

SAN FRANCISCO  
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

MOTION NO. 17007

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE CERTIFICATION OF A FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED RINCON HILL PLAN, WHICH WOULD CREATE A NEW ZONING DISTRICT IN THE AREA OF SAN FRANCISCO GENERALLY BOUNDED BY FOLSOM STREET, STEUART STREET, THE EMBARCADERO, BRYANT STREET, BEALE STREET, THE BAY BRIDGE APPROACH AND THE TRANSBAY TERMINAL RAMPS.**

MOVED, That the San Francisco Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") hereby CERTIFIES the Final Environmental Impact Report identified as case file No. 2000.1081E, the Rincon Hill 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 March 10, 2001.

b. On September 25, 2004, 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.

c. Notices of availability of the DEIR and of the date and time of the public hearing were posted near the project site by Department staff on September 25, 2004.

d. On September 25, 2004, 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, to adjacent property owners, 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 September 25, 2004.

2) The Commission held a duly advertised public hearing on said Draft Environmental Impact Report on November 29, 2004 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 December 10, 2004.

3) The Department prepared responses to comments on environmental issues received at the public hearing and in writing during the 64-day public review period for the DEIR, prepared revisions to the text of the DEIR in response 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 a "Draft Comments and Responses" document, published on April 11, 2005 was distributed to the Commission and to all parties who commented on the DEIR, and was available to others upon request at Department offices.

4) A Final Environmental Impact Report has been prepared by the Department, consisting of the Draft Environmental Impact Report, any consultations and comments received during the review process, any additional information that became available, and the Summary of Comments and Responses all as required by law.

5) Project Environmental Impact Report files have been made available for review by the Commission and the public. These files are available for public review at the Department offices at 1660 Mission Street, and are part of the record before the Commission.

6) On April 21, 2005, the Commission reviewed and considered the Final Environmental Impact Report and hereby does find that the contents of said report and the procedures through which the Final Environmental Impact Report 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 Alternative referred to as the Revised Preferred Option, as described in the Final Environmental Impact Report.

8) The Planning Commission hereby does find that the Final Environmental Impact Report concerning File No. 2000.1081E, the Rincon Hill Plan, reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the City and County of San Francisco, is adequate, accurate and objective, and that the Comments and Responses document contains no significant revisions to the DEIR, and hereby does CERTIFY THE COMPLETION of said Final Environmental Impact Report in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

8) The Commission, in certifying the completion of said Final Environmental Impact Report, hereby does find that the project described in the Environmental Impact Report and the project preferred by the project sponsor, described as the Revised Preferred Option in the Final Environmental Impact Report:

will have unavoidable project-specific significant impacts on the environment by: 1) adding traffic and changing street configurations which will cause significant unavoidable adverse traffic impacts at the Fremont/Harrison, First/Market, Embarcadero/Folsom intersections; 2) contributing considerably to significant cumulative traffic impacts at the First/Market and First/Folsom intersections; and 3) encouraging and facilitating the loss of the Union Oil Company Building and potentially the Edwin W. Tucker Company Building, the 375 Fremont Street building, as well as other architectural resources in the Plan Area, resulting in potentially significant adverse impacts on historical resources.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Motion was ADOPTED by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of May 5, 2005.

Linda Avery  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners S. Lee, Alexander, Antonini, Bradford-Bell, Hughes, B. Lee, Olague

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: May 5, 2005

**San Francisco  
Planning Department**

**RINCON HILL PLAN**

---

*Draft Environmental Impact Report*

Planning Department Case No. 2000.1081E  
State Clearinghouse No. 1984061912

*September 25, 2004*

**Draft EIR Publication Date:**  
September 25, 2004

**Draft EIR Public Hearing Date:**  
November 4, 2004

**Draft EIR Public Comment Period:**  
September 25 through November 10, 2004

*Written comments should be sent to:*

Joan A. Kugler, AICP  
Environmental Coordinator  
San Francisco Planning Department  
1660 Mission Street, Suite 500  
San Francisco, CA 94103

**THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## ● RINCON HILL PLAN FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

|   | <u>Page</u>      |
|---|------------------|
| <b>I. SUMMARY</b>   | <b>S-1</b>       |
| <b>II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>  | <b>1</b>         |
| A. Introduction   | 1                |
| B. Project Sponsor’s Objectives   | 2                |
| C. Project Location   | 4                |
| D. Project Components   | 6                |
| E. Approval Process   | 33               |
| F. Plan Options Considered and Withdrawn  | 34a              |
| <b>III. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND IMPACTS</b>   | <b>41</b>        |
| A. Land Use, Plans, and Policies  | 41               |
| B. Visual Quality   | 64               |
| C. Transportation, Circulation and Parking  | 122              |
| D. Population and Housing   | 135              |
| E. Air Quality  | 146              |
| F. Shadow   | 159              |
| G. Wind   | 175              |
| H. Hazardous Materials  | 180              |
| I. Historical Resources   | 186              |
| J. Hydrology and Water Quality  | 207              |
| K. Growth Inducement  | 221              |
| <b>IV. MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL<br/>ADVERSE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT</b>              | <b>222</b>       |
| <b>V. SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE<br/>AVOIDED IF THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS IMPLEMENTED</b> | <b>233</b>       |
| <b>VI. ALTERNATIVES</b>   | <b>234</b>       |
| <b>VII. DRAFT EIR DISTRIBUTION LIST</b>   | <b>238</b>       |
| ● <b>VIII. SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES</b>  | <b>C&amp;R.1</b> |
| ● <b>IX. APPENDICES</b>   |                  |
| A. Initial Study  |                  |
| B. Wind Study   |                  |
| ● <b>X. EIR AUTHORS AND CONSULTANTS; PERSONS CONSULTED</b>  |                  |

**LIST OF FIGURES**

|       |  |     |
|-------|--|-----|
| ● 1   | [Revised] Project Location   | 5   |
| 2.    | Existing Planning Code Use Districts   | 7   |
| ● 3.  | [Revised] Proposed Planning Code Use Districts                               | 8   |
| ● 4.  | [Revised] Existing Height and Bulk Districts                                 | 10  |
| ● 5.  | [Revised] Proposed Height and Bulk Districts                                 | 11  |
| 6.    | Bulk Illustration  | 14  |
| ● 7.  | [Revised] Preferred Option   | 22  |
| ● 8.  | [Revised] 82.5-Foot Option   | 23  |
| ● 9.  | [Revised] 150-Foot Tower Separation (Existing Controls) Option               | 24  |
| 10.   | March 2003 Heights   | 35  |
| 11.   | Options Considered and Withdrawn   | 40  |
| 12.   | Existing Land Uses and Major Buildings                                       | 43  |
| 13.   | Visual Setting Photos  | 65  |
| 14.   | Visual Setting Photos  | 67  |
| 15.   | Visual Setting Photos  | 68  |
| 16.   | Visual Setting Photos  | 69  |
| 17.   | Viewpoint Location Map   | 71  |
| 18.   | Representative View Corridors  | 73  |
| 19.   | Representative View Corridors  | 74  |
| 20.   | Representative View Corridors  | 76  |
| 21.   | Representative View Corridors  | 77  |
| 22.   | Representative View Corridors  | 78  |
| ● 23. | [Revised] Representative View Corridors                                      | 79  |
| 24.   | Representative View Corridors  | 81  |
| 25.   | Existing and Proposed Bulk Controls  | 88  |
| 26.   | Existing View from Bay Bridge of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan        | 92  |
| 27.   | Photosimulation from Bay Bridge of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan      | 93  |
| 28.   | Photosimulation from Bay Bridge of Preferred Option                          | 94  |
| 29.   | Photosimulation from Bay Bridge of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option        | 95  |
| 30.   | Photosimulation from Bay Bridge of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option       | 96  |
| 31.   | Existing View from Treasure Island   | 97  |
| 32.   | Photosimulation from Treasure Island of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan | 98  |
| 33.   | Photosimulation from Treasure Island of Preferred Option                     | 99  |
| 34.   | Photosimulation from Treasure Island of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option   | 100 |

| <b>LIST OF FIGURES (cont'd.)</b> |  | <u>Page</u> |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------|
| 35.                              | Photosimulation from Treasure Island of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option              | 101         |
| 36.                              | Existing View from Potrero Hill  | 102         |
| 37.                              | Photosimulation from Potrero Hill of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan                | 103         |
| 38.                              | Photosimulation from Potrero Hill of Preferred Option                                    | 104         |
| 39.                              | Photosimulation from Potrero Hill of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option                  | 105         |
| 40.                              | Photosimulation from Potrero Hill of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option                 | 106         |
| 41.                              | Existing View from Randall Museum  | 107         |
| 42.                              | Photosimulation from Randall Museum of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan              | 108         |
| 43.                              | Photosimulation from Randall Museum of Preferred Option                                  | 109         |
| 44.                              | Photosimulation from Randall Museum of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option                | 110         |
| 45.                              | Photosimulation from Randall Museum of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option               | 111         |
| 46.                              | Existing View from Near Sixth / Bryant Streets   | 112         |
| 47.                              | Photosimulation from Near Sixth / Bryant Streets of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan | 113         |
| 48.                              | Photosimulation from Near Sixth / Bryant Streets of Preferred Option                     | 114         |
| 49.                              | Photosimulation from Near Sixth / Bryant Streets of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option   | 115         |
| 50.                              | Photosimulation from Near Sixth / Bryant Streets of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option  | 116         |
| 51.                              | Publicly Accessible Open Space in Plan Area Vicinity                                     | 161         |
| 52.                              | Shadow Patterns, Spring, 9 a.m.  | 163         |
| 53.                              | Shadow Patterns, Spring, 12 noon   | 164         |
| 54.                              | Shadow Patterns, Spring, 3 p.m.  | 165         |
| 55.                              | Shadow Patterns, Summer, 9 a.m.  | 166         |
| 56.                              | Shadow Patterns, Summer, 12 noon   | 167         |
| 57.                              | Shadow Patterns, Summer, 3 p.m.  | 168         |
| 58.                              | Shadow Patterns, Winter, 9 a.m.  | 169         |
| 59.                              | Shadow Patterns, Winter, 12 noon   | 170         |
| 60.                              | Shadow Patterns, Winter, 3 p.m.  | 171         |
| 61.                              | Historic Buildings and Archaeological Mitigation Zones                                   | 193         |

**LIST OF TABLES**

|     |  |      |
|-----|--|------|
| S-1 | Summary of Impacts: Plan Options and EIR Alternatives                                | S-30 |
| 1.  | Comparison Between Existing and Proposed Bulk Controls                               | 13   |
| 2.  | Comparison Between Existing Use District Controls and Proposed Use District Controls | 15   |
| 3.  | Residential Construction Anticipated Under Each Plan Option                          | 26   |
| 4.  | Existing and Approved Large-Scale Residential Projects in Rincon Hill                | 42   |

|   | <u>Page</u> |
|---|-------------|
| <b>LIST OF TABLES (cont'd.)</b>   |             |
| 5. Intersection Levels Of Service   | 128         |
| 6. Plan Area Population   | 139         |
| 7. ABAG Projections 2003 for San Francisco                                    | 140         |
| 8. Comparison of ABAG Projections 2002 and Projections 2003 for San Francisco | 141         |
| 9. State and National Ambient Air Quality Standards                           | 148         |
| 10. San Francisco Air Criteria Air Pollutant Concentrations, 1997-2001        | 150         |
| 11. Estimated Carbon Monoxide Concentrations at Selected Intersections        | 158         |

# CHAPTER I

## SUMMARY

---

### A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This document is a “program level” Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Rincon Hill Plan,<sup>1</sup> covering amendments to the Planning Code and Zoning Maps and to the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan, an element of the San Francisco General Plan. While the EIR analysis is based on assumed development and activity that could occur pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan, individual projects that may be proposed in the future under the Rincon Hill Plan would undergo project-level environmental review to determine whether they could generate further impacts specific to their site, time and configuration. The proposed plan that is the subject of this EIR is not a development proposal, and, while it would facilitate construction of certain projects, the only specific improvements proposed are in the area of streetscape enhancement and open space. Therefore, the EIR’s analysis of physical changes in the environment is based on the assumptions about future development that could occur under the plan.

The project description is taken from the “Rincon Hill Plan—Draft for Public Discussion” published by the Planning Department in November 2003 and revised through “Proposed Plan Refinements” in March 2004 and a “Supplement to the Draft Rincon Hill Plan” dated September 2004. These documents together are referred to in this EIR as the “Draft Rincon Hill Plan” or the “Draft Plan.”

Three options from the Draft Plan are analyzed at an equal level, as EIR alternatives, in Chapter III. The Preferred Option would increase certain height limits and reduce the Planning Code–required separation between high-rise residential towers from the existing 150 feet to 115 feet. The Preferred Option–115-foot Tower Separation would also eliminate the current practice under which exceptions to the existing zoning have been granted, pursuant to Planning Code Section 271, thereby increasing the absolute distance between towers, compared to what has been previously approved. This EIR also analyzes two other options including a lesser separation of towers (82.5-foot Tower Separation Option) with the same increase in height limits, and retention and enforcement of the existing tower separation with no change in height limits from the existing controls (Existing Controls–150-foot Tower Separation Option). Two other alternatives—a No Project Alternative and a Preservation Alternative—are discussed in Chapter VI. Other options have been considered and withdrawn during the planning process because they do not meet the objectives of the project as effectively as the three options that have been carried forward.

---

<sup>1</sup> As described further below, the “Rincon Hill Plan” that is the subject of this EIR is distinguished from the “Rincon Hill Area Plan” within the San Francisco General Plan, in that the Rincon Hill Plan includes amendments not only to the Area Plan, but also to the City’s Planning Code, including the Zoning Maps.

Other than controls relating to height and bulk, and location and number of towers, the controls and zoning changes in the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would apply uniformly to all options; that is, permitted uses, maximum residential density, open space, parking and loading requirements, and proposed street changes and public realm improvements would be the same under all options, regardless of the height and bulk controls ultimately implemented.

The Rincon Hill area is situated within the northeast portion of San Francisco, bounded generally by Folsom Street, Steuart Street, The Embarcadero, Bryant Street, Beale Street, the Bay Bridge approach, and the Transbay Terminal ramps. The large-scale rectilinear geometry of Rincon Hill's street grid reflects the area's once dominant industrial land uses. In contrast to the street network north of Market Street, the blocks in Rincon Hill are typically 550 feet by 275 feet between major streets, approximately twice as large as the blocks north of Market Street.

