



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report

Date: July 1, 2009
Case No.: 2005.1004E
Contract No.: CS-148 (San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency)
Project Title: **Glen Park Community Plan**
BPA Nos.: Not applicable
Zoning: Various; see below
Block/Lot: Various; see below
Lot Size: Not applicable
Project Sponsor: San Francisco Planning Department
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Context

The Glen Park neighborhood, located in the southern portion of San Francisco, was the subject of a community planning process that focused on the City's transit-served neighborhoods. A primary purpose of this effort was to develop a plan for the neighborhood's "downtown," which includes Glen Park's commercial district, the Glen Park BART Station, and nearby streets and public open spaces. After a series of public workshops, the *Draft Glen Park Community Plan Summary*¹ (*Community Plan*) was published in 2003 by the Planning Department. The plan area is bounded generally by Chenery Street to the north; Roanoke Street to the east; San Jose Avenue, Calvert Drive, and Bosworth Street to the south; and Elk Street to the west (see Figure 1, p. 3).

The commercial center of the Glen Park neighborhood is on Diamond Street, near the intersection of Diamond Street and Chenery Street. This area is in close proximity to the Glen Park BART Station, located at the intersection of Bosworth Street and Diamond Street. The downtown Glen Park area is also proximate to I-280 on-ramps, San Jose Avenue, and the Muni J-Church stop on San Jose Avenue. Glen Canyon Park, which contains a section of Islais Creek, is located approximately 0.3 miles west of

¹ City and County of San Francisco, Planning Department, *Draft Glen Park Community Plan*, prepared November 2003. Accessed at: <http://www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/planning/citywide/pdf/gpdplowres.pdf>.

downtown Glen Park. Islais Creek enters an underground culvert upon leaving the park, and runs parallel to Bosworth Street.

The *Community Plan* is a policy document that presents an overall concept for enhancing the existing neighborhood, as well as encouraging infill development at the BART parking lot north of the BART station and at the northwest intersection of Diamond Street and Bosworth Street. The *Community Plan* proposes general design features and policies to guide future infrastructure improvements and update zoning, design guidelines, and other city policies for future development. However, the details of the *Community Plan* are still in the process of being developed as part of the community planning process, and are subject to approval by the City Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

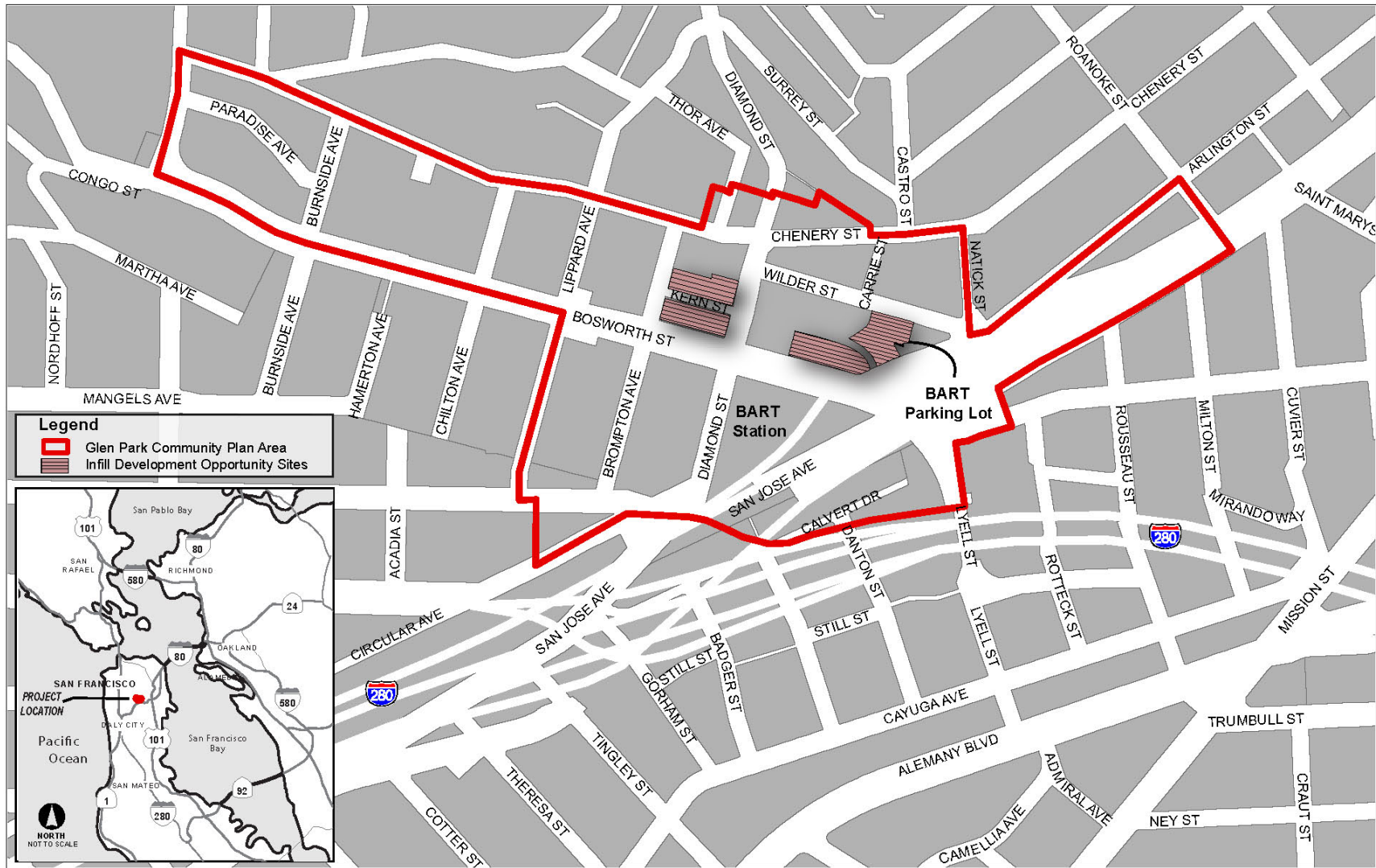
Design features and policies provided in the *Community Plan* address pedestrian safety, traffic flow, access to transit, parking and other transportation improvements described in further detail below. The *Community Plan* also includes improvements to public spaces, such as improvements to the design and character of streets, redesign of the BART station plaza, and connecting public open spaces throughout the plan area.

