  | 22,030  | 23,530  | 25,620  | 10,760      | 72.4%    |
| Manufacturing & Wholesale          | 21,960  | 23,230  | 20,980  | 19,210  | (2,750)     | -12.5%   |
| Retail                             | 44,970  | 49,030  | 49,470  | 50,700  | 5,730       | 12.7%    |
| Transportation & Utilities         | 12,030  | 9,980   | 9,680   | 9,150   | (2,880)     | -23.9%   |
| Information                        | 20,800  | 26,520  | 27,020  | 28,060  | 7,260       | 34.9%    |
| Financial & Leasing (F I R E)      | 54,660  | 70,310  | 71,160  | 73,590  | 18,930      | 34.6%    |
| Professional & Managerial Services | 129,800 | 165,640 | 183,630 | 207,060 | 77,260      | 59.5%    |
| Health & Educational Services      | 64,660  | 79,590  | 88,460  | 100,020 | 35,360      | 54.7%    |
| Arts, Recreation & Other Services  | 106,390 | 124,660 | 131,850 | 141,650 | 35,260      | 33.1%    |
| Government                         | 98,170  | 99,800  | 101,490 | 104,090 | 5,920       | 6.0%     |
| TOTAL                              | 568,720 | 671,230 | 748,100 | 759,500 | 190,780     | 33.5%    |

SOURCE: ABAG, *Projections 2013*

## 2. Employed Residents and Commuters

The number of employed residents in San Francisco is project to increase (Table I-11) A total of 480,800 employed residents is projected by 2015 and ABAG’s *Projections 2013* also indicate that this trend will continue over the 20 years with the addition of over 83,600 employed residents between 2020 and 2040.

| Year | Employed Residents | No. of Change | % Change |
|------|--------------------|---------------|----------|
| 2010 | 461,300            | 73,200        | 18.9%    |
| 2015 | 480,800            | 19,500        | 4.2%     |
| 2020 | 501,600            | 20,800        | 4.3%     |
| 2025 | 516,600            | 35,200        | 7.7%     |
| 2030 | 541,400            | 27,200        | 5.5%     |
| 2035 | 564,000            | 62,400        | 12.4%    |
| 2040 | 585,200            | 21,200        | 3.8%     |

SOURCE: ABAG, *Projections 2013*

The number of workers per household is also projected to increase between 2010 and 2015, from 1.22 to 1.27 (Table I-12). This number is expected to remain fairly constant until 2040 when it will increase to 1.28 workers per household. The Bay Area region will follow a similar trend with a slightly higher number of workers per household.

| Area            | 2010 | 2015* | 2020* | 2025* | 2030* | 2035* | 2040* |
|-----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| San Francisco   | 1.22 | 1.27  | 1.32  | 1.30  | 1.28  | 1.28  | 1.28  |
| Bay Area Region | 1.25 | 1.30  | 1.36  | 1.34  | 1.32  | 1.32  | 1.31  |

SOURCE: Planning Department based on *ABAG Projections 2013*

As of 2010, commuters into San Francisco held 27.3% of the jobs in the city (Table I-13). According to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's *Plan Bay Area*, which includes the region's *Sustainable Communities Strategy* and *2040 Regional Transportation Plan*, over half of these workers commute into the city via the Bay Bridge corridor. By 2020, it is estimated that commuters will take up 43% of jobs in San Francisco.

As a regional job center, San Francisco will continue to have a larger share of commuters than other cities in the Bay Area. The regional transportation goal in the next ten years is to reduce commuting with a smaller share of new jobs created in San Francisco being taken by non-San Francisco residents. Table I-13, however, is not a job forecast nor does it show distribution of jobs throughout the area. Rather, it assumes that more of the future jobs in San Francisco are expected to be taken by San Francisco residents than has occurred in the past.

| Category                                     | 2010    | 2020*   | 2030*   | 2040*   |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Commuters                                    | 162,455 | 283,622 | 281,580 | 314,862 |
| San Francisco Residents                      | 433,674 | 378,678 | 414,910 | 436,968 |
| TOTAL JOBS                                   | 596,129 | 662,300 | 696,490 | 751,830 |
| % of Commuters                               | 27.3%   | 42.8%   | 40.4%   | 41.9%   |
| Increase                                     | 8,829   | 66,171  | 34,190  | 55,340  |
| Change in Commuters                          | -6,292  | 121,167 | -2,042  | 33,282  |
| Regional Goal of Percent Change of Commuters | -71.3%  | 183.1%  | -6.0%   | 60.1%   |

SOURCE: Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
(Note: Travel simulation results generated for the Plan Bay Area, SCS and Regional Transportation Plan)

*Table I-11*  
**Employed Residents Trends and Projections, San Francisco, 2010–2040**

*Table I-12*  
**Workers per Household Trends and Projections, San Francisco and Bay Area, 2010–2040**

*Table I-13*  
**Workers Commuting into San Francisco, 2010–2040**



## C. INCOMES

### 1. Median Incomes

The 2010 Census noted San Francisco's median household income at \$71,304. This represents an increase of about 29% in the 10 years between Census counts (Table I-14). Table I-14 also shows that median and mean family incomes tend to be higher than that of non-family households. The 2012 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates the median household income at just under \$73,802 or about a 3.5% increase in the last twelve years. Table I-15, however, shows these same incomes adjusted for inflation, where median household and median family household incomes have decreased slightly, and median non-family household incomes have decreased by almost 29%.

*Table I-14*  
**Household and Family  
Income, San Francisco,  
2000–2012**

|                                    | 2000     | 2010      | 2012 ACS  |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Median Household Income            | \$55,221 | \$71,304  | \$73,802  |
| Mean Household Income              |          | \$102,267 | \$107,520 |
| Median Family Household Income     | \$63,545 | \$85,778  | \$88,565  |
| Mean Family Household Income       |          | \$122,087 | \$128,144 |
| Median Non-Family Household Income | \$46,457 | \$58,139  | \$60,285  |
| Mean Non-Family Household Income   |          | \$83,647  | \$87,991  |

SOURCE: Census Bureau

*Table I-15*  
**Household and Family  
Income in Constant Dollars,  
San Francisco, 2000–2012**

| Income Category                    | 2000 (2010 Dollars) | 2010 (2010 Income) | 2012 (2010 Dollars) |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Median Household Income            | \$69,926            | \$71,304           | \$70,093            |
| Median Family Income               | \$80,467            | \$85,778           | \$84,114            |
| Median Non-Family Household Income | \$58,828            | \$58,139           | \$41,242            |
| Per Capita Income                  | \$45,229            | \$45,478           | \$44,898            |

SOURCE: Census Bureau

Table I-16 below shows household incomes by household type, tenure and ethnicity. In addition to the difference between median family income and median non-family income, disparities exist between home-owning households and renters, and amongst ethnic groups. This array of income, as well as household type, affects housing demand and affordability. For example, the median household income is not enough to afford the average 2012 rent for a two-bedroom apartment at \$1,799 a month. And while the median family income is somewhat higher than that of a non-family household, it is spread among more people in the household and would have to pay for larger housing to accommodate the larger average family household size. There is thus a need for larger units affordable to families and large households in San Francisco and an ongoing need for affordable housing for the population in general.

trols for southeastern portions of the city aimed at preserving industrially zoned lands from competing uses. These controls created Industrial Protection Zones where new housing and live/work units are not allowed, and accompanying Mixed Use Districts where housing would be encouraged. Concerned with distortions in the housing supply and with displacement of industrial space, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors also passed a six-month moratorium on the construction of new live/work units in February 2001. The temporary moratorium was intended to halt the approval of new projects while a study on the impact of live/work units on the city's housing market and industrial lands was being conducted. This moratorium was extended several times and eventually live/work loopholes were mended. Live/work units built after the moratorium were from development projects that were grandfathered in at the time of the legislation.

