



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

General Plan Referral

Date: June 18, 2019

Case 2019-012559GPR
Acquisition of 1515 South Van Ness Avenue

Block/Lot No.: 6571/008

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Recommendation: Finding the proposed acquisition of 1515 South Van Ness, on balance, **in conformity** with the General Plan.

Recommended
By:


 John Rahaim, Director of Planning

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development is proposing to purchase the property at 1515 South Van Ness Avenue and construct a 100% affordable housing project on the site. The site is currently occupied by a one-story, vacant commercial property, and has been entitled for up to 157 units of housing and 1,074 square feet of retail. The Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development intends to construct affordable housing on the site, and is conducting further analysis to refine a project for the site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The acquisition of this property is not a project under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c) and 15378 because there is no direct or indirect physical change in the environment. Any future development projects at this site would be evaluated and potentially subject to environmental review.

GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE AND BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

As described below, the proposed acquisition of 1515 South Van Ness Avenue is consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 and is, on balance, in conformity with the Objectives and Policies of 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.

HOUSING ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 1, IDENTIFY AND MAKE AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT ADEQUATE SITES TO MEET THE CITY'S HOUSING NEEDS, ESPECIALLY PERMANENTLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

POLICY 1.3

Work proactively to identify and secure opportunity sites for permanently affordable housing.

Comment: The acquisition of 1515 South Van Ness Avenue would secure this site for permanently affordable housing.

POLICY 1.10

Support new housing projects, especially affordable housing, where households can easily rely on public transportation, walking and bicycling for the majority of daily trips.

Comment: The permanently affordable housing project to be constructed on this property would be easily accessible to major MUNI and bicycle routes, and would enable households to rely on walking, public transportation and bicycling for most trips.

OBJECTIVE 4, FOSTER A HOUSING STOCK THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS ACROSS LIFECYCLES.

POLICY 4.4

Encourage sufficient and suitable rental housing opportunities, emphasizing permanently affordable rental units wherever possible.

Comment: The acquisition of 1515 South Van Ness Avenue would secure this site for permanently affordable housing, addressing an unmet housing need in San Francisco.

POLICY 4.5

Ensure that new permanently affordable housing is located in all of the city's neighborhoods, and encourage integrated neighborhoods, with a diversity of unit types provided at a range of income levels.

Comment: The acquisition of 1515 South Van Ness Avenue would secure this site for permanently affordable housing in an existing, diverse, mixed-use neighborhood close to amenities like parks, schools and high-frequency transit.

OBJECTIVE 7, SECURE FUNDING AND RESOURCES FOR PERMANENTLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING, INCLUDING INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS THAT ARE NOT SOLELY RELIANT ON TRADITIONAL MECHANISMS OR CAPITAL.

POLICY 7.5

Encourage the production of affordable housing through process and zoning accommodations, and prioritize affordable housing in the review and approval processes.

Comment: Once the site is acquired, the affordable housing project constructed on the site will be eligible to take advantage of recently passed legislation encouraging production of affordable housing, including the Affordable Housing Bonus Program, SB35, and Planning Code Section 315.

OBJECTIVE 8, BUILD PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR CAPACITY TO SUPPORT, FACILITATE, PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

POLICY 8.1

Support the production and management of permanently affordable housing.

Comment: The acquisition of 1515 South Van Ness Avenue would secure this site for permanently affordable housing.

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:

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 existing commercial building on the site is currently vacant. It is not yet known whether the project MOHCD intends to construct will include retail spaces on the ground floor, which could provide future opportunities for neighborhood-serving retail uses and employment.

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

The site contains no existing housing. The construction of a 100% affordable housing project on the site is likely to enhance the cultural and economic diversity of the neighborhood.

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

The acquisition of this site would allow the construction of permanently affordable housing, enhancing 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 adversely affect the City's economic base or future opportunities for employment and/or ownership. The future affordable housing project on the site will increase opportunities for residential employment in our industrial and service sectors by offering permanently affordable housing units for low-income households and families.

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. The affordable housing project to be constructed on the site would be required to meet all applicable building code seismic standards.

7. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

This Project would not adversely affect any landmarks or buildings of historic significance.

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

The acquisition of the site would not adversely affect any parks or open space. The affordable housing project to be constructed on the site would undergo review to ensure it doesn't create a negative impact to sunlight and vistas to our parks and open space.

RECOMMENDATION:

Finding the acquisition of 1515 South Van Ness Avenue, on balance, in-conformity with the General Plan