The Rincon Hill Plan (the "proposed project" or the "project") would create a new zoning district called the Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use (DTR) District and eliminate the existing Rincon Hill Special Use District (SUD), the existing Residential and Commercial/Industrial Subdistricts, and the underlying zoning designations, except that a Residential Commercial (RC) Subdistrict adopted in

- February 2004 would be retained, slightly reduced in size, and renamed the "Folsom and Main Residential/ Commercial Special Use District." The project would also revise height limits within the Plan area, reduce podium heights, increase some tower height limits, revise the "R" bulk district (which currently exists only in the Plan area) to reduce the required separation between towers and increase the permitted bulk of towers while eliminating allowable bulk and tower separation exceptions, and amend the Rincon Hill Area Plan.

In the new Rincon Hill DTR District, permitted uses would include residential, retail, service, office, and institutions such as schools, places of worship, medical clinics, day-care facilities, and the like, as long as a 6:1 ratio for residential to other uses is met. Residential uses would be the only permitted uses above 85 feet in height. (Currently, this restriction applies only in the RC Subdistrict, and takes effect at a height of 200 feet.) The current Rincon Hill Residential SUD has no residential density limit; however, the Rincon Hill Commercial-Industrial SUD has a maximum density of 1 unit per 200 square feet of lot area. The proposed Rincon Hill DTR District would have no residential density limit. However, a minimum percentage of units that are two-bedroom and larger would be required in all development.

The Preferred Plan Option would increase the maximum height limit for residential towers in parts of the western portion of the Plan area centered around what remains of the historical top of Rincon Hill at First and Harrison Streets, while retaining existing height limits in most of the eastern Plan area and reducing the height limit in select portions of the Plan area, mostly in the Guy Place-Lansing Street enclave. In general, the Preferred Option would establish a base, or podium, height throughout most of the Plan area of 85 feet, with towers of various heights permitted above the podium level. The base height would range from 45 feet to 65 feet west of First Street and adjacent to the Bay Bridge west of Beale Street. The greatest height limits would be around the First/Harrison Streets intersection, where buildings between 400 and 550 feet would be permitted. Of the two options in addition to the Preferred Plan Option, one

(the 82.5-foot Option) assumes the same height and bulk limits as the Preferred Option, and the other (the 150-foot Option) assumes that existing height and bulk limits are maintained.

A fundamental aspect of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan is a proposed change from current Rincon Hill “R” bulk district controls in the spacing that would be required between high-rise residential buildings, or towers, which the Plan would define as any portion of a building in excess of 85 feet in height. (The current Rincon Hill “R” bulk district controls define towers as anything over 105 feet tall.) At present, this spacing—called separation of towers—is established at 150 feet; that is, no two high-rise residential buildings in the Plan area can be closer than 150 feet to each other at their nearest points. The Preferred Plan Option would revise the “R” bulk district controls to establish the required distance between towers at 115 feet. However, whereas existing R bulk rules allow the Planning Commission to grant exceptions to the bulk and tower separation controls based on criteria in Planning Code Section 271, under the proposed Plan, no exceptions would be permitted. The Draft Plan would also establish a limit of three towers on each full Rincon Hill block, and would increase the permitted bulk of the tallest towers.

Other proposed zoning changes would eliminate minimum parking requirements; require setbacks to preserve ground-level sunlight; and revise open space requirements.

Each of the options includes several projects in the Plan area that are approved but not yet under construction and that, assuming they are built as approved, will bring five new residential towers to the Plan area as part of three approved projects: 300 Spear Street and 201 Folsom Street, each with two towers (one of 350 feet in height and the other, 400 feet), with a total of more than 1,500 residential units; and 325 Fremont Street, a 200-foot residential tower with about 50 units. Also included in all options are two projects that were under construction and therefore not occupied as of the publication of the Draft Plan in late 2003: 333 First Street, two residential towers (200 and 250 feet tall), with approximately 345 units, recently completed; and 40-50 Lansing Street, an 85-foot-tall residential building with about 80 units. Each option further assumes mid-rise residential construction up to 85 feet in height, the same as tower podiums, on sites where towers would not be permitted due to the required tower spacing.

Finally, under each option, neighborhood-serving retail uses are anticipated to be developed in ground-floor space, particularly on Folsom Street, which is designated as the commercial center of both the Rincon Hill and adjacent Transbay neighborhoods in plans for both areas. Up to about 65,000 square feet of retail space is anticipated, almost half of which would be in a grocery store in the recently approved project at 300 Spear Street. In addition, a small amount of new office space could be accommodated. The Draft Plan anticipates that more than half of the existing commercial uses in the Plan area, including service businesses such as auto repair, light industrial uses, and office space, would be displaced.

**Preferred Option.** The Planning Department’s Preferred Option for the Rincon Hill Plan assumes a 115-foot tower separation and a maximum of three towers per block. This would allow for four towers to be newly permitted, in addition to the two just completed at 333 First Street and the five already approved. The four new towers would be at 425 First Street at Harrison (with two towers, one of 450 feet and one 550 feet tall, with a total of about 830 residential units; 45 Lansing Street (on the north side of Harrison

Street east of First), with about 320 units in a 400-foot residential tower; and a 400-foot-tall residential tower on the west side of Fremont Street just north of Harrison Street, with about 340 units. This option could accommodate all projects for which an application is on file with the Planning Department and that could be built with a tower separation of at least 115 feet.

With the Preferred Option, the Planning Department aims to transform non-residential areas adjacent to downtown (including Rincon Hill) into dynamic mixed-use neighborhoods that will meaningfully contribute to the city's housing supply and provide services and amenities to a growing downtown residential population. As stated in the Draft Plan, the new controls "are intended to ensure the creation of a high-density residential neighborhood that balances livability and density, preserves sunlight and air, has attractive and livable streets and open spaces, offers a variety of housing types, allows easy access to shops and services, and generally enhances the area's role as a vital new part of the city."

**82.5-Foot Tower Separation Option.** This option includes all projects for which an application is on file with the Planning Department and that could be built with a tower separation of at least 82.5 feet, and extends to other sites where towers could be built to the same heights as the Preferred Option and with a minimum of 82.5-foot tower separation. This option thus shows the five approved but not yet built towers, and seven additional new towers on "soft sites" (sites where future development appears likely because the sites are currently developed at a low density), in addition to the two just completed at 333 First Street. The seven new towers would be at 425 First Street (named One Rincon Hill by the developer), with two residential towers (450 feet 550 feet tall) and about 770 units; 375 Fremont Street, a 300-foot residential tower with some 250 units *or* 399 Fremont Street, a 350-foot residential tower with about 300 units (although both of these proposals are on file, they could not both be built and retain the 82.5 foot tower separation from the existing Avalon Towers residential building, nor from each other); 340–350 Fremont Street, a 400-foot residential tower with about 350 units; 45 Lansing Street, a 400-foot residential tower with about 275 units; a 400-foot, 320-unit residential tower at the northwest corner of Fremont and Harrison Streets; and a 400-foot, 230-unit residential tower on the south side of Harrison Streets between First and Essex Streets.

This option is intended to illustrate the maximum potential development that could occur should heights as proposed with the Preferred Option be adopted with minimum tower separation controls of 82.5 feet, the width of streets in the district, and the tower separation approved in February 2004 for the projects at 300 Spear Street and 201 Folsom Street. Based on community input, Planning Department staff believes this option does not provide for adequate spacing between towers, particularly on Fremont Street, and does not preserve adequate sky exposure or sunlight to streets. Under this option, five towers would be developed on Fremont Street between Folsom Street and the south side of Harrison Street.

**Existing Controls (150-Foot Minimum Tower Separation) Option.** Based on tower spacing that matches existing controls of 150 feet, this option assumes that the existing controls would be enforced and that the Planning Code would be modified to prohibit the granting of exceptions to permit more closely spaced towers, as is currently permitted by Code Section 271. This is the only option that would



not include increased height limits. It would allow for three new towers, in addition to the five already approved and the two just completed at 333 First Street. New residential towers would include a 200-foot tower at the southeast corner of First and Harrison Streets (425 First Street site), with about 280 units; a 200-foot, 195-unit tower at the northwest corner of First and Harrison Streets (the site of an existing Union 76 gas station); and a 250-foot tower at the northwest corner of Fremont and Harrison Streets, with about 190 units.

The Planning Department believes that the existing controls have proven difficult to implement and have failed to achieve the key elements of the Rincon Hill Area Plan, such that the character of the area remains industrial, with wide, heavily trafficked streets, and the district lacks basic residential amenities.

The Preferred Option would create the potential for about 2,200 new residential units in the Plan area, adding to the approximately 1,565 units already existing or under construction in Rincon Hill and the 1,595 units approved but not yet under construction. Assuming all approved units are built, the Preferred Option would increase the number of units in the Plan area to a total of about 5,350 units. The other two options would allow for between about 1,650 and 2,850 new units, and a total of between 4,800 and 6,000 units. These assumptions drive various aspects of the analysis in this EIR.

Existing city policy requires that, for developments of 10 units or more that require Conditional Use authorization, at least 12 percent of on-site units be made affordable to households with annual incomes at or below the area median, or that the equivalent of 17 percent affordable units be constructed off-site (requirements are 10 percent and 15 percent if no Conditional Use authorization is required). The Draft Plan would require that all projects of 10 units or more comply with the 12 percent/17 percent affordable housing requirement, regardless of whether Conditional Use authorization is required. The Rincon Hill Plan would also require that a specified additional percentage of residential units be affordable to households with up to 120 percent of area median income in the Plan area, the amount of which would be based on economic analysis to assess the economic value added to land in Rincon Hill as a result of the increased density to be permitted. The Draft Plan also would require that 40 percent of all residential units (other than 100-percent affordable projects, senior/disabled housing, single-room occupancy buildings and other such specialized dwellings) be two-bedroom or larger units.

The Draft Plan proposes design guidelines that focus on podium-level (85-foot-tall) facades on the theory that the portions of buildings that meet the street would have the greatest influence on the pedestrian experience. The guidelines are intended to provide a consistent street wall that defines the street as a useable, comfortable space; create activity and visual interest along the ground-floor and sidewalk edge; and sculpt buildings to maintain an intimate scale related to width of the street and preserve sunlight and sky exposure in alleys and on important pedestrian streets. Separate design guidelines would apply to the Guy-Lansing enclave.

In accordance with the City Charter's Transit-First Policy, and given Rincon Hill's adjacency to downtown and access to both transit and urban services, the Draft Plan seeks to retire minimum parking requirements and establish a parking maximum to encourage travel by foot, bicycle and transit, while

meeting the on-site parking needs of new development and promoting creation of an active, walkable neighborhood. There would be no minimum off-street parking requirement for any use. All parking would be required to be located below street grade, and sponsors would need to ensure that parking will be sold or rented separately from residential units and commercial spaces and that it would only serve those uses for which it is accessory. No parking would be permitted as a principal use. For residential uses, up to one space per unit could be provided, but spaces in excess of 1 space per every 2 units could not be conventionally independently accessible. For projects of more than 100 units, between two and five spaces must be made available at no cost to car-sharing or site-based car rental programs. At least one bicycle parking space must be provided for every two units. For retail use, up to 1 space per 1,500 sq. ft. of occupied floor area could be provided; office parking would be as in the C-3 (Downtown) district (7 percent of floor area), while for other uses, maximums would equal existing minimums in the Planning Code. There would be no minimum off-street loading requirements.

A comprehensive streetscape and open space plan is proposed under all options, with sidewalk widenings, tree plantings, street furniture and the creation of new public spaces along streets throughout the district, intended to create an inviting and vibrant public realm. Under the Draft Plan, new development would be required to implement portions of the streetscape plan as a condition of approval, with potential additional funding from a neighborhood benefit district for both the streetscape plan and for parks and open space and other public amenities.

Seventy-five square feet of usable open space would be required for every dwelling unit, and one square foot of public open space would be required per 50 square feet of non-residential uses. The Draft Plan calls for open space funds collected as part of an assessment district, Mello Roos district, or other means to be directed to purchasing and improving as public open space the parcel adjacent to the Fremont Street off-ramp at Harrison Street, and the implementation of the sidewalk treatments along Plan area streets. Additional open space would be created along Essex Street, including the hillside and useable space at the top of the hill along Guy Place and Lansing Street. Mid-block pedestrian pathways, proposed in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan, would continue to be included, with some alterations.

The Draft Plan calls for a number of changes in the configuration of streets to shift the street environment from one built almost entirely around vehicular movement to one that is more accessible and accommodating to pedestrians. On First Street, the Plan calls for retaining four lanes but narrowing the easternmost lane by up to 5 feet and widening the adjacent sidewalk, and building raised landscaped medians south of Lansing Street, where there are currently striped medians, to prevent drivers from jumping center-lane bridge queues by using side lanes meant for local access.

Fremont Street would lose one southbound lane, for a resulting configuration of one southbound and two northbound lanes; the east sidewalk would be widened. On Harrison Street, the eastbound lane is to be narrowed from 18 to 12 feet, to add space to the north sidewalk and realign the westbound lanes. The Draft Plan proposes “soft-hit” stanchions between the two northernmost lanes to prevent drivers from jumping center-lane bridge queues by using side lanes meant for local access. Folsom Street is intended

to be the commercial heart of the Transbay and Rincon Hill neighborhoods, and the civic and transportation spine linking the neighborhood to the rest of the South of Market and the waterfront. A legislated fifteen-foot setback on the north side of the street (currently lined mostly with vacant public parcels to be redeveloped as part of the Transbay Development plan) would enable Folsom Street to be redesigned as a grand civic street.

Main, Beale, and Spear Streets would be converted to “living streets,” with two-way operation (one 11-foot lane in each direction), priority given to pedestrian activity and open space over auto needs, a parking lane on either side, widened sidewalks, street trees and pocket open spaces. Guy Place and Lansing Street would be converted to pedestrian-priority streets, but no change is proposed to the number of lanes or allowable auto access.

The Draft Plan encourages walking as the primary way that people living in Rincon Hill and Transbay will move about due to the proximity to downtown, regional transit hubs at the Transbay Terminal, Muni Metro and BART below Market Street, and the Ferry Building, and the anticipated development of a neighborhood retail center focused on Folsom Street. However, the Plan also recognizes that there is limited transit service between the Rincon Hill/Transbay neighborhood and the rest of San Francisco, and therefore recommends evaluation of a series of potential Muni improvements achievable in the short term to link the Plan area with the remainder of the City, including potentially extending certain Muni lines, increasing service on others, and creating late night service to the area. No funding has been identified for these changes.