## **B. HOUSING TENURE AND AFFORDABILITY**

### **1. Owner-Occupied Housing**

The rate of homeownership estimated in 2012 (33%) has decreased since the 2000 Census (35%) and is still much lower than the national average (65.5%). Table I-33 below shows rates of home ownership by planning district. About 50% of homes owned are in the Inner Sunset, Outer Sunset, South Central, and Bernal Heights planning districts. Home ownership rates are lowest in the Downtown, with only one percent of people owning their home.

San Francisco's housing prices are among the highest in the nation. And despite recent price declines, at year-end 2012, the median price for an average single family home in San Francisco exceeded \$855,500 and was over 1.2 times the cost of similar housing in the Bay Area and four times the national average (Table I-34). It is estimated that only 16% of San Francisco's households can afford a median priced home in the city.

| Planning District      | Rate of Home Ownership |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Richmond             | 38%                    |
| 2 Marina               | 25%                    |
| 3 Northeast            | 15%                    |
| 4 Downtown             | 2%                     |
| 5 Western Addition     | 19%                    |
| 6 Buena Vista          | 26%                    |
| 7 Central              | 41%                    |
| 8 Mission              | 20%                    |
| 9 South of Market      | 32%                    |
| 10 South Bayshore      | 50%                    |
| 11 Bernal Heights      | 53%                    |
| 12 South Central       | 67%                    |
| 13 Ingleside           | 59%                    |
| 14 Inner Sunset        | 56%                    |
| 15 Outer Sunset        | 59%                    |
| San Francisco Citywide | 33%                    |

*Table 1-33*  
**Rate of Homeownership,  
 San Francisco, 2012**

SOURCE: US Census

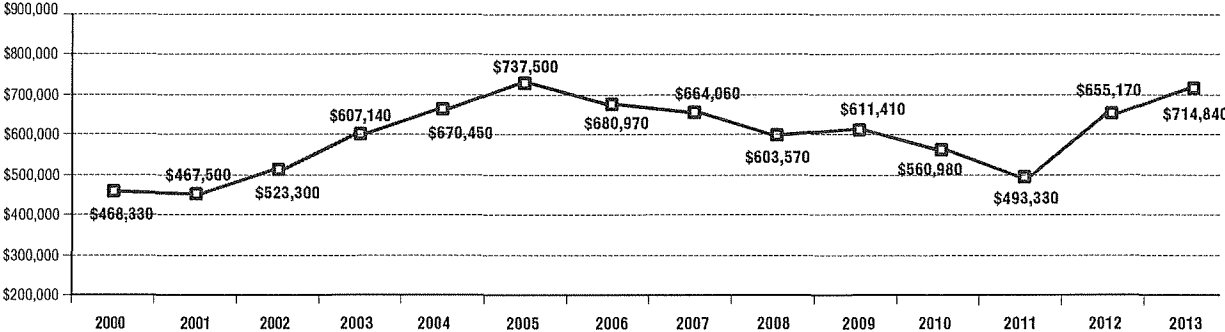
| Geographic Region                                      | Median Price | % of Households Qualifying |
|--|--------------|----------------------------|
| San Francisco  | \$855,500    | 16%                        |
| SF Bay Area Region                                     | \$704,990    | 21%                        |
| Northern California<br>(not including the SF Bay Area) | \$721,140    | 21%                        |
| California   | \$433,940    | 32%                        |
| Nationwide   | \$207,300    | 56%                        |

*Table 1-34*  
**Housing Affordability of  
 Average Single Family  
 Homes, San Francisco, 2013**

SOURCE: California Association of Realtors

Home sales prices in San Francisco has been steadily climbing since 2000 before peaking in 2005. With the global recession, prices dropped between 2005 and 2011 (Figure I-4). Since 2011, the price of housing in San Francisco continues to grow and based on the trend since 2000, the price of housing is projected to is to surpass the high prices seen in 2005. Compared to the Bay Area region, the housing prices trend follows a similar path as San Francisco. Still, the high cost of home ownership is still prohibitive for San Francisco’s low and moderate-income households and homeownership for these households would require substantial subsidies. As stated earlier, only 16% of San Francisco households can qualify to purchase homes at these prices.

Figure I-4  
**Housing Price Trends,  
 San Francisco, 2000–2013**



SOURCE: California Association of Realtors, \*(Figures in current dollars)

## 2. Rental Housing

The 2012 American Community Survey (ACS) estimated that about 63% of San Francisco households are renters; this is almost double the national average of 34.5%. San Francisco is nevertheless typical of other larger cities where renters outnumber homeowners. Average asking rents in San Francisco dropped slightly with the dot-com bust but remain high, climbing to \$2,750 in 2007 and remaining constant until about 2011. After 2011, asking rents for a two-bedroom apartment skyrocketed to an average of \$4,100 in 2014 (Figure I-5). To afford this level of rent in 2013, a household would need to earn about \$170,000 a year.

Rental affordability continues to be a citywide problem. Traditionally, neighborhoods in the southeast portions of the city have been relatively affordable; however there is still a significant gap for low and very-low income households (Table I-35). The lowest median asking rent for a two bedroom by district (\$2,525 in South Bayshore) has an affordability gap of \$763 for low income households (i.e., those households with income from 51%-80% of the area median income).

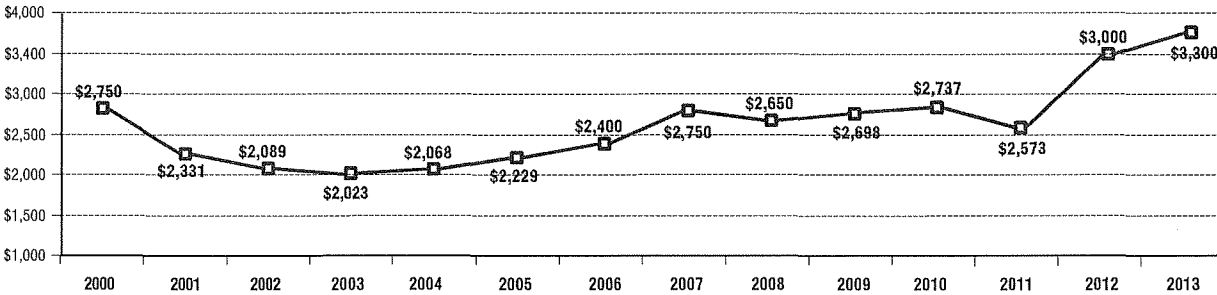


Figure I-5  
**Average Monthly Rental  
 Rates, San Francisco,  
 2000–2013**

SOURCE: Zillow.com, RentSF.com, Zilpy.com

# III.

## Housing Needs

This section examines the type, amount and affordability of new housing construction needed in San Francisco, as determined by the Association of Bay Area Governments, through June 2022. It is based, in part, on the data presented in the preceding Sections.