For the purposes of environmental review, the proposed project consists of recommendations for transportation/infrastructure and public space improvements proposed in the *Community Plan*, and the infill development that would be accommodated by the *Community Plan*, that would be expected to occur within the roughly 20-year time-frame of the environmental analysis (by 2030). Improvements expected to be completed beyond 2030 (e.g., converting San Jose Avenue from a “freeway” to a City street) are considered speculative in nature and are not included as part of the proposed project. These speculative projects would be subject to environmental review when specific plans for these proposals are developed.

Physical Improvements

Transportation and Infrastructure Improvements. The *Community Plan* contains policies that propose transportation and infrastructure improvements, including:

- Roundabouts at key intersections along Bosworth Street east of Diamond Street;
- Improved access between Glen Park BART Station and J-Church Muni stop;
- Improved Muni access to the Glen Park BART Station via a bus loop and new concourse entry on the south side of the station;
- Better access to the Glen Park BART Plaza near Bosworth Street and Diamond Street;
- Improved pedestrian linkages to infill development (at the Glen Park BART Station parking lot); and
- Other traffic calming, streetscape, and pedestrian improvements throughout the plan area.



SOURCE: PBS&J, 2009.

GLEN PARK COMMUNITY PLAN
FIGURE 1: PROJECT LOCATION MAP

The transportation improvements are currently being reviewed through a series of feasibility studies to determine their viability and conceptual performance from an engineering perspective. Some of these improvements may not be practically possible, due to spatial or other considerations. The feasibility study will identify which of the proposed improvements are feasible, thereby narrowing this list. Only improvements that are determined to be feasible will be studied in the EIR and other transportation improvements may be proposed in lieu of those that are found to be infeasible. In addition, other proposed infrastructure improvements are identified in the *Community Plan*, including daylighting portions of Islais Creek.

Infill Development Opportunities. The *Community Plan* identifies infill development opportunities at two sites: the existing Glen Park BART Station parking lot and the parcels at the northwest corner of Diamond Street and Bosworth Street.