Neither the Rincon Hill Plan area nor the adjacent Transbay area currently has any substantial community facilities. The Draft Plan proposes that the Sailors’ Union of the Pacific building at the northeast corner of First and Harrison Streets be rehabilitated for reuse, in part, as a Community Center. The Plan calls for a portion of funds collected as part of a neighborhood assessment district to be earmarked for the rehabilitation of the Sailor’s Union building, and the creation of at least 22,000 square feet of space for community use.

The Draft Plan would retain, but modify, under all options, the preservation objective from the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan, Objective 27, “Preserve and adaptively reuse those buildings in the area which have particular architectural or historical merit or which provide a scale and character of development consistent with the plan.” Historically significant buildings identified for preservation in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan would retain that identification, with the exception of the Union Oil Building and Clock Tower (now Bank of America Building and Clock Tower), which the Draft Plan does not recommend for preservation, instead giving priority to a high-rise residential project proposed at that site.

Except as necessary to maintain consistency with the proposed concepts described in the Draft Rincon Hill Plan analyzed in this EIR, objectives and policies of the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan would remain substantially the same. Given the proposed focus on residential development, the portion of Objective 3 calling for new “industrial, service and office uses ... in designated locations” would be deleted. Objectives 24 and 25, which pertain to provision of adequate residential parking and joint use of parking

structures, would be revised to reflect the Plan’s proposals regarding parking. Finally, Objective 27, regarding preservation, would be revised to acknowledge that the Plan would consider housing a more important goal than retention of the Union Oil (now Bank of America) Clock Tower.

Approval and implementation of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would require the following actions, with acting bodies shown in italics:

- Amendment of the General Plan Rincon Hill Area Plan to conform to the concepts of the currently proposed Rincon Hill Plan (the project), as outlined above. *Planning Commission recommendation; Board of Supervisors Approval*
- Determination of consistency of the proposed rezoning (Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District and Zoning Map and Height and Bulk Map changes) with the General Plan and Planning Code Section 101.1 Priority Policies. *Planning Commission recommendation; Board of Supervisors Approval*
- Amendment of the Planning Code to rescind the existing Rincon Hill Special Use District, eliminate existing underlying zoning within the Plan area (except the Residential/Commercial district approved in February 2004 and the U.S. Postal Service site), revise the “R” bulk district, and adopt the proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District. *Planning Commission recommendation; Board of Supervisors Approval*
- Amendment of the Planning Code Zoning Maps to change height limits throughout the Plan area. *Planning Commission recommendation; Board of Supervisors Approval*
- Street and sidewalk improvements, including changing some one-way streets to two-way flow, restriping as needed, and widened sidewalks. *Departments of Parking and Traffic and Public Works Approval; consultation with Fire Department, Muni, and other city agencies; review by city’s Interagency Staff Committee on Traffic and Transportation (ISCOTT); Board of Supervisors Approval (of curb changes, traffic changes, and certain other on-street changes).*
- Approval of financing mechanism (Mello Roos District or other option) for public improvements, and acquisition of necessary lands for certain improvements, such as the proposed park adjacent to the Fremont Street off-ramp, currently owned by Caltrans. *Board of Supervisors Approval, with Planning Commission recommendation and/or General Plan consistency finding as necessary; Recreation and Park Commission acceptance of park, if applicable*
- Determination that the proposed park site adjacent to the Fremont Street off-ramp is a surplus parcel *Caltrans*

## B. MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

This environmental impact report, for the Rincon Hill Plan, focuses on the following environmental issues. Other potential environmental effects, including Noise, Utilities and Services, Biology, Geology, and Energy, were determined in the Initial Study to be at a less-than-significant level or to be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with mitigation measures to be implemented. (Please see the Initial Study, included in this document as Appendix A, for analysis of other issues.)

## LAND USE, PLANS, AND POLICIES

The proposed Rincon Hill Plan would replace the current Rincon Hill Special Use District (SUD) and two of its three subdistricts with a new Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed-Use (DTR) District. The existing underlying zoning districts would be eliminated in the area covered by the new Rincon Hill DTR

District, which would be a new zoning district within the Planning Code. The most intense new residential development in the Plan area is anticipated along Fremont Street (between Folsom and Harrison Streets) and around the intersection of First and Harrison Streets, as well as on the south side of Folsom Street between Spear and Beale Streets, where four residential towers approved in February 2004.

- The Draft Plan would increase residential densities in an area in which residential land use is quickly expanding. Additionally, the proposed controls would likely be a catalyst for higher-density residential projects by yielding a greater possible number of dwelling units per lot area. The increased number of residential units would fuel demand for neighborhood-serving commercial uses either within or in close proximity to the Plan area.

The Draft Plan requires ground-floor retail uses along the south side of Folsom Street, and encourages ground floor retail space along Harrison, First, Fremont, Beale, and Main Streets. As a result, the Rincon Hill DTR District would be anticipated to reduce the number of sites currently used for surface parking and the number of existing underutilized buildings, and increase the amount of housing and commercial activity in the Plan area, especially at the ground level.

Permitted densities would be compatible with existing residential densities in the area, and would complement densities to the north and west of the Plan area in the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area and in adjacent areas such as the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area (e.g., the Paramount residential tower and St. Regis Museum Tower, at Third and Mission Streets).

In general, therefore, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would encourage the continued development of Rincon Hill as a primarily residential neighborhood, consistent with the trend since the adoption of the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan in 1985. The Plan would produce a change in the character of the area, but the change would be in keeping with City goals. In terms of land use, the effects of the three options analyzed would essentially be the same. The primary differences between these options would be the number of dwelling units that could be constructed in the area.

Any of the Plan options would result in the addition of publicly accessible open spaces and ground floor retail that would create “destinations” within the neighborhood, with associated increases in pedestrian activity. Rincon Hill’s proximity to the Financial District and the downtown area, and to BART and other transit, increases the likelihood that the project would increase foot traffic and result in a 24-hour presence throughout the area. Over time, the Plan assumes that it is likely that smaller parcels could be consolidated to allow buildings with larger footprints. However, the requirement for setbacks at specified heights and the requirement for slender towers separated by at least 115 feet with the Preferred Plan Option would reduce the overall appearance of “walls” of high-rise development along Folsom and Harrison Streets, as well as along First, Fremont, Beale and Main Streets, although 85-foot-tall buildings could be built on sites where towers would not be permitted. The potential for such consolidation would be minimized in the Guy-Lansing enclave by the substantially lower height limits proposed there, compared to other parts of the Plan area.

The proposed Plan acknowledges the need for affordable housing and a mix of housing types. The plan requires future projects to adhere to the City's inclusionary housing requirements, which require 12 percent of on-site or the equivalent of 17 percent of off-site units be affordable; unlike citywide rules, within the Plan area, this requirement would apply to all projects, regardless of whether Conditional Use authorization is required. Further, there would be an additional affordability requirement at 120 percent of median income. Moreover, the plan sets forth the goal for the unit mix to be varied, with a minimum of 40 percent two-bedroom units or larger.

New residential uses in the Plan area would increase the demand for open space and recreation uses, which are deficient within Rincon Hill. The plan seeks to address this lack of open space by planning for a future park on a parcel currently owned by Caltrans, located to the east of the Fremont Street off-ramp from the Bay Bridge. In addition, the plan proposes a number of improvements to the public realm under the title of "living streets," which include sidewalk widenings with pocket parks, tree plantings, and street furniture. Implementation of the plan's "living streets" would provide approximately 30,000 square feet of new active open space, changing the area's character from one primarily defined by its historic industrial development pattern to an active, predominately high-density mixed-use neighborhood.

The proposed Rincon Hill Plan options would neither disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community, nor would any of the Plan options have a substantial adverse impact on the existing character of the vicinity, and project land use impacts would not be significant.

Folsom Street would act as a transition between the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Project Area and the Rincon Hill Plan area, and could be transformed from a relatively quiet (except during rush hour) street bordered by numerous undeveloped parcels to a built-out boulevard with residential and commercial uses side-by-side and a large amount of pedestrian traffic. This street would play an important role in defining the identity of both the Transbay Area and Rincon Hill Plan area, providing a mix of jobs, housing and support services. Development foreseen under the Transbay Redevelopment Plan, coupled with the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, would ultimately lead to a more intense urban character of both areas. Intensified residential uses at the core of the Rincon Hill area would complement the Transbay development, and provide a corridor of residential and compatible commercial uses linked to the Financial District and the downtown. Implementation of the Rincon Hill DTR District and the Transbay Terminal/Redevelopment project would have the cumulative effect of intensifying land uses in currently underdeveloped areas of the city adjacent to downtown. This could provide new opportunities for downtown employees to live in proximity to their workplaces. Together with cumulative development, however, the proposed project would neither disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community, nor would it have a substantial adverse impact on the existing character of the vicinity, in that both the Rincon Hill and Transbay areas would represent continuation of existing development trends, and therefore cumulative land use impacts would not be significant.

---

## VISUAL QUALITY

With implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan, the overall character of the Rincon Hill area would continue to experience a change that has been under way for several years, from a mid-rise area with a mix of more industrial building types and parking lots, to a denser urban neighborhood of mid- to high-rise residential and mixed-use buildings, interspersed with designated areas of open space and enclaves of older housing and commercial buildings. The existing scale of the Plan area could change, as the Plan's proposed height limits could encourage the construction of tall, sculpted structures that could replace smaller-scale buildings. Mid- and high-rise construction within the district would be concentrated in the area fronting on Folsom Street, Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets, and on Harrison Street between Fremont and Essex Streets.

Height limits would regulate both podium height and tower height. The Plan would reduce the podium height from 105 feet to 85 feet in most areas, except for certain areas in the Guy/Lansing enclave and the south side of Harrison Street, where podium heights would be further reduced to 45 and 65 feet, respectively. The Plan calls for a minimum average podium height of 50 feet (except for required setbacks and where the maximum height is 85 feet or less), and requires upper levels to be set back 15 feet at a height of 65 feet. On alleyways and mid-block passageways, the 15-foot setback (20 feet in the Guy-Lansing area) would be required above 45 feet. Over time, these requirements could promote the development of uniform street walls, at heights related to existing street widths (generally 82.5 feet). Upper-level setbacks would reduce the apparent height of the podiums and would allow for semi-private open spaces atop the podium levels.

With respect to towers, height limits would be increased under the Preferred Option and 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option, mainly at the top of Rincon Hill around Harrison Street and First Street near Fremont Street, where heights of as much as 550 feet would be permitted. This is generally consistent with objectives in the General Plan's Urban Design Element to accentuate the natural topography of the Hill, and to taper heights down to the water. The 150-foot (Existing Controls) Option would not include increased height limits. Regardless of which option, if any, is approved, a great degree of visual change would also occur along the Folsom Street corridor between Spear and Beale Street, where two already approved projects, each consisting of a pair of 350-foot and 400-foot tower above an 80-foot podium, are expected to be built.

Although future buildings would generally be larger than existing buildings in Rincon Hill, increases in building height would not, in themselves, result in an adverse change in regard to visual quality: several recently constructed residential buildings in the area range in height from about 200 to 250 feet, and other recent project approvals have increased permitted heights to 400 feet at select locations in the Plan area. The Plan's proposed bulk controls and other requirements related to towers would result in development of taller, more slender, and more widely spaced buildings within Rincon Hill than currently exist. These buildings could provide orientation points and increase the area's physical distinction by introducing variety and contrast to large areas with similar streets and buildings, and would preserve more public

views than continued development under existing controls, which have permitted reduced tower spacing through exceptions granted pursuant to Planning Code Section 271.

Aside from design considerations and physical impacts related to tower height (e.g., potential view obstruction and shading), the manner in which future buildings meet the street, the reduced podium heights and required setbacks above 65 feet, and the more slender towers would define the aesthetic character of the pedestrian realm. The Plan's guidelines for massing and articulation call for future building designs to clearly define a base, mid-section and top. The Plan further recommends dividing building facades in vertical section and employing bay windows and balconies, using a "clean, simple palette of colors and materials" and avoiding unusual shapes. Such provisions would aid to visually relate new development with existing, adjacent uses.

Of the existing visually cohesive areas within the study area, the least change would come to the Guy-Lansing enclave, where building height limits would be reduced by 20 feet to 65 feet within the block's inner portions. Externally, development on surrounding blocks would, however, be expected to bring closer the backdrop of mid- to high-rise buildings.

The Plan also could lead to the removal of visually important buildings, notably the Bank of America (former Union Oil Co.) Clock Tower at First and Harrison Streets, visible to those crossing the Bay Bridge into San Francisco.

Development in Rincon Hill could result in noticeable changes in visual quality associated with an overall intensification of urban uses. At the same time, the development of certain arguably unsightly vacant parcels and surface parking lots, the anticipated provision of open space(s) of meaningful size, and area-wide streetscaping improvements could enhance the visual quality of the area. Future buildings in the area could define, unify and contribute positively to Rincon Hill's visual context.

While the proposed Plan would result in aesthetic changes within Rincon Hill, these changes are neither necessarily significant nor adverse. Future uses and building designs would be developed pursuant to the City's General Plan and a set of urban design controls and guidelines proposed by the Rincon Hill Plan. Although visual quality is subjective, it can reasonably be concluded that the proposed buildings themselves would not result in a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect on the existing visual character or quality of the area and its surroundings.

Public view corridors would remain down existing streets; however, they would be increasingly constricted horizontally over time by increased podium heights and the construction of towers, particularly along east-west streets such Folsom Street (and to a lesser degree along Harrison Street), and on north-south streets, especially along Fremont and First Streets. While development pursuant to the Draft Plan would result in substantial intensification of both height and density in the Rincon Hill Plan area, and some new development would obstruct portions of certain longer-range views of and through the Plan area, the Plan would not be considered to result in a significant adverse impact with regard to views. Obstruction of long-range views would occur over a limited visual field in any given view,



because short-range and mid-range views from within the Plan area and nearby locations would be preserved along streets in the Plan area, and because view corridors along existing streets within the Plan area would remain largely unobstructed, especially in terms of longer-range views of the Bay or hills that now exist along these streets.