### A. REGIONAL HOUSING NEED ASSESSMENT

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), in coordination with the California State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), determine the Bay Area's regional housing need based on regional trends, projected job growth and existing needs. San Francisco's fair share of the regional housing need for January 2015 through June 2022 was calculated as 28,870 units, or about 3,850 units per year (Table I-38). This goal seeks to alleviate a tight housing market stemming from forecast household and employment growth as well as allocating regional household and employment growth to jurisdictions with established or planned transit infrastructures. More important, the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) determination includes production targets addressing housing needs of a range of household income categories. A total of about 16,333 units or 57% of the RHNA target must be affordable to households making 120% of the area median income (AMI) or less.

*Table I-38*  
**Regional Housing  
Needs Assessment for  
San Francisco,  
2015–June 2022**

| Household Income Category        | No. of Units  | % of Total    | Annual Production Goal |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Very Low ( 0–50% AMI )           | 6,234         | 21.6%         | 831                    |
| Low ( 51–80% AMI )               | 4,639         | 16.1%         | 619                    |
| Moderate (81–120% AMI )          | 5,460         | 18.9%         | 728                    |
| Above Moderate ( over 120% AMI ) | 12,536        | 43.4%         | 1,671                  |
| <b>TOTAL UNITS</b>               | <b>28,869</b> | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>3,849</b>           |

SOURCE: ABAG, Planning Department

Downtown districts are similarly ideal for residential development given proximity to jobs and transit. The higher densities allowed under current zoning in these districts could bring almost 4,180 new units. Some industrial lands may be more suitable than other industrial sites for residential development based on its proximity to existing residential districts and transit. At least 3,160 units can be accommodated in these industrial lands.

The city's mixed-use districts in Chinatown and South of Market are generally built up and yielded smaller numbers of developable sites. However, with higher densities allowed in these areas, in-fill development could accommodate at least an additional 9,870 units.

The Mission Bay Plan, adopted and being carried out by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (now known as the Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure), is envisioning a new neighborhood arising from one of the city's few vast and underused vacant industrial tracts. Projected land uses include a mix of housing and job opportunities. Mission Bay North will accommodate 3,000 units of housing while Mission Bay South will have 3,090 units. Over a quarter (28% or 1,700) of the units will be affordable to moderate, low and very low-income households. As of 2013, 3,455 units were built and the remaining 4,373 are expected to be completed by 2020.

Hunters Point Naval Shipyard, another redevelopment project, will involve re-use of the 500-acre former military base and 200-acre former Candlestick Point. The HPNS Redevelopment Plan sees the decommissioned shipyard transformed into a mini-city with housing, job opportunities and recreational uses. The residential component of the Redevelopment Plan will bring about some 10,500 new housing units. Construction on the Shipyard Phase 1 has begun and the first residents of the redeveloped sites have moved in early 2013; this phase will have a total of 1,600 new homes.

Redevelopment of Treasure Island, while not expected to commence during the 2015-2022 RHNA reporting period, has been included in the land inventory because of its long-term potential for housing. The current proposal includes up to 8,000 units.

#### *a. Housing in Residential Areas*

Housing development on remaining vacant, residentially zoned sites will occur as market pressure intensifies to build on available residential sites throughout the city. These sites generally have low or moderately low density residential-house zoning designations (RH-1, RH-2 or RH-3), which permit only one, two or three units per lot in most cases. Most housing – especially family housing – is already located in these residential districts. It is estimated that there is an in-fill housing potential of approximately 2,388 units on vacant and underutilized RH-1 and RH-2 parcels, which allow for single-family and duplexes, respectively. Typical densities range from a maximum of 16 units per acre for RH-1 districts and 28 units per acre for RH-2. An additional 662 units can also be accommodated in RH-3 parcels that allow for development of triplexes at about 37 units per acre density.



# PART II. OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Please note that this text contains *Part 2: Objectives and Policies* of the Housing Element. *Part 1: Data and Needs Analysis* and *Appendix C: Implementation Measures* are available separately.



## INTRODUCTION

Housing element law mandates that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. The City of San Francisco has embraced this requirement as an opportunity for a community based vision for San Francisco's future. Part 2 of the Housing Element sets forth objectives, policies, and programs to address the housing needs identified in Part 1. The Housing Element is intended to provide the policy background for housing programs and decisions; and to provide broad direction towards meeting the City's housing goals. As with other elements of the General Plan, it provides the policy framework for future planning decisions, and indicates the next steps the City plans to take to implement the Housing Element's objectives and policies. Adoption of the Housing Element does not modify land use, specify areas for increased height or density, suggest specific controls for individual neighborhoods, and implement changes to the Zoning Map or Planning Code, nor does it direct funding for housing development. Any such changes would require significant community and related legislative processes, as well as review and public hearings before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

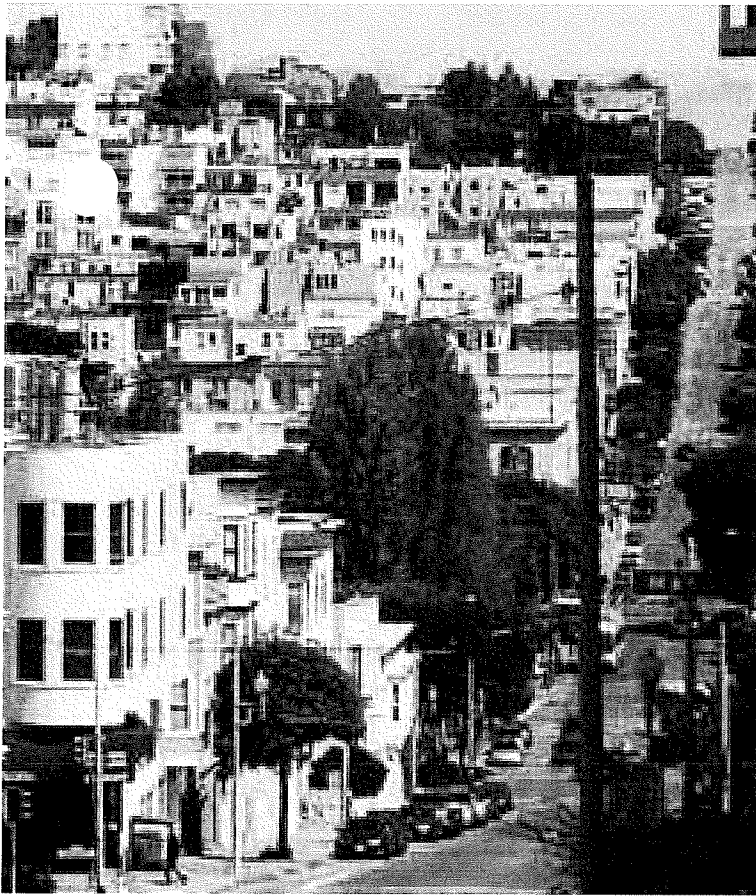
### Why is Housing an Issue?

