



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

General Plan Referral

Date: April 6, 2016
Case No. Case No. 2016-003775GPR
City Lease of 601 Van Ness Avenue of Office Space
Block/Lot No.: 0762/027
Project Sponsor: Josh Keene
San Francisco Real Estate Department
25 Van Ness Ave. Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94102

Applicant: Same as Above

Staff Contact: Jessica Look-- (415) 575-6812
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Recommendation: Finding the project, on balance, is **in conformity** with the General Plan

*Recommended
By:*


John Rahaim, Director of Planning

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project is for the City's proposed 5-year office lease of approximately 8,640 square feet located on the ground floor in Suite P at 601 Van Ness Avenue. If the Project is approved, the City's Human Services Agency (HSA) will utilize the space for administrative functions to digitize HSA's historical files and future files and records. The site was most recently used as administrative offices for a private brokerage firm and is a legal nonconforming general office use. This use was approved in building permit application 2001.04.25.7659, which conversion to office use was permitted at that time by the Redevelopment Agency.

HSA is a department of the City and County of San Francisco and the central resource for public assistance in the City. Their mission is to promote well-being and self-sufficiency among individuals, families and communities in San Francisco. The submittal is for a General Plan Referral to recommend whether the Project is in conformity with the General Plan, pursuant to Section 4.105 of the Charter, and Section 2A.52 and 2A.53 of the Administrative Code.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project was determined to be categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 on 3/30/16 (Planning Record No. 2016-003775GPR).

GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE AND BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Project is the City's proposed 5 year office lease on the ground floor of approximately 8,640 square feet for use by the City's Human Services Agency. The Project is consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 as described in the body of this letter and is, on balance, **in-conformity** with the following Objectives and Policies of the General Plan:

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ELEMENT

POLICY 7.1

Promote San Francisco, particularly the Civic Center, as a location for local, regional, state and federal governmental functions.

In a manner similar to other economic functions such as office uses and institutions, physical proximity of various governmental activities is important to the efficient functioning of daily activities of related agencies. The city should strengthen the locational advantages of this clustering of governmental services by insuring provision of an adequate amount of space in the Civic Center area to serve this function without endangering surrounding residential areas.

The Human Services Agency provides services to all resident throughout the City, in particular families, seniors and adults with disabilities. It is vital that the City strengthens the locational advantage of consolidating government services within close proximity of each other. In addition, since the main use of this office space is to digitize historical and future files, it is imperative that this office be located within close proximity of other HSA offices, also located within Civic Center. Centralized government activities also serve as a resource for government employees, as they are able to utilize the transit services that are located within Civic Center and lessen the need to utilize private automobiles.

CIVIC CENTER AREA PLAN

Policy 2.3

Encourage governmental activities of each level of government to locate within a "sphere of influence" within the Civic Center to avoid inefficient dispersal of these activities throughout the area

The Project, which would include an office lease on the ground floor for use by the City's Human Services Agency, is consistent with this policy. The location of this office space within Civic Center will enhance and encourage cooperation with other government offices and nearby HSA sites. The proposed Project's site will be located within close proximity of HSA administrative offices located at 170 Otis Street, 1650

Mission Street and 160 South Van Ness Avenue. In addition, HSA's client services are also located in close proximity to Civic Center.

PROPOSITION M FINDINGS – PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1

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

Eight Priority Policies Findings

The subject project is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 in that:

The proposed project is found to be consistent with the eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 in that:

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 would have no adverse effect on neighborhood serving retail uses or opportunities for employment in or ownership of such businesses. The previous use of the premise was office space, and the proposed lease to the City is for office space.

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

The Project would have no adverse effect on the City's housing stock or on neighborhood character. The existing housing and neighborhood character will be not be negatively affected.

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

The Project would have no adverse effect on the City's supply of affordable housing.

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

The Project would not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI's transit service, overburdening the streets or altering current neighborhood parking.

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 residential employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced.

The Project would not affect the existing economic base in this area. The previous use of the premise was office space, and the proposed lease to the City is for office space.

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

The Project would not adversely affect achieving the greatest possible preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake. It would improve the City's ability to respond to injuries caused by earthquakes and other emergencies.

7. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

This site and building are not landmarks or of historic significance. The structure was constructed in the last 30 years.

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

The Project would have no adverse effect on parks and open space or their access to sunlight and vista. If the City purchases or leases the site for use by the Department of Technology, no new structures would be added to the site

RECOMMENDATION:	Finding the Project, on balance, in-conformity with the General Plan
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Attachments:

Site Plan – 601 Van Ness Avenue

Office Layout – Suite P – 601 Van Ness Avenue

cc: Joshua Keene, Real Estate

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