The Rincon Hill area would become a more distinctive part of views from outside the study area as development over time generally becomes taller toward the top of Rincon Hill. It is likely that over time, construction of high-rise structures would continue to migrate southward from north of Mission Street toward Rincon Hill. The overall effect on urban form of development under the Rincon Hill Plan would be to create an additional concentration of high-rise development distinct from downtown that would serve as a counterpoint to existing high-rise development north of Market Street. The increased height limits proposed as part of the Rincon Hill Plan would permit construction of substantially taller and less bulky buildings than are currently allowed in the Plan area, with the tallest buildings permitted atop Rincon Hill itself, consistent with the direction in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan and the General Plan Urban Design Element to allow increased heights on hilltops in order to emphasize the natural topography.

Under any of the Plan options, distant views of the City's skyline would change because new buildings could be constructed over time. The increased density and height of development would result in a substantial change in the built form of development in the Plan area in long-range east-west views across the Plan area, such as from the Randall Museum, Dolores Park or Twin Peaks to the west, or from the Bay Bridge or Treasure Island to the east. From the south (e.g., Potrero Hill or Bernal Hill), the new buildings that are anticipated in the Plan would be less distinctive, and would somewhat merge into the background of existing high-rises in the downtown area. From the north, changes in urban form would be apparent primarily in views from upper stories of downtown high-rises, and from elevated viewpoints such as Telegraph Hill, and Russian Hill. Although some existing views would be diminished, implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan would provide an additional focal point in long-range views of and through the area, which could enhance the urban form of downtown San Francisco.

Given what could be described as a dramatic change in density and, especially, height, despite the relative lack of interference with existing view corridors along streets in the Plan area, it is reasonable to conclude that, among some observers, changes in the overall urban form of the Rincon Hill Plan area due to development pursuant to the Draft Plan would appear to result in a substantial, perhaps negative, change in the appearance of the City's skyline. However, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would, in general, respond favorably to the objectives, policies, and principles in the General Plan Urban Design Element. The Draft Plan—and particularly the more intense development of the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option—by altering views might be judged inconsistent with Urban Design Policy 1.1, “Recognize and protect major views in the city, with particular attention to those of open space and water.” The Draft Plan would nevertheless adhere to many of the Fundamental Principles For Major New Development listed under Urban Design Objective 3, “Moderation of major new development to complement the city pattern, the resources to be conserved, and the neighborhood environment.” The Draft Plan also would

respond favorably to several Fundamental Principles for Neighborhood Environment listed under Urban Design Objective 4, “Improvement of the neighborhood environment to increase personal safety, comfort, pride and opportunity.” The Draft Plan’s provisions are consistent with these principles, which are designed to foster an attractive urban form. In light of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan’s generally positive response to the objectives, policies, and guidelines in the Urban Design Element, it is the conclusion that the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse effect with regard to visual quality.

The northern boundary of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would simultaneously act as the southern boundary of the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Plan Area. Implementation of both the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and the Transbay Redevelopment Plan would intensify land uses in the northeastern portion of the City. However, the proposed urban design controls included in the Rincon Hill Area Plan and development controls for the Transbay Redevelopment area would maximize retention of existing views and encourage slender towers by requiring minimum tower separation distances and square footage reductions in the towers’ upper levels. The relationships of building forms to one another and to other elements of the city pattern would be moderated so that the effects related to implementing both the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and Transbay Redevelopment Plan would be complementary and harmonious. The general pattern of buildings would emphasize the topographic form of the city and the importance of centers of activity. Therefore, the cumulative visual effects, while showing an overall change to the area, would not result in a significant adverse effect.

## TRANSPORTATION, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

Currently 12 of 17 intersections analyzed operate at acceptable (LOS D or better) service levels during the p.m. peak hour, while five intersections operate unacceptably (LOS E or F). The five intersections operating at LOS E/F (First and Folsom Streets, Essex and Harrison Streets, First and Harrison Streets, Main and Harrison Streets, and Second and Brannan Streets) are located on the main approaches to I-80 and the Bay Bridge, which typically carry high volumes of traffic during the p.m. peak period. Growth in San Francisco and within the study area by 2020 (without the project) would cause operating conditions at all study intersections to worsen versus Existing conditions, and seven of the 17 study intersections would operate at unacceptable LOS E or F. The two intersections where conditions would degrade to worse than LOS D are The Embarcadero and Bryant Street and Fremont and Harrison Streets.

The addition of traffic from the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and the proposed changes in street configurations under the Plan would result in a significant impact at six of the study intersections (Fremont/Harrison, which would degrade from LOS E to LOS F; and First/Market, Beale/Folsom, Main/Folsom, Spear/Folsom, and Embarcadero/Folsom, which would degrade from LOS D or better to LOS E or F). Conditions at the six study intersections that would operate at LOS F under 2020 Baseline conditions would worsen, but with relatively minor changes to the volume-to-capacity ratios.

Because intersection operations on certain streets are dictated largely by the operations of downstream intersections and the I-80/U.S. 101 on-ramps, localized improvements at these adversely affected

intersections would not necessarily improve overall traffic conditions. These intersections include First/Market, Fremont/Harrison, and Embarcadero/Folsom; impacts at those intersections would be significant and unmitigable. However, mitigation measures identified in this EIR could improve LOS to acceptable levels at the three other adversely affected intersections (Beale/Folsom, Main/Folsom, and Spear/Folsom). Because mitigation measures to ensure an acceptable LOS at Beale/Folsom and Main/Folsom would necessitate maintaining four eastbound lanes on Folsom Street at the intersection approaches, these measures, if adopted, would preclude the Draft Plan's proposed extension of the existing westbound lane on Folsom Street from Main Street westward to Fremont Street. The impact would be significant and unavoidable if four eastbound lanes were not maintained on Folsom Street. It should be noted that certain streets in Rincon Hill that serve freeway on-ramps—notably, First Street approaching Harrison Street and Harrison Street westbound approaching First Street—include lanes reserved for non-freeway traffic. The Draft Plan proposes to physically separate these local-serving traffic lanes from Bay Bridge traffic.

Under 2020 Cumulative conditions, ten study intersections would operate at LOS F, two intersections would operate at LOS E, and the remaining five study intersections would operate at LOS D or better. In general, the poor operating conditions would occur along the primary access routes to the Bay Bridge, including Second, First and Harrison Streets. As with 2020-plus-Project conditions, mitigation could achieve acceptable intersection levels of service at the Beale/Folsom, Main/Folsom, and Spear/Folsom intersections, but not at other intersections analyzed where LOS would be E or F; that impact would be significant and unmitigable. The project would be considered to contribute substantially to cumulative degraded LOS at First/Folsom, First/Harrison, Main/Harrison, Embarcadero/Bryant, and Second/Brannan; the impact at those intersections would be significant and unmitigable.

As such, the project **would** result in significant effects to intersection levels of service.

In the vicinity of the Plan area, transit lines generally have available capacity during the weekday p.m. peak hour, which would accommodate the additional inbound and outbound transit trips generated by the project. In addition, it is anticipated that some people would walk to and from Market Street to access the bus lines or Muni Metro at the Embarcadero Station (instead of taking a bus and transferring). By 2020, Muni ridership is expected to approach capacity at several of the individual corridors, but each of four “screenlines” would continue to operate at less than capacity. With the proposed project, the corridors and screenlines would continue to operate at less than capacity, with only minor changes in the capacity utilization at each screenline. Thus, the project would not result in a significant transit impact. Even under 2020 Cumulative conditions, the project contribution would be relatively minimal, and the project would not result in a significant impact associated with cumulative transit conditions.

Residential development pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan would result in an increase, depending on the option pursued, in midday parking demand of between about 1,700 and 2,950 spaces, and between about 2,100 and 3,700 spaces during the evening period. In conjunction with already approved projects in the Plan area, the additional demand would be between about 3,800 and 5,100 spaces in the daytime and

between about 4,750 spaces and 6,300 spaces in the evening, depending on the option selected. Assuming parking were provided at a ratio of one space per dwelling unit, the result would be a residential parking shortfall of between about 150 and 200 spaces during the weekday midday period and between about 1,100 and 1,500 spaces during the weekday evening period. On the other hand, if no parking were provided for the new residential units (and one space per unit provided for approved projects), the residential shortfall would be between about 700 and 1,700 weekdays and between about 1,450 to 2,700 at night. Because a major goal of the Draft Rincon Hill Plan is to enhance pedestrian circulation and reduce the necessity for driving trips by residents in the Plan area, it is conceivable that the above numbers overstate the potential impact.

It is anticipated that a majority of the new peak-hour pedestrian trips would be to and from Market Street, the Transbay Terminal area and The Embarcadero. The Rincon Hill Plan anticipates, under all options analyzed, an enhanced network of widened sidewalks, including tree plantings, street furniture and the creation of new public spaces along streets throughout the district, intended to create a more inviting pedestrian experience to encourage walking trips and limit driving trips. If successful, the Plan could boost pedestrian travel beyond the numbers indicated here, but the currently vastly underused sidewalks would be able to accommodate the increase, particularly with implementation of planned sidewalk widenings. However, given existing light pedestrian volumes, the anticipated increase in pedestrian traffic could be accommodated without the Plan's proposed street and sidewalk improvements.

The Plan area is within convenient bicycling distance of downtown San Francisco and the Financial District, as well as the major transit hubs (Ferry Building, Transbay Terminal and Caltrain). In addition, there are several bicycle routes in the vicinity of the Plan area, including along Second Street, Howard Street, Folsom Street and The Embarcadero. The Draft Plan calls for one bicycle parking space for every two residential units. As a result, there would be a substantial increase in the bicycle amenities in the Plan area.

The Plan proposed changes to Planning Code standards such that provision of off-street loading spaces would no longer be required. To the extent that loading demand is not accommodated on-site, double-parking, illegal use of sidewalks and other public space is likely to occur with associated disruptions and impacts to traffic and transit operations as well as to bicyclists and pedestrians.

Construction activity associated with one or more development projects may overlap with that of other nearby projects; in particular, ongoing construction over the next decade affecting the Bay Bridge ramps and Interstate 80 freeway in the project area, as well as the potential demolition and new construction associated with the extension of Caltrain and a new Transbay Terminal, would be expected to add to construction-related congestion in the Rincon Hill Plan area and vicinity.

In summary, the project would result in a significant adverse impact on traffic and circulation, but would not result in a significant impact on transit, parking and loading, or pedestrian and bicycle conditions.

---

## POPULATION AND HOUSING

Development pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan would increase the population of the Plan area to five or six times the current population. The increase (including approved projects) could range from between about 5,000 and about 6,700, depending on the Plan option implemented, assuming that household sizes remain constant in the Plan area at 1.4 persons per household. The projected growth in Rincon Hill under any of the Plan options would be within growth currently forecast for San Francisco by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), which is the regional planning agency responsible for developing growth estimates for Bay Area cities and counties.

- Based on the existing number of residents under the age of 18 in the Plan area, the estimated number of new school-age children in the Plan area would range from about 50 students under the Existing Controls Option to about 90 students under the 82.5-foot Option. It is possible, as more larger units are constructed and more neighborhood services, such as grocery stores and other retail shops, are developed on and near Rincon Hill, that more families would move into the neighborhood, which could increase household size. However, the number of new students would not result in a need for new school facilities.

The Preferred Rincon Hill Plan Option would, by itself, result in construction of nearly twice as many units in the Plan area as currently exist; combined with already approved projects, the overall number of housing units in Rincon Hill would increase nearly five-fold. Implementation of other Plan options, along with already approved projects, would increase the total number of housing units in the Plan area by four to 5.5 times the existing number of housing units. No existing housing units would be directly displaced by development pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan. Furthermore, sites anticipated to be developed are occupied by non-residential uses.

San Francisco's draft Housing Element estimates that more than 29,000 housing units could be added citywide as infill development within the constraints of existing zoning and planning controls. To help meet the future demand for housing in San Francisco, the Planning Department has embarked upon a number of initiatives, one of which is the proposed new Rincon Hill Plan. The Rincon Hill Plan is part of an areawide program called the Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative that foresees the potential for more than 40,000 new housing units in the greater Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, including Mission Bay, the South of Market and Showplace Square districts, the Mid-Market area, Market/Octavia "Better Neighborhoods" planning effort, Van Ness Corridor, Downtown, Transbay Terminal Area, Yerba Buena Center, South Beach, and Rincon Hill. Additional housing is projected in other areas of San Francisco as part of the Department's Citywide Action Plan, which encompasses the proposed Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning, Balboa Park and Central Waterfront "Better Neighborhoods," the former Hunters Point Shipyard, certain Port of San Francisco lands, and some transit corridors, in addition to the Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative. According to the draft Housing Element, a minimum of 10,000 additional units could be added in these areas. Even this ambitious housing production program, however, would not keep pace with ABAG's forecast of an increase of nearly 73,000 new households in San Francisco between 2000 and 2030 in *Projections 2003*, which is based on "smart growth" principles

intended to revitalize central cities and older suburbs, support and enhance public transit, and preserve open space and agricultural lands.

Most San Francisco residents do not earn enough to be able to afford the anticipated market-rate housing units that would be built in Rincon Hill pursuant to adoption of a revised Rincon Hill Plan, whether it be the Preferred Option that is approved or one of the other options. The proposed Plan would require that all projects of 10 units or more comply with the City's 12 percent (on-site) / 17 percent (off-site) affordable housing requirement, regardless of whether Conditional Use authorization is required, and would require an additional percentage of residential units be affordable to households with up to 120 percent of area median income, in recognition of the value added to land in Rincon Hill as a result of the increased density to be allowed by the Plan. Finally, the Plan would promote family housing by requiring that 40 percent of residential units have two or more bedrooms, and by encouraging development of not only high-rise housing but also podium-level and townhouse units, which the Draft Plan projects would be less costly than tower units and would offer greater access to open space. In addition, the Draft Plan's proposed elimination of minimum parking requirements is intended to reduce the amount of parking provided, thereby "uncoupling" parking spaces from residential units and reducing the average dwelling unit cost. Through these components, the Plan would seek to offset, as much as possible within the Plan area, the relatively high cost of housing in San Francisco.