San Francisco's population continues to grow; now with over 808,000 residents. As a hub for the region, San Francisco hosts a significant proportion of the Bay Area's jobs, as well as the core of local transportation infrastructure. Despite the recent economic impacts of the crash of dot-com ventures and 2008 recession, industries in San Francisco are continuously growing, particularly in the categories of professional, managerial, health and educational services. With new employment opportunities comes the increased demand for a variety of housing types.

Affordable housing is the most salient housing issue in San Francisco and the Bay Area. ABAG projects that at least 38% of new housing demands will be from low income households (households earning under 80% of area median income), and another 19% affordable from households of moderate means (earning between 80 and 120% of area median income). The policies and programs offer strategies to address these specific housing demands.

Based on the growing population, and smart growth goals of providing housing in central areas like San Francisco,





near jobs and transit, the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), estimates that San Francisco must plan for the capacity for roughly 29,000 new units, 60% of which should be suitable for housing for the extremely low, very low, low and moderate income households, in the next Housing Element period to meet its share of the region's projected housing demand. Because San Francisco also shares these state and regional objectives to increase the supply of housing, improve the regional jobs-housing balance, protect the environment, and promote a more efficient development pattern, this Housing Element works to meet those targets.

## The City's Housing Values

In developing the 2014 Housing Element Update, the City worked closely across agencies and broadly with San Francisco neighborhoods, community organization members, housing advocates, and elected officials.

1. ***Prioritize permanently affordable housing.*** Across the city, participants acknowledged that the cost of housing in San Francisco was an issue affecting everyone, from working families to the very poor. Thus the Housing Element focuses on creating the right type of housing, to meet the financial, physical and spatial needs of all of our residents who cannot afford market-rate housing. This requires not only creating new housing, but addressing the numerous housing types needed for San Francisco's diverse population, and preserving and maintaining the existing housing stock, which provides some of the city's most affordable units.
2. ***Recognize and preserve neighborhood character.*** Residents of San Francisco, from its wealthiest neighborhoods to its lower income areas, prioritized their own neighborhoods' physical and cultural character. Therefore the Housing Element recognizes that any plans for housing, from individual projects to community plans, need to acknowledge the unique needs of individual neighborhood which they are located. No individual strategies proposed in this Housing Element are appropriate universally; each needs to be considered within the neighborhood context. By using community planning processes that are driven by the input of the community itself, the City can ensure that the best qualities of neighborhoods are not only maintained, but strengthened.
3. ***Integrate planning of housing, jobs, transportation and infrastructure.*** Participants stressed that housing does not occur in a vacuum- that successful housing must be considered as a part of a whole neighborhood, one that includes public infrastructure such as transit, open space and community facilities, and privately provided infrastructure such as retail and neighborhood services. As one considers the needs of various household types, steps must be taken to encourage amenities required by families, such as child care, schools, libraries, parks and other services.
4. ***Cultivate the city as a sustainable model of development.*** The city's residents recognized the City's social, practical and legislative responsibility to address housing needs from both the local and the regional perspective, given San Francisco's role as a job center and a transit nexus. Thus, the Housing Element pri-

1 [Business and Tax Regulations, Planning Codes - Central South of Market Housing  
Sustainability District]

2  
3 **Ordinance amending the Business and Tax Regulations and Planning Codes to create**  
4 **the Central South of Market Housing Sustainability District (encompassing an area**  
5 **generally bounded on its western portion by Sixth Street, on its eastern portion by**  
6 **Second Street, on its northern portion by the border of the Downtown Plan Area (an**  
7 **irregular border that generally tracks Folsom, Howard, or Stevenson Streets), and on**  
8 **its southern portion by Townsend Street) to provide a streamlined and ministerial**  
9 **approval process for certain housing projects within the District meeting specific labor,**  
10 **on-site affordability, and other requirements; creating an expedited Board of Appeals**  
11 **process for appeals of projects within the District; and making approval findings under**  
12 **the California Environmental Quality Act, findings of public convenience, necessity,**  
13 **and welfare under Planning Code, Section 302, and findings of consistency with the**  
14 **General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.**

15 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.  
16 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.  
17 **Deletions to Codes** are in ~~*italics Times New Roman font*~~.  
18 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.  
19 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~Arial font~~.  
20 **Asterisks (\* \* \* \*)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code  
21 subsections or parts of tables.

22 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

23 Section 1. Environmental and Planning Code Findings.

24 (a) On \_\_\_\_\_, 2018 after a duly noticed public hearing, the Planning  
25 Commission certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Central  
SoMa Area Plan (the Project) by Motion No. \_\_\_\_\_, finding the Final EIR reflects

1 suspending or revoking authority determines that ongoing operation of the activity during the  
2 appeal to the Board of Appeals would pose a serious threat to public safety; and (iv) actions of  
3 the Director of the Office of Cannabis awarding a Temporary Cannabis Business Permit.  
4

5 **SEC. 26. FACTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY DEPARTMENTS.**

6 (a) Subject to ~~§~~subsection (b) *below*, in the granting or denying of any permit, or the  
7 revoking or the refusing to revoke any permit, the granting or revoking power may take into  
8 consideration the effect of the proposed business or calling upon surrounding property and  
9 upon its residents, and inhabitants thereof; and in granting or denying said permit, or revoking  
10 or refusing to revoke a permit, may exercise its sound discretion as to whether said permit  
11 should be granted, transferred, denied, or revoked.

12 \* \* \* \*

13 *(e) Notwithstanding subsection (a), the provisions of Planning Code Section 343 shall govern*  
14 *actions taken on the granting, denial, amendment, suspension, and revocation of permits regulated*  
15 *under that Section 343, not the standards set forth in subsection (a) of this Section 26. This subsection*  
16 *(e) shall become operative upon receipt of preliminary approval of Planning Code Section 343 by the*  
17 *California Department of Housing and Community Development under California Government Code*  
18 *Section 66202. This subsection shall expire by the operation of law in accordance with the provisions*  
19 *of Planning Code Section 343(k). Upon its expiration, the City Attorney shall cause this subsection to*  
20 *be removed from the Business and Tax Regulations Code.*

21  
22  
23 Section 3. The Planning Code is hereby amended by adding Section 343, to read as  
24 follows:

25 **SEC. 343. CENTRAL SOMA HOUSING SUSTAINABILITY DISTRICT.**

1           (a) Purpose. This Section 343 establishes a Housing Sustainability District within the Central  
2 SoMa Plan Area (“Central SoMa Housing Sustainability District” or “Central SoMa HSD”) under  
3 California Government Code Sections 66200 et seq. The purpose of the Central SoMa Housing  
4 Sustainability District is to encourage the provision of on-site affordable housing in new residential  
5 and mixed-use projects in Central SoMa by providing a streamlined, ministerial approval process for  
6 such projects. The Central SoMa Plan anticipates that 33% of all new residential units produced  
7 within the Plan Area will be permanently affordable to households of very low, low, or moderate  
8 income. This Section 343 sets forth eligibility criteria, design review standards, and entitlement and  
9 approval procedures for projects seeking approval pursuant to the requirements of the Central SoMa  
10 Housing Sustainability District.