- **Glen Park BART Station Parking Lot.²** The proposed project includes the redevelopment of the Glen Park BART Station parking lot (Assessor's Block 6745; Lots 042, 048, 053, 057, 066, 067, 068, and 069), located on the north side of Bosworth Street and Arlington Street, south of Wilder Street, east of Diamond Street, and west of Natick Street. This site would be developed into a mix of uses that would include ground-floor commercial uses along the Bosworth Street frontage and between 40 and 65 residential units. New zoning would allow three-story structures along Bosworth Street and Arlington Street. Parking would range from 0 to 65 private, off-street parking spaces. Currently, this site contains 54 5-hour off-street parking spaces designated for use by BART patrons.
- **Northwest Corner of Diamond Street and Bosworth Street.** This infill site includes five parcels on both sides of Kern Street, between Diamond Street, Bosworth Street, and Brompton Avenue (Assessor's Block 6744; Lots 025, 027, 030, 031, and 032). Potential development would include ground-floor commercial uses along the existing NC-2 (Small-Scale Neighborhood Commercial) zoned street frontages. The existing RH-2 (Residential, House District, Two-Family) use district is expected to be maintained for the site at Kern Street and Brompton Avenue. Approximately 30 to 55 units of housing and 0 to 55 parking spaces are estimated to be allowable on this site. New zoning would allow structures up to four stories tall on the corner of Diamond Street and Bosworth Street. Other structures at this site would be between two and three stories tall. Currently these parcels contain commercial/retail development fronting on Diamond Street, an off-street parking lot, and single-family residential development along Kern Street.

Planning Code Amendments

Zoning. Implementation of the *Community Plan* would require revisions to the existing *San Francisco Planning Code (Planning Code)* zoning districts and height districts in the plan area. Anticipated changes to the *Planning Code* include replacement of the existing NC-2 district with a new Glen Park Neighborhood Commercial Transit District (NCT). The Glen Park NCT zoning district, which is proposed to front on Diamond Street and extend from just north of Chenery Street to Monterey Boulevard, would modify

² This site is owned by the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) District. In December 2008, BART issued a request for qualifications for developers interested in working with the City, BART, and the Glen Park community to determine the feasibility of a new transit-oriented development at the Glen Park BART Station.

parking regulations and residential densities to reflect the plan area's close proximity to abundant transit service. The BART parking lot at Bosworth Street and Arlington Street would be rezoned from its current Public (P) zoning designation. Residential zoning (RH-2 or RTO, Residential, Transit-Oriented) would likely be applied to the portion of the BART parking lot property fronting Wilder Street, and Glen Park NCT zoning would be applied to the portion of the property fronting Bosworth Street.

Heights. Residential-zoned areas would retain an existing height limit of 40 feet. However, height increases of up to 45 feet in the Glen Park NCT district may be considered to allow for active ground-floor uses. Some consideration would be given to increasing height limits on portions of the BART property to 65 feet to account for proximity to transit and grade changes on site.

General Plan Amendments

The *Community Plan* would be adopted as an area plan under the *San Francisco General Plan (General Plan)*. No other changes to the *General Plan* would be required other than minor referential amendments in other *General Plan* elements for consistency.

Project Approvals

It is anticipated that the proposed project would require the following project approvals:

- Amendment of *Planning Code* Article 2 for rezoning the BART parking lot property fronting Wilder Street from P to RH-2 or RTO.
- Amendment of *Planning Code* Article 7 for rezoning the existing NC-2 district to a new Glen Park NCT district for parcels on Diamond Street and Bosworth Street.
- Amendment of *Planning Code* Article 7 for rezoning Assessor's Block 6745, Lots 042, 048, 053, 057, 066, 067, 068, and 069 from P to Glen Park NCT.
- Amendment of *Planning Code* Article 7 for rezoning Assessor's Block 6744, Lot 030 from RH-1 to Glen Park NCT.
- Amendment of *Planning Code* Zoning Map ZNII to reflect the zoning changes indicated above.
- Amendment of *Planning Code* Zoning Map HTII to reflect revised height and bulk limits for the infill sites.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW TOPICS

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed project will examine the potential for the improvements and development proposed under the *Community Plan* to cause or contribute to significant physical or environmental impacts. The EIR will also identify mitigation measures and analyze whether proposed mitigation measures would reduce the environmental effects to a less-than-significant level as defined by the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)*. Two levels of analysis will be provided in the EIR:

- Transportation and infrastructure improvements and infill development at the Glen Park BART Station parking lot and at the Diamond Street and Bosworth Street parcels will be assessed at a project-level of analysis.
- The general policies of the *Community Plan*, along with the connected greenways and the Islais Creek daylighting, will be discussed at a program-level of analysis.