The proposed Rincon Hill Plan would encourage the development of new housing in the Plan area to meet a portion of existing housing demand and to help achieve the need for future housing forecast by ABAG. The proposed Plan would not displace any existing housing. Although the housing market virtually ensures that there would be a mismatch between housing prices in the Plan area and the purchasing ability of many San Francisco residents, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan includes affordability components that are more rigorous than the existing citywide provisions in an effort to make new housing in the Plan area as affordable as deemed reasonably feasible. In conjunction with other proposed programs to encourage new housing in San Francisco, such as the remainder of the Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative, the proposed Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning, and the Better Neighborhoods Program, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan could contribute to a substantial increase in housing in the City. The Plan would not result in displacement of people or housing, nor would it create unmet housing demand; instead, it would provide some relief for housing demand created by other factors by facilitating an increase in the housing supply. In light of these considerations, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would not result in a significant adverse effect with regard to Population or Housing.

## AIR QUALITY

Implementation of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan with any of the options analyzed in this EIR would affect air quality through construction-related emissions, transportation-related vehicular exhaust emissions, and stationary source emissions. Construction activities would occur intermittently at different sites in the Plan area as the development occurs. Although the related impacts at any one location would be temporary, construction of individual projects under the proposed Plan could cause adverse effects on

the local air quality within the planning area. Construction activities would generate substantial amounts of dust (including PM-10 and PM-2.5) primarily from “fugitive” sources (i.e., emissions released through means other than through a stack or tailpipe) and lesser amounts of other criteria air pollutants primarily from operation of heavy equipment construction machinery (primarily diesel operated) and construction worker automobile trips (primarily gasoline operated). The approach of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) to construction impacts is to emphasize implementation of effective and comprehensive control measures rather than detailed quantification of emissions. The BAAQMD considers any project’s construction-related impacts to be less than significant if the required dust-control measures are implemented. These measures are included as mitigation in Chapter IV. Therefore construction emissions are not expected to impede attainment or maintenance of air quality standards in the Bay Area, and would not be significant.

Development under the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would result in increases in population and, to a lesser degree, employment and a concomitant increase in traffic and air pollutant emissions. However, the BAAQMD distinguishes between individual development projects and planning documents, such as city and county general plans, specific area plans and redevelopment plans. Because the project analyzed in this EIR is not a single development, but rather development over the entire Rincon Hill area pursuant to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, the analysis for the proposed project has been conducted at a plan level based on the totality of development and activity that is assumed to occur within the Plan area. In accordance with the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, this EIR judges the significance of the Rincon Hill Plan’s operational emissions of criteria air pollutants based on the consistency of the Rincon Hill Plan with the *Bay Area 2000 Clean Air Plan (CAP)*, which is the most recently adopted regional air quality plan.

Because the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would be consistent with population and vehicle use projections in the current CAP, would implement applicable transportation control measures identified in the CAP, and because odor/toxics buffer zones are not applicable, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would not result in a significant impact with regard to operational air quality.

The cumulative increase in population in San Francisco between 2000 and 2030 would substantially exceed the population projections on which the current CAP is based, and, therefore, could be found, on first examination, to significantly affect air quality on a cumulative basis. It should be noted, however, that to the extent that growth in San Francisco were to occur in lieu of growth elsewhere in the Bay Area, particularly in outlying regions with less transit accessibility and less potential for use of travel modes other than the automobile, relatively more growth in San Francisco would be consistent with the goals of the CAP by promoting and furthering the CAP’s Transportation Control Measures. Therefore, consistent with the “smart growth” forecasts associated with ABAG’s *Projections 2003*, it does not appear that shifting a relatively greater percentage of Bay Area growth to central cities such as San Francisco would result in significant adverse effects on regional air quality; in fact, the reverse might well be true. At any rate, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, itself, would indirectly result in less than 2.5 percent of the ABAG-forecast Citywide growth of 160,000, and would not contribute considerably to this cumulative growth.

---

## SHADOW

Section 295 of the Planning Code prohibits the issuance of building permits for structures or additions to structures greater than 40 feet in height that would shade property under the jurisdiction of or designated to be acquired by the Recreation and Park Commission, during the period from one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset, unless the Planning Commission, in consultation with the and Recreation and Park Commission, determines that such shade would not significantly affect the use of such property. There are no open spaces subject to Section 295 within the Rincon Hill Plan area. The nearest Section 295 open spaces are Justin Herman Plaza, at the foot of Market Street, and South Park, between Bryant and Brannan Streets and Second and Third Streets. There are several publicly and privately owned open spaces within and adjacent to the Plan area that, while not subject to Section 295, are publicly accessible and used by the public, including Rincon Park along The Embarcadero between Howard and Harrison Streets, just east of the Plan area (under the jurisdiction of the Port of San Francisco and the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency); the privately owned, mixed-use Hills Plaza, between Spear and Stuart Streets and between Folsom and Harrison Streets, within the Plan area; and the privately owned Gap building plaza at 2 Folsom Street and 221 Main Street building open space, north of the Plan area. Just west of the Plan area, the slope above Essex Street is an informal open space, used by dog owners and others.

Given the proposed height limits and bulk controls, all of the options would conform to Section 295, in that none would result in new buildings that would cast new shadow on any open space under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Commission within or outside of the study area between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset. Even shadow from a 550-foot building at First and Harrison Streets, where the greatest heights would be permitted, under the Preferred Option and 82.5-foot Option, would not reach either Union Square or St. Mary's Square, the two Section 295 open spaces closest to the Plan area's northwest edge. Therefore, the project would not result in any significant effects with regard to shadow on open spaces subject to Section 295.

Shadow from towers constructed pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan could reach non-Proposition K open spaces, including Yerba Buena Gardens (only in the very early morning, up to the first few "Section 295" minutes; that is, the first minutes following one hour after sunrise, when the gardens are likely shaded by existing buildings, including the W Hotel at Third and Howard Streets and an existing office building across Howard Street). Likewise, shadow from new towers in the Plan area would reach Rincon Park, on The Embarcadero (only in the late afternoon, when Rincon Park is already largely shaded by existing buildings, including the Gap headquarters and Hills Plaza, and would be further shaded by already approved buildings within the Plan area at 300 Spear Street and 201 Folsom Street).

Proposed and anticipated new towers within the Rincon Hill Plan area that are not already approved would add new shadow to the proposed new public open spaces at Fremont and Harrison Streets and on Essex Street between Harrison and Folsom Streets. In particular, the proposed project at 425 First Street would shade the Fremont/Harrison open space during the midday hours, with the time varying by season. This effect would be the same for the Preferred Option and the 82.5-foot Option, but would be



substantially less under the 150-foot (Existing Controls) Option, which would include only a single, shorter tower, rather than two taller towers, at the 425 First Street site. Additionally, the single tower would be on First Street, rather than Harrison Street, set back from the proposed park. Because this park does not exist at present, however, but would be created as part of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, and because this park would receive substantial sunlight during the morning hours and would not be completely shaded during the afternoon, the impact would not be considered significant.

New development within the Rincon Hill Plan area also would add new shadow to proposed sidewalk open space, including the boulevard planned along Folsom Street in conjunction with planning for the adjacent Transbay area and the proposed “living streets” along Main, Beale, and Spear Streets, as well as potentially to mid-block pedestrian walkways in the Plan area. However, the Plan proposes that new towers be required to preserve a specified “sun access plane” from the top of podiums to the opposite side of the street along the south side of Folsom Street and the west side of north-south streets for no less than 58 percent of each block face to ensure maximum potential sunlight on sidewalks within the context of a high-density development plan. Additionally, podiums would be required to have 15-foot setbacks at the 65-foot level, further enhancing potential sunlight.

In general, the options for the Rincon Hill Plan that propose a greater number of towers would have greater localized shadow impacts than those Plan options that would permit fewer towers. Thus, the 82.5-foot Option would cast more new shadow than would the Preferred Option, which, in turn, would cast more new shadow than would the 150-foot (Existing Controls) Option. The 150-foot Option, the only option among the three that would not result in increased height limits, would cast substantially less new shadow than the other two options.

The concentration of new development near the top of Rincon Hill would limit the new shadow on the proposed “living streets” along Main, Beale, and Spear Streets, because the distance from the hilltop to Main, Beale, and Spear Streets means that when shadows from anticipated new towers is long enough to reach the “living streets,” shadows from existing buildings that are shorter but also closer to Main, Beale, and Spear Streets would already be encroaching upon those three streets.

New towers developed in the Rincon Hill Plan area also would cast shadow on planned open spaces in the Transbay Redevelopment Area to the north. The greatest extent of shadow from Rincon Hill buildings on these open spaces would be from the approved but unbuilt towers at 300 Spear Street and 201 Folsom Street, which are farther north than would be other new towers built pursuant to the Plan. New shadow would also be cast on planned Transbay area open spaces by buildings proposed as part of the Transbay Redevelopment Plan itself, on the north side of Folsom Street.

While development pursuant to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would add new shadows to the Plan area and beyond, the new shading caused by the project would not affect open spaces protected by Section 295 of the Planning Code. Individual projects, when proposed within the Plan area, would continue to be evaluated under Section 295 by the Planning Department on a case-by-case basis with respect to their potential to cause adverse shading effects mainly on publicly accessible open space. Some existing

publicly accessible, privately owned open spaces and sidewalks would be see a diminution in sunlight during certain periods of the day and the year, and some open spaces planned pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan and the Transbay Design for Development would be shaded by development anticipated in the Plan area (as well as by development within the Transbay area). However, this new shadow would not be in excess of that which would be normal and expected in a highly urban area. Therefore, given the lack of effect on Proposition K spaces, and given that planned open spaces would still receive substantial sunlight and would, therefore, not be substantially affected by shading in an adverse manner so as to render the open spaces uninviting or unusable, shadow impacts associated with the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would be considered less than significant.

## WIND

The Planning Code specifically outlines wind criteria for the Rincon Hill Area in Section 249.1(b)(3), which is based on Planning Code Section 148, Reduction of Ground-Level Wind Currents in C-3 (Downtown Commercial) Districts. Planning Code Section 148 establishes two comfort criteria, and a hazard criterion, based on equivalent wind speeds, which include turbulence. Section 148 establishes an equivalent wind speed of 7 mph and 11 mph (10 percent of the time) as comfort criteria for seating areas and areas of substantial pedestrian use, respectively in the Downtown. Section 148 also establishes a hazard criterion, which is an equivalent wind speed of 26 mph for a full hour; when adjusted to be based on a comparable measurement period to that used for the comfort criteria, the hazard criterion wind speed becomes 36 mph.

Based on recent wind-tunnel testing performed for projects in the Plan area, existing wind conditions in the area are moderate to windy, with an average wind speed at 27 test points west of Beale Street of 11.2 mph, and an average wind speed at 44 test points east of Beale Street of 9.2 mph. Exceedances of the 11-mph pedestrian comfort criterion are most common on the summit of Rincon Hill, around the intersection of First and Harrison Streets and on First Street north of Harrison. Exceedances of the comfort criterion were also recorded at Folsom and Fremont Streets, Folsom and Beale Streets, Harrison and Beale Streets, Harrison and Main Streets, and midblock on Spear Street between Folsom and Harrison. Only one exceedance of the 36-mph wind hazard criterion was noted under existing conditions: at the southwest corner of Harrison and Beale Streets.

Wind-tunnel testing recently performed for the proposed 425 First Street project included a series of cumulative (for the 425 First Street project) test scenarios based on some of the options for the Rincon Hill Plan analyzed in this EIR. In general, for test points in the western portion of the Plan area, where new development under the Plan would be concentrated, the test results were very similar for the scenarios evaluated. To the extent that there were differences in the results, the test scenarios with more towers generally performed better than scenarios with fewer towers, in terms of exceedances of the 36-mph hazard criterion. The test result differences were relatively small, with scenarios resulting in between one and three hazard exceedances in the area between Essex and Beale Streets, and no scenario resulting in more than five total hours per year that exceeded the 36-mph hazard criterion, which is very

limited. Hazard exceedances were recorded at First and Lansing Streets and in two locations at the intersection of Fremont and Harrison Streets. Given that the exceedances were noted in close proximity to the bases of particular buildings, it is possible that project-specific design adjustments would alleviate all potential exceedances of the hazard criterion, as would be required under the Planning Code for specific project approval.

In terms of average wind speeds, there was also little difference between test scenarios. In these results, options with a larger number of towers fared incrementally more poorly than options with fewer towers, with slightly higher average wind speeds (on the order of a few tenths of a mile per hour), ranging from about 11.9 mph to 12.3 mph, a difference that is unlikely to be perceptible; all options tested would increase average wind speeds by about 1 mph compared to existing conditions. The number of exceedances of the 11-mph pedestrian comfort criterion would increase from 12 of 27 points under existing conditions to between 13 and 15 of 27 points under Plan conditions, depending on the option.

In the eastern portion of the Plan area, where the 201 Folsom Street and 300 Spear Street projects were approved in early 2004, average wind speeds were found to increase by more than 2 mph, but no exceedances of the hazard criterion were noted.

In summary, ground-level wind speeds would increase with all Plan options, and the differences between options would be small. A limited number of exceedances of the 36-mph hazard criterion, for a small number of hours, were found in testing of various options. These exceedances would have to be shown to be eliminated on a project-by-project basis in order for a project to receive approval under the Planning Code.

During the individual project-specific environmental review process that would precede the approval of any project proposed for the Rincon Hill Plan area, potential wind effects of those specific projects would be considered and, if necessary, wind tunnel testing would be performed in accordance with City Planning Code Section 148 and/or Section 249.1, as it is amended (or replaced) as part of the Rincon Hill DTR District implementation. Incorporation of such language in the new Rincon Hill DTR District is, therefore, identified as a mitigation measure in this EIR. If exceedances of the wind hazard criterion should occur for any individual project, design modifications or other mitigation measures would be required to mitigate or eliminate these exceedances to ensure that any proposed project would not constitute a significant environmental impact. Therefore, no significant effects due to wind would occur as a result of implementation of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

In general, potential significant impacts related to hazardous materials are precluded by the stringent regulatory regime that exists with regard to hazardous materials and hazardous waste. For any subsequent development proposed pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan and rezoning, one or more of the various laws and regulations would normally intercede to ensure that no significant impact would result. For the most part, effects related to hazardous materials would stem from construction activities, in that construction

workers could be exposed to soil and/or groundwater contamination, if present, during excavation. Contaminated groundwater could, if not properly treated prior to disposal, result in adverse downstream effects and impacts on the City's combined sewer-storm drain system. Finally, exposure to airborne contaminants such as lead paint dust or asbestos could affect nearby residents and workers.

The proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed-Use (DTR) District would require all parking to be located below street grade, in contrast to current zoning, which could result in greater disturbance of soils than under previous development patterns in Plan area. Depending on the extent and nature of soil or groundwater contamination, if any, on a particular site, the increase in subgrade excavation could result in worker exposure to petroleum hydrocarbons, lead, polychlorinated biphenyls, creosote-treated lumber, and other contaminants. Construction activity could expose construction workers and the surrounding community to hazardous materials through excavation and grading of soil (potential exposure to dust containing contaminants or to soil gases); installation of building foundation piles for structural support (potential exposure to soil and groundwater); and identification and removal of underground storage tanks (potential exposure to contaminated material involving the tank, vapors, soil, or groundwater).

An owner or contractor who submits plans for any excavation of soil within the project site must meet the appropriate regulatory requirements for sampling and analysis of contaminated soil. For any soil excavation determined to be within the "Maher" area (generally, bayward of the historic shoreline), compliance with the Maher Ordinance would require additional testing of subsurface soil to determine the potential magnitude and extent of soil contamination. Soil or groundwater samples, or both, would be collected in such areas as directed by the site assessment consultant. Mitigation identified in this EIR would ensure that any contaminated groundwater does not adversely affect water quality. If the aforementioned sampling identifies surface and/or subsurface contamination in areas subject to ground disturbance, the area would have to be remediated in accordance with the standards, regulations, and determinations of local, state, and federal regulatory agencies. The owner or contractor would coordinate with the Department of Public Health and any other applicable regulatory agencies to adopt contaminant-specific remediation target levels; hazardous substances would be disposed of at an approved site; alternatively, soil may be treated and retained on-site, where applicable. Prior to conducting any remediation activities, a Site Health and Safety Plan would be prepared pursuant to state and federal requirements and guidelines, and subject to Health Department approval, to ensure worker safety.

If ground-disturbing activities are proposed where there is a potential for the presence of underground storage tanks, ground-penetrating radar, magnetic surveys, or other appropriate methods would be employed to locate previously unknown tanks. If any tanks are identified, the owner would coordinate with the Health Department to determine whether the tank must be removed or may be closed in place.

Demolition may involve exposure to hazardous building materials, including asbestos, lead-based paint, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and wood treated with creosote. Testing and remediation for these materials is carefully regulated and appropriate handling is prescribed by law and regulation. Compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and standards regarding underground storage

tanks, buried debris, unidentified contamination; and compliance with asbestos abatement and PCB disposal regulations would reduce potential impacts associated with hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level.

## HISTORICAL RESOURCES

### *ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES*

The Draft Plan would allow and encourage mixed, high-density residential development in the majority of the Plan area, whereas existing zoning permits such uses within about one-half of the Plan area, with industrial and public uses permitted within the remainder of the Plan area. The Plan would permit and encourage substantial new high-density residential development throughout the Plan area, with between three and seven new residential towers, depending on the option approved, anticipated to be constructed, in addition to five towers already approved (two at 300 Spear Street, two at 201 Folsom Street, and one at 325 Fremont Street) and the two just completed at 333 First Street. Under the Preferred and 82.5-foot Tower Separation options, these new towers also would be taller than currently allowed. Such taller towers would generally require a greater number of parking spaces to be built, below grade, and such development would result in greater soils disturbance from deep subgrade parking structures, foundation supports (site excavation, pilings, soils grouting), and remediation of contaminated soils than might otherwise be proposed, increasing the potential to adversely affect buried prehistoric and historic archaeological resources, including deposits related to domestic life, industry, and schools and religious institutions of early San Francisco. Assuming that future development demand in the Plan area is comparable to current and recent demand, any substantial appreciation in land value as a consequence of the rezoning, could motivate land owners to develop or redevelop properties with uses that can better capture the increased value than current property use. The more closely that new development would approximate the objectives of the Rincon Hill Plan in land use density, generally greater would be the effect on soils disturbance for parking, foundation support, and/or site remediation, and, thus, an associated greater potential to adversely disturb archaeological resources. However, with implementation of mitigation identified in this EIR, the potential effects would be less than significant.

Additionally, because parts of the Plan area contain or may contain persistent hazardous wastes from 19th and early 20th century industrial, ship-building and repair, and other land uses using chemical processes, there is a potential that greater site remediation for hazardous wastes would occur in conjunction with development under the Rincon Hill DTR District, than under the current zoning. Site remediation can result in the disturbance and removal of soils in excess of soils that would be disturbed by the other components of a project such as foundations or parking. Thus, mitigation of hazardous materials within the soils of a project site may adversely affect archaeological deposits within the affected soils independent of all other aspects of a project. Again, implementation of mitigation identified in this EIR would reduce the potential effects to a less-than-significant level.

---

## ***HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE***

Of eight buildings identified in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would retain seven as Significant Buildings, based on architectural and historical attributes. The Draft Plan anticipates demolition of the former Union Oil Company building at First and Harrison Streets and, therefore, proposes not to carry forward the listing of this building as Significant. Because the Union Oil Company Building has been determined to be a historical resource under CEQA, the Draft Plan would be considered to have a significant, unavoidable impact on historical resources. Two other buildings that are identified as historical resources under CEQA could be demolished and replaced by new construction, either podium-level or tower, under all Plan options: 347 Fremont Street and 375 Fremont Street; in particular, the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option calls for a new tower on the 375 Fremont Street site. Demolition of these buildings would also result in a significant and unavoidable impact. The proposed Plan might possibly contribute to the loss of other historic architectural due to increased development pressures. This impact would be considered a potentially significant cumulative impact.

The draft Rincon Hill Plan proposes that the Sailors' Union of the Pacific building be rehabilitated for reuse, in part, as a Community Center. It is anticipated that such rehabilitation, assuming it proceeds, would be undertaken consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, and therefore no significant adverse effect would result.

Future specific development proposals in the Plan area could affect potential historical resources not yet identified as such. In the case of some resources, additional analysis would need to focus on whether resources are indeed "historical resources" under CEQA and what qualities / features contribute to their historical significance. In other cases, additional analysis would need to determine whether changes proposed would constitute substantial and adverse changes to the resources, or whether they would constitute acceptable changes that would not substantially affect the resources' significance.

## **HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

Implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan would lead to new development and attendant construction activities throughout the Rincon Hill area. Construction activities could affect water quality due to grading and earthmoving operations, use of fuels and other chemicals for construction equipment, and demolition and construction. However, with proper mitigation and compliance with appropriate water quality regulations, water quality impacts associated with construction activities in the Plan area would be less than significant. Construction projects would be subject to the requirements of the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit covering its wastewater treatment plants, including compliance with applicable federally mandated controls. Each project would be required to develop an erosion and sediment control plan specifying Best Management Practices to prevent the off-site migration of sediment and other pollutants and to reduce the effects of runoff from the construction site to the combined sewer system. Therefore, water quality impacts related to discharge of construction related stormwater runoff would be less than significant.

Two aspects of any of the Plan options could result in long term changes to the wastewater flows to the City's combined sewer system: (1) new development would increase sanitary sewage flows year-round to the combined sewer system, and (2) increased landscaping and decreased impervious surfaces would decrease the volume of stormwater runoff to the combined sewer system. The Plan options would result in area plan and zoning changes that would encourage and promote new residential development throughout the Rincon Hill Plan area. When implemented, the new development would result in a densification of land uses and an associated increase in sanitary sewage generated by new residents and associated land uses in the Plan area. During dry weather, all sanitary sewage generated in the Plan area would be treated at the Southeast Plant. The additional dry weather flow associated with implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan would be a negligible incremental increase to the existing dry weather flow and could be accommodated within the system's existing capacity. During wet weather, however, there is a wide variation in volume of wet weather flow due to the addition of stormwater. During periods of intense rainfall, the combined sewer system is designed to discharge treated overflows to the Bay. Although the total increase in sanitary sewage generated as a result of implementation of the Plan options could be accommodated within the existing system's operating capacity and permitted discharges, the incremental increase of sanitary sewage during wet weather would affect the overall system's wet weather operations. This increase in sanitary sewage could cumulatively contribute to an increase in average volume of combined sewer overflow (CSO) discharges to the Bay in the Plan area.

Stormwater flows to the combined sewer system, where it is captured and treated to varying degrees, depending on the characteristics of individual rainstorms. Runoff from new development and redevelopment projects may contain many types of pollutants including polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons from vehicle emissions; heavy metals such as copper from brake pad wear and zinc from tire wear; dioxins as products of combustion; and mercury resulting from atmospheric deposition. In addition, individual development projects could contribute specific pollutants including car maintenance wastes, pesticides, household hazardous wastes, pet wastes, and trash which can be washed into the combined sewer system. These pollutants can all affect water quality. However, the Plan options would include design guidelines and the "living streets" program, which would promote increased landscaping, street trees and open space. If these programs were to result in the replacement of paved areas or structures with landscaping, trees, or other pervious surfaces and/or other stormwater Best Management Practices, then there would be an incremental increase in infiltration of rainwater into the ground and an associated decrease in the volume of stormwater runoff flowing to the combined sewer system. No increase in stormwater runoff is anticipated, because the Plan area is virtually entirely covered with impervious surfaces (buildings, streets and sidewalks, and parking lots) at present; there would be no increase in impervious surface with implementation of the Plan.

Under any of the Plan options, all discharges from the combined sewer system to the Bay, through either the outfalls or the CSO structures, would continue to operate in compliance with the City's existing NPDES permit. The current permit states that the City's combined sewer system is regulated under the federal CSO Control Policy, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has determined that the current design and operation of the wet weather facilities satisfy the CSO Control Policy

requirements. Under this policy, the City must operate the combined sewer system to maximize treatment of wet weather flows and to minimize combined sewer overflows. Compliance is based on implementation of nine minimum controls specified in the CSO Control Policy and implementation of the long term control plan, which includes both construction of the system (already completed) and appropriate operations of the system. The permit acknowledges that some years have more intense rainstorms than others and that there may be times when there is more flow than anticipated in the system design criteria. Any development in the Plan area resulting from implementation of the Project would require coordination with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) and would be required to develop and implement pollution prevention programs that focus on contaminant reduction activities.

Thus, implementation of any of the Plan options would generate increased year-round sanitary sewage flows to the combined sewer system, but would not result in an increase in stormwater runoff. Although development pursuant to the Draft Plan could indirectly result in cumulative, long-term contributions to an increase in average volume of CSO discharges in the Rincon Hill Plan area, compliance with existing regulations and policies would protect water quality and beneficial uses of the Bay. In addition, concurrent with the proposed schedule for implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan, the SFPUC has numerous ongoing planning efforts that address CSO discharges and associated water quality impacts as part of citywide plans and programs. These planning efforts address long-term objectives of compliance with existing and future regulatory requirements and overall protection of water quality, aquatic resources and beneficial uses of San Francisco Bay. Based on compliance with existing and future regulations and coordination with ongoing planning efforts to provide long-term water quality protection of the Bay, water quality impacts associated with changes in combined sewer overflow discharges to the Bay would be considered less than significant.

## GROWTH INDUCEMENT

In general, a project would be considered growth-inducing if its implementation would result in substantial population increases and/or new development in other nearby areas that might not occur if the project were not approved and implemented, particularly if the project would facilitate growth by removing a major obstacle to development in a particular area (such as by provision of major new public services to an area where those services are not currently available). The Rincon Hill Plan would encourage the continued development of a high-density residential neighborhood in close proximity to the major employment center of downtown San Francisco. The Plan would encourage reuse of what has until very recently been a relatively underutilized neighborhood (except for through traffic traveling to and from the Bay Bridge) where basic urban infrastructure is provided and, as such, would be more appropriately characterized as infill development that would meet demand for housing in San Francisco and the Bay Area, rather than a growth-inducing phenomenon that would facilitate development in areas not currently ripe for growth. Furthermore, to the extent that residents of the Plan area were to work in or near downtown San Francisco, residential expansion in the Plan area would result in substantially less impact on transportation systems and air quality than would development of a similar number of residential units in a more outlying part of the Bay Area where fewer services and less transit access is



provided. Thus, the project would not result in substantial inducements to growth, but instead would contribute incrementally to meeting existing and future housing demand in San Francisco.

Table S-1 summarizes and compares impacts of the three Plan options, as well as impacts of the two EIR alternatives described below in Section I.D and in Chapter VI, p. 234.

## C. MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures identified in this EIR that would serve to mitigate significant environmental impacts appear below. Mitigation measures preceded by an asterisk (\*) are from the Initial Study (see Appendix A). All of the following measures will be required of all projects proposed for implementation with future development under City of San Francisco jurisdiction.

### CONSTRUCTION NOISE

- \* • For projects requiring pile driving, individual project sponsors would ensure that piles be pre-drilled wherever feasible to reduce construction-related noise and vibration. No impact pile drivers should be used unless absolutely necessary. To reduce noise and vibration impacts, sonic or vibratory sheetpile drivers, rather than impact drivers, shall be used wherever sheetpiles are needed.

Construction noise is regulated by the San Francisco Noise Ordinance, Article 29 of the City Police Code. The ordinance requires that noise levels from individual pieces of construction equipment, other than impact tools, not exceed 80 dBA at a distance of 100 feet from the source. Impact tools (jackhammers and impact wrenches) must have both intake and exhaust muffled to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works. Section 2908 of the Ordinance prohibits construction work between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. if noise would exceed the ambient noise level by five dBA at the project property line, unless a special permit is authorized by the Director of Public Works.

### TRANSPORTATION, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

- C.1a At the Beale/Folsom intersection, LOS E operating conditions would primarily be due to the high volume of southbound left turns (due to the closure of Beale Street) and high future volumes on eastbound Folsom Street. To improve operating conditions in the 2020 with project and 2020 cumulative scenarios at the intersection of Beale and Folsom Streets to an acceptable level of service, the City could provide four eastbound lanes on Folsom Street: three through lanes and a right-turn pocket (the Plan-proposed configuration for Folsom Street would provide two through lanes and a through-right lane).
- C.1b At the Main/Folsom intersection, LOS F operating conditions would primarily be due to the high eastbound volume on Folsom Street (due to vehicles rerouted from Beale Street to Main Street) and to northbound traffic volumes. To improve operating conditions in the 2020 with project and 2020 cumulative scenarios at the intersection of Main and Folsom Streets to an acceptable level of service, the City could widen the northbound approach for a distance of about 75 feet to accommodate a left-turn pocket, and could create additional capacity on eastbound Folsom Street by providing four eastbound lanes: two through lanes, a left-turn pocket, and a through-right lane (the Plan-proposed configuration for Folsom Street would provide three eastbound lanes).