11           (b) Geography. The Central SoMa Housing Sustainability District shall include all parcels  
12 within the Central SoMa Special Use District, which is defined in Section 249.78(b). The entirety of the  
13 Central SoMa Special Use District is an “eligible location,” as that term is defined in California  
14 Government Code Section 66200(e).

15           (c) Relationship to Other Planning Code Provisions. Except as otherwise provided in this  
16 Section 343, all provisions of the Planning Code, including Section 249.78, that would be applicable to  
17 projects approved pursuant to this Section 343 shall apply to such projects. In the event of a conflict  
18 between other provisions of the Planning Code and this Section, this Section shall control.

19           (d) Eligibility. Projects seeking approval pursuant to this Section 343 shall meet all of the  
20 following requirements:

21                   (1) The project is located in a zoning district that principally permits residential uses.

22                   (2) The project proposes no less than 50 dwelling units per acre, and no more than 750  
23 dwelling units per acre.

24                   (3) A majority of the project’s gross square footage is designated for residential uses.

25 All non-residential uses must be principally permitted in the underlying zoning district and any

1 applicable special use district(s), and may not include greater than 24,999 gross square feet of office  
2 space that would be subject to the annual limit on office development set forth in Sections 321 et seq.

3 (4) The project does not exceed a height of 160 feet, except that any project whose  
4 principal use is housing, where all such housing is restricted for a minimum of 55 years as affordable  
5 for "persons and families of low or moderate income," as defined in California Health & Safety Code  
6 Section 50093, shall be deemed to satisfy this subsection (c)(4) regardless of height.

7 (5) If the project sponsor seeks a density bonus pursuant to California Government  
8 Code Section 65915 et seq., the project sponsor demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Planning  
9 Department that the project would not result in a significant shadow impact.

10 (6) The project is not located on a lot containing a structure listed as a designated  
11 landmark pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code or a contributory or significant structure  
12 pursuant to Article 11 of the Planning Code.

13 (7) The project provides no less than 10% of its dwelling units as units affordable to  
14 very low or low income families, using one of the following methods:

15 (A) For projects subject to Section 415, by electing to comply with Section 415  
16 by choosing the On-Site Affordable Housing Alternative under Sections 415.5(g)(1)(A) or  
17 415.5(g)(1)(D); or

18 (B) For projects not subject to Section 415, by entering into a regulatory  
19 agreement with the City that contains the terms specified in Section 206.6(f).

20 (8) The project does not demolish, remove, or convert to another use any existing  
21 dwelling unit(s).

22 (9) The project complies with all applicable zoning and any adopted design review  
23 standards.

1                   (10) The project sponsor complies with all Mitigation Measures in the Central SoMa  
2 Environmental Impact Report (Central SoMa EIR) that the Planning Department determines are  
3 applicable to the project.

4                   (11) The project sponsor certifies that the project will comply with all applicable  
5 requirements of California Government Code Section 66201(f)(4).

6                   (12) The project shall comply with Government Code Section 66201(f)(5).

7                   (13) A project is not deemed to be for residential use if it is infeasible for actual use as  
8 a single or multifamily residence.

9                   (e) Approving Authority. The Planning Department is the approving authority designated to  
10 review permit applications for compliance with this Section 343.

11                   (f) Application.

12                   (1) Prior to submittal of an application for required approvals from the Planning  
13 Department, a project sponsor seeking to apply pursuant to this Section 343 shall submit an  
14 application for a preliminary project assessment (PPA), pursuant to Planning Department procedures.

15                   (2) In addition to any requirements under other provisions of this Code for submittal of  
16 application materials, an application under this Section 343 shall be submitted to the Department on a  
17 form prescribed by the Department and shall include at minimum the following materials:

18                   (A) A full plan set, including site plan, elevations, sections, and floor plans,  
19 showing total number of units, and number of and location of units affordable to very low or low  
20 income households;

21                   (B) All documentation required by the Department in its response to the project  
22 sponsor's previously-submitted PPA application;

23                   (C) Documentation sufficient to support determinations that:

24                   (i) the project meets all applicable zoning and any adopted design  
25 review standards;

1 (ii) the project sponsor will implement any and all Mitigation Measures  
2 in the Central SoMa EIR that the Planning Department determines are applicable to the project,  
3 including but not limited to the following:

4 a. An agreement to implement any and all Mitigation Measures  
5 in the Central SoMa EIR that the Planning Department determines are applicable to the project; and

6 b. Scope(s) of work for any studies required as part of any and all  
7 Mitigation Measures in the Central SoMa EIR that the Planning Department determines are applicable  
8 to the project. An application pursuant to this Section 343 shall not be deemed complete until such  
9 studies are completed to the satisfaction of the Environmental Review Officer.

10 (iii) the project sponsor will comply with subsections (d)(10) and (d)(11)  
11 of this Section 343.

12 (g) **Decision and Hearing.** The Department shall exercise ministerial approval of projects that  
13 meet all the requirements in this Section 343. Section 329 of this Code shall not apply to projects that  
14 are approved pursuant to this Section 343.

15 (1) **Hearing.** The Planning Department shall conduct an informational public hearing  
16 for all projects that are subject to this Section 343 within 100 days of receipt of a complete application,  
17 as defined in subsection (f).

18 (2) **Decision.** Within 120 days of receipt of a complete application, as defined in  
19 subsection (f), the Planning Director or the Director's designee shall issue a written decision  
20 approving, disapproving, or approving subject to conditions, the project. The applicant and the  
21 Department may mutually agree to extend this 120-day period. If no written decision is issued within  
22 120 days of the Department's receipt of a complete application, or within the period mutually agreed  
23 upon by the Department and applicant, the project shall be deemed approved. The Planning Director  
24 or the Director's designee shall include any certifications required by California Government Code  
25 Section 66205(e) in a copy of the written decision.

1                    (3) **Grounds for Permit Denial.** The Department may deny a Central SoMa HSD  
2 project application only for one or more of the following reasons:

3                    (A) The proposed project does not fully comply with this Section 343, including  
4 but not limited to meeting all adopted design review standards and demonstrating compliance with all  
5 applicable Mitigation Measures in the Central SoMa EIR that the Department determines are  
6 applicable to the project.

7                    (B) The project sponsor has not submitted all of the information or paid any  
8 application fee required by this Section 343 and necessary for an adequate and timely design review or  
9 assessment of potential impacts on neighboring properties.

10                    (C) The Department determines, based upon substantial evidence in light of the  
11 whole record of the public hearing on the project, that a physical condition on the site of development  
12 that was not known and could not have been discovered with reasonable investigation at the time the  
13 application was submitted would have a specific adverse impact upon the public health or safety and  
14 that there is no feasible method to satisfactorily mitigate or avoid the specific adverse impact. As used  
15 in this subsection (g)(3)(C), "specific adverse impact" means a significant, quantifiable, direct, and  
16 unavoidable impact based on identified objective written public health or safety standards, policies, or  
17 conditions, as in existence at the time the application is deemed complete.

