San Francisco Planning

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GENERAL PLAN REFERRAL

September 24, 2025

Case No.:	2023-000654GPR
Project Title:	Lower Alemany Stormwater Improvements
Block/Lot No.:	5866/044-045, 5872/068-069, 5375/028, 5391/002, 5861/021-023 And adjacent right-of-way
Project Sponsor:	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Applicant:	Suzanne Huang, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission shuang@sfwater.org 525 Golden Gate Avenue, 9th Floor San Francisco, CA, 94102
Staff Contact:	Dylan Hamilton – (628) 652-7478 dylan.hamilton@sfgov.org

Recommended By: _____
Joshua Switzky, Deputy Director of Citywide Policy for
Sarah Dennis Phillips, Director of Planning

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

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

Project Description

The Project proposes to alleviate peak flooding in the Lower Alemany area of San Francisco during a 5-year storm. The project would involve constructing two new sewer lines: a 10-ft internal diameter Alemany Auxiliary Sewer (AAS) and a 6-foot diameter Cortland Auxiliary Sewer (CAS). The AAS would primarily occur along Gaven Street south of I-280 and along Boutwell Street northeast of the I-280/US-101 interchange. The AAS would be an approximately 1.26-mile-long stormwater sewer line that connects to the existing Alemany Sewer upstream and the Industrial Sewer and Islais Creek Transport/Storage downstream. The CAS would be approximately 0.12 mile

long and will connect with the existing Cortland Sewer upstream and the Industrial Sewer downstream. At the western terminus of the AAS, a new diversion structure with a weir would be installed to direct stormwater flows from the existing Alemany Sewer to the proposed AAS. When a storm event causes stormwater flows to rise, wet weather flows would flow over the weir and be diverted to the new AAS.

Up to four shafts would be constructed to facilitate construction of the tunnel portion of the AAS using either a tunnel boring machine (TBM) or a micro-tunnel boring machine (MTBM). If TBM tunnel excavation methods are used, the following shafts would be constructed: the Stoneybrook Shaft, Bayshore Shaft, and Boutwell Shaft. If MTBM tunnel excavation methods are used, an additional shaft (Bowdoin Shaft) would be established between the Stoneybrook Shaft and Bayshore Shaft to receive the MTBM. The diameter of the shafts would range between approximately 16 feet wide and approximately 32 feet wide and the shaft depths would range between approximately 15 feet deep to approximately 85 feet deep.

The CAS would have an inside diameter of 3.5 feet and a 6-foot inside diameter steel casing. The CAS would be constructed using a combination of trenchless and cut-and-cover methods.

Staging areas would occur on paved streets (including Alemany Blvd, portions of Gaven Street), a portion of the I-280 off ramp, and a grassy area that abuts Bayshore Blvd. within Caltrans right-of-way.

The proposed tunnel alignment crosses under the driveways of three private residential properties at the western terminus of Gaven Street. Prior to construction, the SFPUC must acquire permanent utility subsurface easements from private property owners located at Assessor's Parcel Nos. 5861-021, 5861-022, and 5861-023.

Environmental Review

The project was determined to be categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines sections 15301 and 15303 on 3/25/2025 (Planning Case No. 2023-000654ENV).

General Plan Compliance and Basis for Recommendation

As described below, the proposed project is consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 and is, on balance, in conformity with the General Plan.

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

SAFETY AND RESILIENCE ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 2.2

MULTI-HAZARD RESILIENCE AND CO-BENEFITS. IN ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION INVESTMENTS TO MULTIPLE AND SIMULTANEOUS HAZARDS, MAXIMIZE RISK REDUCTION STRATEGIES AND THE RELATED COMMUNITY BENEFITS.

Policy 3.2.9
Examine the risk of flooding and evaluate adaptation actions that will protect people and the built and natural environments to help inform land use, capital investment, and other policies.

The Project will mitigate the effects of current and future flooding events.

OBJECTIVE 3.3
INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC REALM. ENSURE THE CITY'S LIFELINE SYSTEMS, TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE FACILITIES, UTILITIES, STREETS, PUBLIC SPACES, AND COASTS CAN WITHSTAND AND ADAPT TO ALL HAZARDS.

POLICY 3.3.1.
Reduce the risk of all hazards to community facilities and lifeline infrastructure, starting with Environmental Justice Communities.

POLICY 3.3.2.
Identify and replace vulnerable infrastructure and critical service lifelines in high-risk areas.

The Project will improve a key utility system in a high-risk portion of San Francsico, which is identified as an Environmental Justice Community.

Planning Code Section 101 Findings

Planning Code Section 101.1 establishes Eight Priority Policies and requires review of discretionary approvals and permits for consistency with said policies. The Project is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies as set forth in Planning Code Section 101.1 for the following reasons:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced;

   The Project will not impact existing neighborhood-serving retail or business. The project is focused on below-ground infrastructure.

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

   The Project will help protect existing housing from flooding.

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

   The Project will not be adding, demolishing, or in any way altering housing of any kind.

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

parking;

The Project will have no impact to commuter traffic, parking, or MUNI service.

5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced;

   The Project does not consist of any changes to industrial spaces.

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

   The Project consists of below-grade infrastructure, and will not impact mobility or emergency evacuation in case of an earthquake

7. That the landmarks and historic buildings be preserved;

   The Project will not have any impact on historic buildings or landmarks.

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

   This Project consists of below-grade work that will not have any impact to sunlight or vistas for parks or any other resource.

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