**TABLE S-1  
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS: PLAN OPTIONS AND EIR ALTERNATIVES**

| <b>Description of Alternative</b>                 | <b>Preferred Option</b> | <b>82.5-foot Tower Separation Option</b> | <b>Existing Controls (150-ft. Separ.)</b> | <b>No Project Alternative</b> | <b>Preservation Alternative</b> |
|---|-------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Residential Units (Plan Increment)                | 2,220                   | 2,845                                    | 1,630                                     | 1,630 – 3,300                 | 1,630 – 2,200                   |
| Residential Units (Total Increase incl. Approved) | 4,220                   | 4,865                                    | 3,650                                     | 3,650 – 8,800                 | 3,650 – 3,220                   |
| Retail Square Footage                             | 65,000                  | 65,000                                   | 65,000                                    | 65,000                        | 65,000                          |
| Historic Buildings Demolished                     | Up to 3                 | Up to 3                                  | Up to 3                                   | Up to 3                       | 0                               |
| Height Increase                                   | Yes                     | Yes                                      | No  | No                            | Yes                             |

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

**A. Land Use, Plans, And Policies**

The Rincon Hill Plan would encourage continued residential development in Plan area that has been under way since adoption of Rincon Hill Area Plan in 1985. Residential density would increase to varying degrees: more so with the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option (and, possibly, No Project Alternative if it were to evolve with exceptions and height increases as has occurred in the past), and less so with the Existing Controls (150-foot Tower Separation) Option and Preservation Alternative; increased density with the Preferred Option would fall between the density of the other two options.

|    |     |     |     |     |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| LS | LS↑ | LS↓ | LS↑ | LS↓ |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

**B. Visual Quality**

Rincon Hill area would continue to change from a mid-rise, more industrial area to a denser neighborhood of mid- to high-rise residential and mixed-use buildings, with areas of open space and of older housing and commercial buildings.

|    |     |     |     |     |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| LS | LS↑ | LS↓ | LS↑ | LS↓ |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

SU – Significant, Unmitigable Impact, even with mitigation; SM – Significant Impact; less than significant with mitigation; LS – Less than Significant Impact; N – No Impact

↑ Impact of option or alternative *more* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

↓ Impact of option or alternative *less* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

↕ Impact of option or alternative could be either *more* or *less* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

= Impact of option or alternative would be the same as that of Preferred Option.

**TABLE S-1 (Continued)**  
**SUMMARY OF IMPACTS: PLAN OPTIONS AND EIR ALTERNATIVES**

|   | <b>Preferred<br/>Option</b> | <b>82.5-foot Tower<br/>Separation Option</b> | <b>Existing Controls<br/>(150-ft. Separ.)</b> | <b>No Project<br/>Alternative</b> | <b>Preservation<br/>Alternative</b> |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>B. Visual Quality (cont'd.)</b>  |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| Rincon Hill would gain visual prominence as a distinct, relatively dense area with its own discernable urban form on the City's skyline, in a manner generally consistent with the General Plan Urban Design Element.   | LS                          | LS↑  | LS↓   | LS↓                               | LS↓                                 |
| Taller but less bulky buildings, spaced farther apart, would preserve view corridors along Plan area streets but some obstruction of longer-range views through the Plan area of Twin Peaks (viewed from the east) and of portions of the Bay Bridge and East Bay Hills (viewed from the west).   | LS                          | LS↑  | LS↓   | LS↓                               | LS↓                                 |
| <b>C. Transportation, Circulation and Parking</b>   |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| The Rincon Hill Plan would result in degraded level of service (LOS) at six intersections; at three intersections, the impact could potentially be mitigated to a less-than-significant level, but at three others, no mitigation is available. The Draft Plan would contribute considerably to the cumulative degraded LOS at two intersections.   | SU                          | SU↑  | SU↓   | SU↓                               | SU↓                                 |
| Plan impacts on transit, parking and loading, and pedestrian and bicycle travel, would be less than significant.  | LS                          | LS↑  | LS↓   | LS↓                               | LS↓                                 |
| <b>D. Population and Housing</b>  |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| Population in the Plan area would increase from about 1,500 to between about 6,500 and 8,200 (up to 8,800 under No Project Alternative with bulk exceptions and height increases). Based on census data, school enrollment would be little affected. The Draft Plan includes provisions to increase housing affordability, but most San Franciscans likely could not afford new homes in the Plan area. | LS                          | LS↑  | LS↓   | LS↓                               | LS↓                                 |

SU – Significant, Unmitigable Impact, even with mitigation; SM – Significant Impact; less than significant with mitigation; LS – Less than Significant Impact; N – No Impact

↑ Impact of option or alternative *more* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

↓ Impact of option or alternative *less* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

↕ Impact of option or alternative could be either *more* or *less* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

= Impact of option or alternative would be the same as that of Preferred Option.

**TABLE S-1 (Continued)**  
**SUMMARY OF IMPACTS: PLAN OPTIONS AND EIR ALTERNATIVES**

|   | <b>Preferred<br/>Option</b> | <b>82.5-foot Tower<br/>Separation Option</b> | <b>Existing Controls<br/>(150-ft. Separ.)</b> | <b>No Project<br/>Alternative</b> | <b>Preservation<br/>Alternative</b> |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>E. Air Quality</b>   |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| Construction impacts would be mitigated by Bay Area Air Quality Management District-recommended measures.   | SM                          | SM↑  | SM↓   | SM↓                               | SM↓                                 |
| Because the Draft Plan would be consistent with the <i>Bay Area 2000 Clean Air Plan</i> , it would not result in significant operational effects on air quality.  | LS                          | LS↑  | LS↓   | LS↓                               | LS↓                                 |
| <b>F. Shadow</b>  |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| New buildings in the Plan area would not shade any open spaces protected under Planning Code Section 295, nor would they adversely affect other publicly accessible open spaces.  | LS                          | LS↑  | LS↓   | LS↓                               | LS↓                                 |
| <b>G. Wind</b>  |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| Effects on ground-level winds would be relatively modest, and would be mitigated through Planning Code provisions that would not allow new hazardous winds.   | SM                          | SM↓  | SM↑   | SM↓                               | SM↑                                 |
| <b>H. Hazardous Materials</b>   |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| Excavation, in particular for below-grade parking that would be required under the Draft Plan, could result in potential exposure of workers and the public to contaminated soil and groundwater, if present, as well as hazardous building materials. However, compliance with laws and regulations and applicable mitigation would avoid significant impacts. | SM                          | SM↑  | SM↓   | SM↓                               | SM↓                                 |

SU – Significant, Unmitigable Impact, even with mitigation; SM – Significant Impact; less than significant with mitigation; LS – Less than Significant Impact; N – No Impact

↑ Impact of option or alternative *more* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

↓ Impact of option or alternative *less* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

↕ Impact of option or alternative could be either *more* or *less* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

= Impact of option or alternative would be the same as that of Preferred Option.

**TABLE S-1 (Continued)**  
**SUMMARY OF IMPACTS: PLAN OPTIONS AND EIR ALTERNATIVES**

|   | <b>Preferred<br/>Option</b> | <b>82.5-foot Tower<br/>Separation Option</b> | <b>Existing Controls<br/>(150-ft. Separ.)</b> | <b>No Project<br/>Alternative</b> | <b>Preservation<br/>Alternative</b> |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>I. Historical Resources</b>  |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| Excavation, in particular for below-grade parking that would be required under the Draft Plan, could result in disturbance to prehistoric and historic archaeological resources, including deposits related to domestic life, industry, and schools and religious institutions of early San Francisco.                    | SM                          | SM↑  | SM↓   | SM↓                               | SM↓                                 |
| All options and alternatives except the Preservation Alternative would result in demolition of three buildings identified as historical resources under CEQA: the Union Oil (Bank of America) Clock Tower, 347 Fremont St., and 375 Fremont St.   | SU                          | SU=  | SU=   | SU=                               | LS↓                                 |
| <b>J. Hydrology and Water Quality</b>   |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| Increased population would result in increased wastewater that, while not problematic during dry weather, would increase the volume of flow to the City's combined sewer-storm drain system, potentially increasing the volume of partially treated wet-weather overflows to San Francisco Bay.                           | LS                          | LS↑  | LS↓   | LS↓                               | LS↓                                 |
| <b>K. Growth Inducement</b>   |                             |  |   |                                   |                                     |
| Development pursuant to the Draft Rincon Hill Plan would occur in an area where infrastructure exists and would not remove impediments to future growth. Rather than inducing growth, development pursuant to the Draft Plan would contribute incrementally to meeting the City's existing and future demand for housing. | LS                          | LS↑  | LS↓   | LS↓                               | LS↓                                 |

SU – Significant, Unmitigable Impact, even with mitigation; SM – Significant Impact; less than significant with mitigation; LS – Less than Significant Impact; N – No Impact

↑ Impact of option or alternative *more* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

↓ Impact of option or alternative *less* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

↕ Impact of option or alternative could be either *more* or *less* substantial than that of Preferred Option.

= Impact of option or alternative would be the same as that of Preferred Option.

Because mitigation measures to ensure an acceptable LOS at Beale/Folsom and Main/Folsom would necessitate maintaining four eastbound lanes on Folsom Street the intersection approaches, the above two measures, if adopted, would preclude the Draft Plan's proposed extension of the existing westbound lane on Folsom Street from Main Street westward to Fremont Street. Further, the necessity to obtain adequate right-of-way on eastbound Folsom Street would require implementation of this measure when initial improvements are made to Folsom Street to avoid more costly future acquisition and construction costs. Alternatively, the impact would be significant and unmitigable if four eastbound lanes were not maintained on Folsom Street. Installation of a left-turn pocket on northbound Main Street could be accomplished within the existing right-of-way and could be implemented as intersection operating conditions warrant, subject to an ongoing monitoring program; however, this measure would not, itself, mitigate conditions at the Main/Folsom intersection to a less-than-significant level.

C.1c At the Spear/Folsom intersection, LOS F operating conditions would primarily be due to the high eastbound volume on Folsom Street. To improve operating conditions in the 2020 with project and 2020 cumulative scenarios at the intersection of Spear and Folsom Streets to an acceptable level of service, the City could prohibit westbound left turns from Folsom onto Spear, or could widen the eastbound approach on Folsom Street to four lanes: three through lanes and a right-turn lane.

Prohibition of left turns would require no physical change and, as such, could be implemented as intersection operating conditions warrant, subject to an ongoing monitoring program. Should the decision be made to provide four eastbound lanes on Folsom Street, this improvement, like the Folsom Street changes identified in the two preceding measures, would require implementation of this measure when initial improvements are made to Folsom Street to avoid more costly future acquisition and construction costs. Alternatively, the impact would be significant and unmitigable if four eastbound lanes were not maintained on Folsom Street.

### ***IMPROVEMENT MEASURE IDENTIFIED IN THIS EIR***

C.2 Construction contractor(s) for the individual development projects would need to meet with the Traffic Engineering Division of the Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT), the Fire Department, Muni, the Planning Department and other City agencies to determine feasible measures to reduce traffic congestion, including any potential transit disruption and pedestrian circulation impacts during construction of the project. In addition, the temporary parking demand by construction workers would need to be met on-site or within other off-site parking facilities, and the construction contractor(s) would need to determine the location of an off-site parking facility for construction workers during the construction period.

## **AIR QUALITY**

### ***CONSTRUCTION-RELATED AIR QUALITY***

E.1 The City shall condition approval of individual development proposals under the proposed project upon implementation of an appropriate dust abatement program, patterned after the BAAQMD approach described below.

The BAAQMD approach to dust abatement, as put forth in the BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines, calls for “basic” control measures that should be implemented at all construction sites, “enhanced” control measures that should be implemented at construction sites greater than four acres in area, and “optional” control measures that should be implemented on a case-by-case basis at construction sites that are large in area, located near sensitive receptors or which, for any other reason, may warrant additional emissions reductions.

Elements of the “basic” dust control program for project components that disturb less than four acres shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Water all active construction areas at least twice daily. Watering should be sufficient to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Increased watering frequency may be necessary whenever wind speeds exceed 15 miles per hour. Reclaimed water should be used whenever possible.
- Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard (i.e., the minimum required space between the top of the load and the top of the trailer).
- Pave, apply water (reclaimed if possible) three times daily, or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at construction sites.
- Sweep streets (with water sweepers using reclaimed water if possible) at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads.

Elements of the “enhanced” dust abatement program for project components that disturb four or more acres are unlikely to be required, in that no sites anticipated for development in the Plan area are as large as four acres. Should a site this size be proposed for development, dust control shall include all of the “basic” measures in addition to the following measures to be implemented by the construction contractor(s):

- Hydroseed or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for one month or more).
- Enclose, cover, water twice daily or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers to exposed stockpiles (dirt, sand, etc.).
- Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.
- Limit the amount of the disturbed area at any one time, where possible.
- Pave all roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. as soon as possible. In addition, building pads should be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.
- Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.
- Designate a person or persons to monitor the dust control program and to order increased watering, as necessary, to prevent transport of dust offsite. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress. The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the BAAQMD prior to the start of construction.

The “optional” dust-control measures supplement the “basic” and “enhanced” programs to address site-specific issues. They include:

- Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto streets, or wash off trucks and equipment leaving the site.

- Install windbreaks, or plant tree/vegetative wind breaks at windward side(s) of construction areas.
- Suspend excavation and grading activity when winds (instantaneous gusts) exceed 25 mph.

Ordinance 175-91, passed by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, project sponsors would require that construction contractors obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

Implementation of the above measure would reduce construction impacts to a less-than-significant level.