18                    (4) **Appeal.** The procedures for appeal to the Board of Appeals of a decision by the  
19 Department under this Section 343 shall be as set forth in Section 8 of the Business and Tax  
20 Regulations Code.

21                    (5) **Discretionary Review.** No requests for discretionary review shall be accepted by  
22 the Planning Department or heard by the Planning Commission or Board of Appeals for projects  
23 subject to this Section 343.

24                    (6) **Progress Requirement.** The project sponsor of any project approved pursuant to  
25 this Section 343 shall obtain the first site or building permit for the project from the Department of



1 Building Inspection within 36 months of the Department's issuance of a written decision pursuant to  
2 subsection (g)(2) of this Section 343. If the project sponsor has not obtained the first site or building  
3 permit from the Department of Building Inspection within 36 months, then as soon as is feasible after  
4 36 months has elapsed, the Planning Director shall hold a hearing requiring the project sponsor to  
5 report on the status of the project, to determine whether the project sponsor has demonstrated good  
6 faith in its effort to obtain the first site or building permit for the project. If the Planning Director finds  
7 that the project sponsor has not demonstrated good faith in its efforts to obtain the first site or building  
8 permit for the project, the Planning Director shall revoke the approvals for the project. Factors in  
9 determining whether the project sponsor has demonstrated good faith in its efforts include, but are not  
10 limited to, whether any delays are the result of conditions outside the control of the project sponsor and  
11 whether changes in the financing of the project are necessary in order for construction to proceed.

12 (h) **Design Review Standards.** Projects subject to this Section 343 shall be reviewed for  
13 compliance with the design standards set forth in the San Francisco Urban Design Guidelines and the  
14 Central SoMa Plan's Guide to Urban Design, which are on file with the Planning Department, as  
15 approved by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

16 (i) **District Affordability Requirement.** At the request of the California Department of Housing  
17 and Community Development, the Planning Department shall demonstrate that at least 20% of the  
18 residential units constructed in the Central SoMa Housing Sustainability District during the life of the  
19 District and pursuant to this Section 343 will be affordable to very low, low-, and moderate-income  
20 households and subject to a recorded affordability restriction for at least 55 years.

21 (j) **Monitoring and Enforcement.** The Planning Department shall include, as conditions of  
22 approval of all projects approved pursuant to this Section 343, monitoring and enforcement provisions  
23 to ensure that the project meets all labor and wage requirements and complies with all identified  
24 applicable mitigation measures. Projects found to be in violation of any of these conditions shall be  
25 subject to the Administrative Enforcement Procedures in Section 176.1 of this Code, including

1 initiation of abatement proceedings or referral to the City Attorney or District Attorney for prosecution,  
2 if not corrected within 90 days of service of any notice of violation issued under Section 176.1(c).

3 Conditions of approval shall include, but are not limited to:

4 (1) A project sponsor shall submit weekly reports to the Office of Labor Standards  
5 Enforcement, certifying that a project approved pursuant to this Section 343 is complying with  
6 subsections (d)(11) and (d)(12), if applicable to the project. Projects found to be in violation of  
7 subsections (d)(11) and (d)(12) shall be subject to penalties pursuant to Section 1741 of the Labor  
8 Code, in addition to any penalties assessed pursuant to Section 176.1 of this Code. All penalties shall  
9 be paid prior to issuance of the project's First Certificate of Occupancy.

10 (2) The Planning Department shall monitor compliance with Central SoMa EIR  
11 Mitigation Measures.

12 (3) The Planning Department shall monitor and report the construction of affordable  
13 housing units under the Central SoMa Housing Sustainability District in its annual Housing Inventory,  
14 which shall include the following information:

15 (A) Number of projects approved pursuant to this Section 343.

16 (B) Number of projects under construction pursuant to approvals obtained  
17 under this Section 343.

18 (C) Number of projects completed pursuant to approvals obtained under this  
19 Section 343.

20 (D) Number of dwelling units within projects completed pursuant to approvals  
21 obtained under this Section 343.

22 (E) Number of dwelling units affordable to very low, low, moderate, and middle  
23 income households within projects completed pursuant to approvals obtained under this Section 343.

24 (k) Operative and Sunset Dates.

1                   (1) This Section 343 shall become operative upon receipt of preliminary approval by  
2 the California Department of Housing and Community Development under California Government  
3 Code Section 66202 (“Operative Date”).

4                   (2) This Section 343 shall expire by operation of law seven years from the Operative  
5 Date, unless this Section 343 is renewed by ordinance pursuant to Government Code Section 66201(g),  
6 in which case this Section 343 shall expire on the date specified in that ordinance (“Sunset Date”).

7                   (3) Upon the expiration of this Section 343, the City Attorney shall cause this Section  
8 343 to be removed from the Planning Code. Pursuant to Government Code Section 66205(b), this  
9 Section 343 shall govern the processing and review of any complete application submitted pursuant to  
10 this Section 343 prior to the Sunset Date.

11  
12                   Section 4. Effective Date; Operative Date.

13                   (a) This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after enactment. Enactment occurs  
14 when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the ordinance unsigned or does not  
15 sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board of Supervisors overrides the  
16 Mayor’s veto of the ordinance.

17                   (b) Consistent with Section 343(k)(1) of the Planning Code, this ordinance in its  
18 entirety shall become operative upon receipt of preliminary approval by the California  
19 Department of Housing and Community Development under California Government Code  
20 Section 66202.

21  
22                   Section 5. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors  
23 intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles,  
24 numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal  
25 Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment

1 additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the "Note" that appears under  
2 the official title of the ordinance.

3  
4 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
5 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

6 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
7 PETER R. MILJANICH  
8 Deputy City Attorney

9  
10 n:\egana\as2018\1200444\01272339.docx  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25



**SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

**MEMO**

**DATE:** April 5, 2018

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Elizabeth White and Jessica Range, Environmental Planning  
Steve Wertheim, Citywide Planning

**RE:** Analysis of Environmental Effects of Plan Changes  
Presented April 5, 2018 for the Central South of Market  
Area (SoMa) Plan  
Planning Department Case No. 2011.1356E

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
**415.558.6378**

Fax:  
**415.558.6409**

Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

Following publication of the Responses to Comments document (RTC) for the Central South of Market Area (SoMa) Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR), the legislative sponsors and the Planning Department propose to modify various aspects of the Plan based upon feedback from the community and decision-makers. The Environmental Planning division has reviewed these changes, which are detailed in the Planning Commission packet for April 5, 2018 and determined that the environmental analysis conducted for the EIR adequately analyzes the Central SoMa Plan, with these modifications.

This memoranda explains how proposed strategies designed to maximize the number of housing units anticipated under the Plan would not result in increased physical environmental effects beyond that already studied in the EIR, and therefore would not change any of the conclusions in the EIR and do not constitute significant new information that requires recirculation of the EIR under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code Section 21092.1) and the CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations Section 15088.5).