The Planning Department anticipates that the Initial Study will address all environmental review topics in advance of the EIR. The Initial Study will identify any mitigation measures necessary to reduce any potential impacts of the proposed project in these topic areas to a less-than-significant level. Topics that are likely to be eligible for adequate coverage in the Initial Study include: Wind and Shadow, Recreation, Utilities and Service Systems, Public Services, Biological Resources, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Hazards/Hazardous Materials, Mineral/Energy Resources, Agricultural Resources; these topics would not be addressed in the EIR.

It is anticipated that the following environmental topics will be addressed in the EIR.

Plans and Policies

This section of the EIR will discuss any potential conflicts with applicable land use plans and policies, including the *General Plan* and Priority Policies, and other City policies that are designed to avoid or mitigate environmental effects. The EIR will discuss proposed amendments to the *General Plan* and *Planning Code*. The EIR will discuss the proposed project's potential inconsistencies with *General Plan* policies, as well as the City's *Sustainability Plan*. Any project inconsistency with City and regional plans, including the *Bay Area Air Quality Plan*, the *San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan*, the *San Francisco Congestion Management Plan*, the *San Francisco Municipal Transportation Plan*, areawide waste treatment plans, and regional housing plans, will also be identified.

Land Use

This section of the EIR will discuss the zoning and land use controls proposed in the *Community Plan* and the effect that alteration of existing controls could have on the existing land use character. Potential land use inconsistencies between existing and proposed uses will be discussed. The effects of increased densities at the two infill sites and changes in land use character will be described and evaluated. Other issues that will be discussed in this section include land use changes linked to improved transit access, daylighting of Islais Creek, reconfiguration of streets, and traffic-calming improvements.

Aesthetics

This section of the EIR will describe the existing visual character of the plan area and discuss potential impacts of the proposed land use and transportation changes on neighborhood and streetscape character and/or scenic views. The urban design features proposed in the *Community Plan* will be identified and assessed in the EIR in consideration of potential environmental impacts. The height, bulk, and massing of the proposed development at the infill opportunity sites will be compared with adjacent buildings to determine whether proposed development would be compatible with the existing built environment.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources

This section of the EIR will assess historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources in the plan area, and will identify the potential for proposed infrastructure improvements, development, or *Community Plan* policies to adversely affect these resources. Impacts will be assessed based on the City's *CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources*.

Transportation and Circulation

This section of the EIR will address the potential impacts associated with proposed infill development and transportation improvements on the City's transportation network, including area roadways, public transportation, and pedestrian accessibility. Proposed transportation improvements, and their effect on the overall circulation pattern, will be assessed according to the City's *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines for Environmental Review*.

Noise

This section of the EIR will analyze the potential for existing noise and vibration sources, including the I-280 freeway and local streets, BART operations, and Muni operations, to adversely affect proposed infill development. Impacts of construction-related noise generated by infill development and proposed infrastructure improvements on the local community will also be discussed, including any identified noise-sensitive receptors in the project vicinity.

Air Quality and Climate Change

This section of the EIR will analyze consistency of the *Community Plan* with applicable air quality plans. Project-specific air quality effects, including long-term operational and short-term construction related impacts; greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; and air quality issues related to new development built in close proximity to high volume traffic corridors will be assessed.

Alternatives

This section of the EIR will discuss alternatives to the proposed project that would reduce or eliminate significant environmental effects. The alternatives will include a No Project Alternative, which is required by CEQA to be discussed in the EIR. This alternative would entail a continuation of existing zoning controls and General Plan policies in the area. Existing uses on the BART parking lot and the Diamond Street and Bosworth Street sites would remain, and no transportation improvements would be made. The EIR will also analyze up to three additional alternatives that will respond to potential significant environmental impacts that would occur with implementation of the proposed project.

FINDING

This project may have a significant effect on the environment and an Environmental Impact Report is required. This determination is based upon the criteria of the State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15063 (Initial Study), 15064 (Determining Significant Effect), and 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance).

PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS

Pursuant to the State of California Public Resources Code Section 21083.9 and California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15206, a public scoping meeting will be held to receive oral comments concerning the scope of the EIR. The meeting will be held on **July 16, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at the Glen Park Community Recreation Center, 70 Elk Street**. Written comments will also be accepted at this meeting and until 5 p.m. on July 31, 2009. Written comments should be sent to Bill Wycko, Environmental Review Officer, San Francisco Planning Department, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94103.

If you work for a responsible State agency, we need to know the views of your agency regarding the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the EIR when considering a permit or other approval for this project. Please include the name of a contact person in your agency.

July 1, 2009
Date

for Lisa K. K.
Bill Wycko
Environmental Review Officer