**Proposal to Maximize Housing under the Central SoMa Plan**

The Planning Department has developed a two-pronged proposal to maximize the number of housing units anticipated under the Plan. These proposals include a modification to the Planning Code and Zoning Map as discussed below.

Planning Code Amendments

The Planning Department proposes to modify Planning Code Section 249.78(c)(6)(A) to increase the size of sites previously designated to be commercially-oriented from 30,000 square feet to 40,000 square feet.

This change to the Planning Code would require two sites in the Plan Area previously anticipated to be commercial to become residential, which would result in a net increase of 640 units above that anticipated by the Plan and a net decrease of approximately 2,050 jobs.<sup>1</sup> This change would also result in a commensurate reduction in the total number of projected jobs, discussed further below.

### Zoning Map Amendments

The Planning Department proposes to change the zoning map from the currently proposed West SoMa Mixed Use Office (WMUO)<sup>2</sup> to Central SoMa Mixed Use Office (CMUO) on the following parcels: Block 3777, Lots 047-049 and Block 3778, Lots 001, 001C, 001D, 001E, 001F, 016-019, 022-023, 025-026, 032, 046A, 046B, 046C, 046D, 046E, 046F, 046G, 046H, and 051-087. The existing zoning on these parcels is West SoMa Service, Arts, Light Industrial (WS-SALI). Both WS-SALI and WMUO generally do not allow residential uses. The proposed change to CMUO would allow residential uses on these sites, thus shifting the Plan's projected amount of jobs and housing units. The EIR assumed soft sites on these parcels would result in new office jobs. If the soft sites were developed as residential uses, this zoning change could generate about 600 additional housing units, with a commensurate reduction in the projected number of 2,700 jobs.<sup>3</sup>

### **Effect of Changes on Housing Units and Jobs Projected Under the Central SoMa Plan**

The above proposed modifications to the Central SoMa Plan would result in a shift from projected office uses to residential uses. Altogether, these Planning Code and Zoning Map amendments would result in a net increase of 1,240 residential units and a commensurate reduction of 4,750 jobs.

---

<sup>1</sup> Calculation based on the Planning Department's *Buildout Analysis for Central SoMa*, January 25, 2018. This document and all other documents referenced in this memoranda are on file and available for public review as part of Case File No. 2011.1356E at the Planning Department, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA, 94103. This document includes a parcel-level analysis of development potential in the Plan Area that was utilized for the EIR and conveys that the two sites affected by this proposed change (490 Brannan Street and 330 Townsend Street) had a development potential under the previously proposed requirements of approximately 184,000 gross square feet of residential development, resulting in approximately 150 units and approximately 450,000 of non-residential uses, resulting in space for approximately 2,050 jobs, based on the EIR's assumption of 1,200 gross square feet per unit and 219 gross square feet per new job (including 200 square feet per office worker and higher for other types of jobs)(calculations of density contained in the Planning Department's *Central SoMa EIR Inputs by TAZ*, November 13, 2017). Subsequent analysis determined that, based on the revised proposal, these two sites could contain approximately 972,000 square feet of residential development if these sites are developed as fully residential, resulting in approximately 790 units.

<sup>2</sup> Note that the Plan uses the term "WMUO" and the EIR uses the term "WS-MUO." Both refer to the WSoMa Mixed-Use Office District contained in Section 845 of the Planning Code.

<sup>3</sup> Calculation based on the Planning Department's *Buildout Analysis for Central SoMa*, (January 25, 2018), which includes a parcel-level analysis of development potential in the Plan Area. This document conveys that the 62 lots affected by this proposed change had a development potential under the previously proposed requirements of approximately 800,000 square feet of non-residential space, resulting in space for approximately 3,650 jobs )(calculations of density contained in the Planning Department's *Central SoMa EIR Inputs by TAZ*, November 13, 2017). Subsequent analysis determined that, based on the revised proposal, these lots could contain approximately 720,000 square feet of residential development and 200,000 square feet of non-residential development, presuming these small sites are predominantly residential but include some small office and other non-residential uses. Such development would result in space for approximately 600 new units and 950 jobs.

### Central SoMa Plan EIR Analysis

As explained in the EIR, the analysis of physical impacts related to the proposed Planning Code and Zoning Map amendments are based, in part, on growth projections developed by the Planning Department. These growth projections inform the quantitative analysis of effects of the Plan on the physical environment.

As shown in **Table IV-1, Summary of Growth Projections** on Draft EIR page IV-6, the EIR analyzes an increase of approximately 14,500 residential units within the EIR study area, of which 8,320 units are anticipated to occur within the Plan Area. The Plan, on the other hand, projects a total of 7,060 residential units.<sup>4</sup> With the additional 1,240 residential units projected under the Plan, the total projected number of residential units would be 8,300 units, which is below the 8,320 units analyzed in the EIR. Additionally, there would be a commensurate reduction in the number of jobs projected in the Plan area of about 4,750 jobs. As shown in **Table IV-1, Summary of Growth Projections** on Draft EIR page IV-6, the EIR analyzes an increase of approximately 63,600 jobs within the EIR study area, of which 44,000 are anticipated to occur within the Plan Area.<sup>5</sup> The Plan, on the other hand, projects a total of 39,000 jobs.<sup>6</sup> As a result of this change, the number of new jobs anticipated under the Plan would be reduced to approximately 34,250 jobs.

### Conclusion

The Central SoMa Plan EIR conservatively analyzed higher growth projections than could occur from the proposed Plan's Planning Code and Zoning Map amendments. The modification to the Central SoMa plan would result in a shift in anticipated jobs and housing, but would not exceed the total number of residential units analyzed in the EIR. Thus, these changes to the Plan would not result in increased physical environmental effects beyond that already studied in the EIR, and therefore would not change any of the conclusions in the EIR and do not constitute significant new information that requires recirculation of the EIR under CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. Other changes to the Plan are proposed and detailed in the Planning Commission packet for April 5, 2018 and those changes have also been evaluated and determined to not result in physical environmental effects beyond that already analyzed in the EIR.

---

<sup>4</sup> Steve Wertheim, *Memorandum Regarding Central SoMa Plan-Clarification of Housing Numbers*. December 7, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Calculation based on the Planning Department's *Central SoMa EIR Inputs by TAZ* (November 13, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> Calculation based on the Planning Department's *Buildout Analysis for Central SoMa*, (January 25, 2018), which includes a parcel-level analysis of development potential in the Plan Area.



## RESPONSES TO COMMENTS on the Draft Environmental Impact Report

# Central SoMa Plan

PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
CASE NO. 2011.1356E

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2013042070



SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING  
DEPARTMENT

|                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Draft EIR Publication Date:      | DECEMBER 14, 2016                   |
| Draft EIR Public Hearing Date:   | JANUARY 26, 2017                    |
| Draft EIR Public Comment Period: | DECEMBER 14, 2016–FEBRUARY 13, 2017 |
| Final EIR Certification Date:    | APRIL 12, 2018                      |

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING DIVISION | SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT



### *Family-Friendly Plan Alternative*

Regarding the request to evaluate a Plan alternative that creates a family-friendly neighborhood that supports the needs of current and future youth, families, and seniors, the commenter does not specify the overall development program that would be considered under such an alternative or how these elements would be achieved. Furthermore, it is unclear how such an alternative would be considerably different from the alternatives already analyzed in the Draft EIR, or what significant impact identified in the Draft EIR that the alternative would address, and if such an alternative would be feasible or meet the Plan's basic objectives. Therefore, no analysis of such an alternative is possible or warranted.

### *Increased Housing Alternative*

Regarding the comments that state the Plan should provide for more housing (Increased Housing Alternative), either in addition to the Plan's proposed employment growth or in place of a portion of forecasted Plan Area employment, to the extent that the comments simply support additional housing, the comments do not address the adequacy or accuracy of the Draft EIR. See Response PM-1, p. RTC-356, for further discussion regarding the merits of the Plan. See Response PD-10, p. RTC-80, for further discussion of the state density bonus program. Additionally, as explained in Response OC-1, p. RTC-248, the 75,000 housing units already planned for in San Francisco could accommodate a substantial portion of the housing demand from new employees in Central SoMa who desire to live in San Francisco. Regardless, because these comments support the provision of an alternative that includes additional housing in the Plan Area, they are responded to here. All of these comments will be transmitted to City decision makers for consideration in their deliberations on the proposed Plan. One comment states that the Draft EIR should include an alternative that is "Jobs-housing balanced at the same level of office space creation as currently in the plan," and an alternative that allows for twice as many people housed as employed. Some comments indicate that an alternative that provides more housing could reduce environmental impacts overall by allowing more workers within the Plan Area to live closer to their jobs, thereby reducing VMT and related impacts.

The selection and analysis of Plan alternatives is discussed above. For a discussion of jobs-housing balance in general, see Response OC-2, p. RTC-258, which explains that, while this measure is useful in a citywide or region-wide context, it is not particularly relevant within the context of a relatively small area, such as the Plan Area. The commenter is also referred to the analysis of the No Project Alternative in the Draft EIR (Chapter VI, Alternatives), which evaluates a reasonable scenario of likely growth within the Plan Area under existing regulations and policies, and which includes both a higher ratio of housing to jobs and a smaller total number of jobs than the other alternatives assessed in the Draft EIR.

Regarding the comments that alternatives that provide more housing could reduce environmental impacts overall by reducing VMT, the Draft EIR includes a number of alternatives that would do this. The vehicle miles traveled (VMT) analysis in the Draft EIR is based on the San Francisco County Transportation Authority's SF-CHAMP travel demand model, which estimates existing average daily VMT on a *per capita* [emphasis added] basis for traffic analysis zones (TAZs). VMT per capita is then used to measure the amount and distance that a resident, employee, or visitor drives and is compared to the *Plan Bay Area* VMT per capita reduction target 2040 goal, which is 10 percent below the Bay Area 2005 regional average VMT for residential development (no VMT per employee target was set). Based on the VMT analysis in the Draft EIR (see Section IV.D, Transportation and Circulation, pp. IV.D-35 through IV.D-38), VMT per person would decrease, both in the Plan Area and throughout the Bay

Area, if more housing were provided within the Plan Area. However, this only holds true if the housing were in addition to office employment proposed in the Plan Area. While the VMT analysis shows that the Plan would incrementally increase VMT per office job within the Plan Area by its increase in office jobs, these office jobs would still result in far less VMT per office job on a regional basis, assuming that the regional office employment total would remain constant. This is because office jobs in the Plan Area, and in San Francisco in general, generate substantially lower VMT per job than do office jobs elsewhere in the Bay Area, given the Plan Area's proximity to other regional transportation modes. While decreased office employment in the Plan Area could incrementally reduce VMT within the Plan Area itself, it may increase VMT regionally by forcing those jobs to occur elsewhere and in less-efficient VMT per capita settings, which is the key metric for greenhouse gas reduction. Accordingly, increasing housing by reducing employment, relative to the Plan proposals, could have greater impacts than would be the case with the Plan. The Plan's emphasis on providing space to accommodate employment within the Plan Area is explained in Draft EIR Chapter II, *Project Description*, on p. II-4:

While the City has planned for more than 75,000 new housing units, its efforts have been less focused on the spatial planning needed to accommodate anticipated employment sector growth, especially office growth. Since adoption of the Downtown Plan in 1985, relatively few Downtown building sites remain to support continued job growth into the future. According to *Plan Bay Area* projections, remaining space in Mission Bay and new space added in the Transit Center District would not be sufficient to meet growth needs in the long run. Current low-vacancy rates and high rents in SoMa indicate that this is an area in high demand, and given access to available space, it is anticipated that companies in the information technology and digital media industries would increasingly seek to locate in this area, due to its central location, transit accessibility, urban amenities, and San Francisco's well-educated workforce.

Therefore, based on the foregoing discussion, adding another alternative that would reduce VMT is not necessary.

Regarding comments requesting the EIR include an alternative with more housing to reduce air quality impacts, it is not clear how such an alternative would reduce air quality impacts. Furthermore, the Draft EIR includes five alternatives, four of which—the No Project Alternative, the Reduced Heights Alternative, the Modified TODCO Plan, and the Land Use Variant—would reduce air quality impacts. As such, the Draft EIR provides a reasonable range of alternatives as required by CEQA; therefore, adding another alternative that would reduce air quality impacts is not necessary.

#### *Limiting Heights for Residential Buildings and Changes to Zoning on Specific Parcels*

The comments include a statement that residential buildings up to 85 feet high under the Planning Code are less costly to construct than high-rise structures, which could result in new housing units that are more affordable. This statement does not address the adequacy or accuracy of the Draft EIR; therefore, no changes to the Draft EIR are required.

The comments include a request for a new alternative with two variants identifying changes to bulk heights and zoning for specific parcels to be evaluated in the EIR. These comments do not provide evidence that the two suggested additional alternatives would meet the Plan objectives, nor that the alternatives would avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects of Plan implementation; as such, these alternatives need not be analyzed in the Draft EIR. The comments include a request that the City consider an alternative that would limit

RECEIVED  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SAN FRANCISCO  
2018 JUN 11 PM 4:05  
BY dw

ORIGINAL CHECK HAS A COLORED BACKGROUND PRINTED ON CHEMICAL REACTIVE PAPER - SEE BACK FOR DETAILS

**VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID**  
**One Vassar LLC**

Wells Fargo Bank NA  
420 Montgomery St  
San Francisco, CA 94104  
11-24/1210(8)

Check Nbr: 001211

433 California St 7th Fl  
San Francisco, CA 94104  
(415) 982-7777

| DATE       | AMOUNT                  |
|------------|-------------------------|
| 06/11/2018 | \$597.00<br>IN US FUNDS |

*Five Hundred Ninety Seven Dollars And 00 Cents*

VOID IF NOT PRESENTED IN 90 DAYS

**VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID VOID**  
PAY TO THE ORDER OF:

SF Planning Dept.  
1650 Mission Street, #400  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94104

Jully  
[Signature]  
TWO SIGNATURES ARE REQUIRED