### ***OPERATIONAL AIR QUALITY***

E.2 Given the potential for the proposed Rincon Hill Plan to contribute to cumulative air quality impacts, the City could implement, or require project sponsors to implement, the following measures to reduce any significant impacts to a less than significant level. Some of these measures that could be a part of development projects within the project's jurisdiction include:

1. Ridesharing: Implement carpool/vanpool program (e.g., carpool ride matching for employees, assistance with vanpool formation, provision of vanpool vehicles, etc.).
2. Transit:
  - (i) Construct transit facilities such as bus turnouts/bus bulbs, benches, shelters, etc.; and
  - (ii) Design and locate buildings to facilitate transit access (e.g., locate building entrances near transit stops, eliminate building setbacks, etc.).
3. Services:
  - (i) Provide on-site shops and services for employees, such as cafeteria, bank/ATM, dry cleaners, convenience market, etc.; and
  - (ii) Provide on-site child care, or contribute to off-site child care within walking distance.
4. Shuttles:
  - (i) Establish mid-day shuttle service from work site to food service establishments/commercial areas; and
  - (ii) Provide shuttle service to transit stations/multimodal centers.
5. Parking:
  - (i) Provide preferential parking (e.g., near building entrance, sheltered area, etc.) for carpool and vanpool vehicles;
  - (ii) Implement parking fees for single occupancy vehicle commuters; and
  - (iii) Implement parking cash-out program for employees (i.e., non-driving employees receive transportation allowance equivalent to value of subsidized parking).
6. Bicycle/Pedestrian:
  - (i) Provide secure, weather-protected bicycle parking for employees;



- (ii) Provide safe, direct access for bicyclists to adjacent bicycle routes;
  - (iii) Provide showers and lockers for employees bicycling or walking to work;
  - (iv) Provide secure short-term bicycle parking for retail customers or non-commute trips; and
  - (v) Provide direct, safe, attractive pedestrian access from project area to transit stops and adjacent development.
7. Other Measures:
- (i) Implement compressed workweek schedule (e.g., 4 days/40 hours, 9 days/80 hours); and
  - (ii) Implement home-based telecommuting program.

As noted in Chapter III, Plan-generated operational air quality impacts would be less than significant, and the Plan would not contribute considerably to cumulative air quality impacts. However, implementation of the above measures would reduce the Plan's direct and cumulative impacts on air quality. The above measures also would act to reduce Plan-generated traffic through reduction of vehicle trips generated in the Plan area. However, the reduction in Plan area traffic would not be expected to be sufficient to reduce traffic impacts to a less-than-significant level.

## WIND

G.1 The City shall incorporate into the Planning Code for the Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed-Use (DTR) District controls on wind speeds that are, at a minimum, functionally equivalent to those controls contained in Planning Code Sections 148 and 249.1(a)(3).

Implementation of the above controls into the Planning Code would ensure that development within the proposed Rincon Hill DTR District would not result in a significant impact with respect to ground-level winds.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

H.1 For any development project in a site not covered by the Maher Ordinance (Article 20 of the Public Works Code and Article 22 of the Health Code), the project sponsor shall perform and submit to the City a Phase I environmental site assessment. If warranted by the Phase I study, and in consultation with the Department of Public Health (DPH), Environmental Health Section, the project sponsor shall prepare a Phase II environmental assessment that includes sampling of, as determined necessary by DPH, soil and/or groundwater. If soil and/or groundwater contamination is discovered in the Phase II assessment, the project sponsor shall, as required by DPH, enter into a voluntary cleanup agreement with DPH, complete and implement a Site Mitigation Plan that is approved by DPH, prepare and implement a Site Health and Safety Plan, and, if required, record a deed restriction limiting the site to future use compatible with remaining hazards, if any.

H.2 For any development project, if dewatering is necessary, the project sponsor shall follow the recommendations of the site assessment/remediation consultant, in consultation with the Bureau of Environmental Regulation (BERM) of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, regarding treatment, if any, of pumped groundwater prior to discharge to the combined sewer system. Any groundwater encountered during construction of the proposed project would be subject to requirements of the City's Industrial Waste Ordinance (Ordinance Number 199 77), requiring that groundwater meet specified water quality standards before it may be discharged into the sewer system. The BERM must be notified of projects necessitating dewatering. That office may require water analysis before discharge.

If dewatering is necessary, groundwater pumped from the development site shall be retained in a holding tank to allow suspended particles to settle, if this is determined necessary by the BERM to reduce the amount of sediment entering the combined sewer system. The project sponsor shall require the general contractor to install and maintain sediment traps if determined necessary by the BERM.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would ensure that any potential effects due to contaminated soil and/or groundwater, if present, would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

## HISTORICAL RESOURCES

### *ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES*

I.1 All but approximately one-fifth of the Plan area has been the focus of some type of archaeological study. However, these studies vary greatly in their inclusion, adequacy, and specificity of discussion of the potential presence, identity, and significance of archaeological resources, prior soils disturbance, and evaluation of project effects. For this reason, these studies vary in their adequacy to serve as evaluations of potential effects on archaeological resources under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(a)(1)(3) and (c)(1)(2)). For the purposes of assessing potential effects to archaeological resources and the need for and appropriate type of mitigation in the Plan area, the principal value of the existing archaeological reports is the identification of potential archaeological resources and of research themes and questions, and of prior disturbance. The archaeological documentation record that has been prepared for the majority of the Plan area has shown that: prehistoric and historical archaeological resources are potentially present within the Plan area; in many cases the expected archaeological resources could contribute significant scientific/historical information that early, deeply buried prehistoric resources may be present; the soils disturbing activities in the Plan area to date may not, in general, have significantly impaired the integrity of archaeological resources expected to be present; and even recent large-scale project have resulted in less soils disturbance than anticipated in order to avoid remediation of contaminated soils.

Thus, based on prior archaeological documentation and the analysis of the Plan area, it can be concluded that significant archaeological resources that have not been substantially affected by prior disturbance may be present within the Plan area and that development pursuant to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and accompanying rezoning has a greater potential to result in adverse effects to these resources than might occur under the existing zoning. Implementation of the following mitigation measures can reduce this potential adverse effect to a less-than-significant level. Since there is no physical project proposed other than surface-level streetscape and open

space improvements, the evaluation of project-specific impacts can only occur at the time a development project is proposed, and in accord with these mitigation measures.

The Plan area is subdivided into three archaeological mitigation zones: based on the potential for significant archaeological resources to be present within the site and /or the adequacy of previous archaeological documentation to assess this potential. For any project involving soils disturbing activities (for example, excavation, grading, foundation work, piles, utilities installation, remediation of contaminated soils) responsibility for the mitigation of potential effects to archaeological resources shall be required based on the location of the project site.

### **Projects Located in Archaeological Mitigation Zone 1 (AMZ-1)**

I.1a AMZ-1 includes those properties within the Plan area for which a final archaeological research design and treatment plan (ARD/TP) is on file in the Northwest Information Center and the Planning Department. Any soils-disturbing project proposed within the AMZ-1 shall be required to submit to the Environmental Review Officer (ERO) for review and approval an addendum to the respective ARD/TP prepared by a qualified archaeological consultant with expertise in California prehistoric and urban historical archaeology. The addendum to the ARD/TP shall evaluate the potential effects of the project on significant archaeological resources with respect to the site- and project-specific information absent in the ARD/TP. The addendum report to the ARD/TP should have the following content:

- 1) Summary: Description of subsurface effect of the proposed project and of previous soils-disturbing activities;
- 2) Historical Development: If demographic data for the project site is absent in the discussion in the ARD/TP, the addendum shall include new demographic data regarding former site occupants;
- 3) Identification of potential archaeological resources: Discussion of any identified potential prehistoric or historical archaeological resources;
- 4) Integrity and Significance: Eligibility of identified expected resources for listing to the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR); Identification of applicable Research Themes/Questions (in the ARD/TP) that would be addressed by the expected archaeological resources that are identified;
- 5) Impacts of Proposed Project;
- 6) Potential Soils Hazards: Update discussion for proposed project;
- 7) Archaeological Testing Plan (if archaeological testing is determined warranted): the Archaeological Testing Plan (ATP) shall include:
  - A) Proposed archaeological testing strategies and their justification
  - B) Expected archaeological resources
  - C) For all historic archaeological resources
    - a) Historic address or other location identification
    - b) Archaeological property type
  - D) For all archaeological resources
    - a) Estimate depth below the surface
    - b) Expected integrity
    - c) Preliminary assessment of eligibility to the CRHR

- E) ATP Map
  - a) Location of expected archaeological resources
  - b) Location of expected project subgrade impacts
  - c) Areas of prior soils disturbance
  - d) Archaeological testing locations by type of testing
  - e) Base map: 1886/7 Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map

### **Projects Located in Archaeological Mitigation Zone 2 (AMZ-2)**

I.1b AMZ-2 is those properties within the Plan area for which no archaeological assessment report has been prepared or for which the archaeological documentation is incomplete or inadequate to serve as an evaluation of potential effects on archaeological resources under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(a)(1)(3) and (c)(1)(2)). In the latter case, the existing archaeological documentation may lack site-specific identification of potential archaeological resources, a historical context or site history discussion, an assessment of prior soils disturbance, an evaluation of eligibility to the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) of potential archaeological resources, or specific information about site occupants.

For projects proposed in AMZ-2, a Preliminary Archaeological Sensitivity Study must be prepared by an archaeological consultant with expertise in California prehistoric and urban historical archaeology. The Sensitivity Study should contain the following:

- 1) Determine the historical uses of the project site based on any previous archaeological documentation and Sanborn maps;
- 2) Determine types of archaeological resources/properties that may have been located within the project site and whether the archaeological resources/property types would potentially be eligible for listing in the CRHR;
- 3) Determine if 19th or 20th century soils-disturbing activities may adversely affected the identified potential archaeological resources;
- 4) Assess potential project effects in relation to the depth of any identified potential archaeological resource;
- 5) Conclusion: assessment of whether any CRHP-eligible archaeological resources could be adversely affected by the proposed project and recommendation as to appropriate further action.

Based on the Sensitivity Study, the Environmental Review Officer (ERO) shall determine if an Archaeological Research Design/Treatment Plan (ARD/TP) shall be required to more definitively identify the potential for CRHP-eligible archaeological resources to be present within the project site and determine the appropriate action necessary to reduce the potential effect of the project on archaeological resources to a less than significant level. The scope of the ARD/TP shall be determined in consultation with the ERO and consistent with the standards for archaeological documentation established by the Office of Historic Preservation for purposes of compliance with CEQA, in Preservation Planning Bulletin No. 5).

### **Projects Located in Archaeological Mitigation Zone 3 (AMZ-3)**

I.1c AMZ-3 is those sites within the Plan area in which it is believed there are no significant archaeological resources, or that those resources have been significantly disturbed, or that those resources have been investigated and those resources with significant research value removed and

curated as the result of an archaeological data recovery program. Although properties within the AMZ-3 have a low potential to contain significant archaeological resources, implementation of the following mitigation measure shall ensure that in the event of an inadvertent and unanticipated encounter of an archaeological resource, the project would have a less-than-significant-effect on archaeological resources.

The following mitigation measure is required to avoid any potential adverse effect from the proposed project on accidentally discovered buried or submerged historical resources as defined in *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5(a)(c). The project sponsor shall distribute the Planning Department archaeological resource "ALERT" sheet to the project prime contractor; to any project subcontractor (including demolition, excavation, grading, foundation, pile driving, etc. firms); or utilities firm involved in soils disturbing activities within the project site. Prior to any soils disturbing activities being undertaken each contractor is responsible for ensuring that the "ALERT" sheet is circulated to all field personnel including, machine operators, field crew, pile drivers, supervisory personnel, etc. The project sponsor shall provide the Environmental Review Officer (ERO) with a signed affidavit from the responsible parties (prime contractor, subcontractor(s), and utilities firm) to the ERO confirming that all field personnel have received copies of the Alert Sheet.

Should any indication of an archaeological resource be encountered during any soils disturbing activity of the project, the project Head Foreman and/or project sponsor shall immediately notify the ERO and shall immediately suspend any soils disturbing activities in the vicinity of the discovery until the ERO has determined what additional measures should be undertaken.

If the ERO determines that an archaeological resource may be present within the project site, the project sponsor shall retain the services of a qualified archaeological consultant. The archaeological consultant shall advise the ERO as to whether the discovery is an archaeological resource, retains sufficient integrity, and is of potential scientific/historical/cultural significance. If an archaeological resource is present, the archaeological consultant shall identify and evaluate the archaeological resource. The archaeological consultant shall make a recommendation as to what action, if any, is warranted. Based on this information, the ERO may require, if warranted, specific additional measures to be implemented by the project sponsor.

Measures might include: preservation in situ of the archaeological resource; an archaeological monitoring program, or an archaeological testing program. If an archaeological monitoring program or archaeological testing program is required, it shall be consistent with the Major Environmental Analysis (MEA) division guidelines for such programs. The ERO may also require that the project sponsor immediately implement a site security program if the archaeological resource is at risk from vandalism, looting, or other damaging actions.

The project archaeological consultant shall submit a Final Archaeological Resources Report (FARR) to the ERO that evaluates the historical significance of any discovered archaeological resource and describing the archaeological and historical research methods employed in the archaeological monitoring/data recovery program(s) undertaken. Information that may put at risk any archaeological resource shall be provided in a separate removable insert within the final report.

Copies of the Draft FARR shall be sent to the ERO for review and approval. Once approved by the ERO, copies of the FARR shall be distributed as follows: California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center (NWIC) shall receive one (1) copy and the ERO shall receive a copy of the transmittal of the FARR to the NWIC. The Major Environmental Analysis division of the Planning Department shall receive three copies of the FARR along with copies of any formal site recordation forms (CA DPR 523 series) and/or documentation for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places/California Register of Historical Resources. In instances of high public

interest or interpretive value, the ERO may require a different final report content, format, and distribution than that presented above.

Implementation of the above measure would eliminate potentially significant effects on subsurface cultural resources, since resources would be identified and documented in accordance with accepted laws, regulations, and professional standards.

### ***HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES***

- I.2a To partially offset the loss of the Union Oil Company Building, the project sponsor of the 425 First Street project shall ensure that a complete survey, to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), is undertaken prior to demolition. This survey should include a written description and history, large-format photographic recordation and detailed HABS level drawings to record the building in its present condition.
- I.2b To partially offset the potential loss of the Edwin W. Tucker & Co. Building (347 Fremont Street), the project sponsor of the 333 Fremont Street project shall ensure that a complete survey, to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), is undertaken prior to demolition, if any. This survey should include a written description and history, large-format photographic recordation and detailed HABS level drawings to record the building in its present condition.
- I.2c To partially offset the potential loss of the 375 Fremont Street Building, the project sponsor of the 375 Fremont Street project shall ensure that a complete survey, to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), is undertaken prior to demolition, if any. This survey should include a written description and history, large-format photographic recordation and detailed HABS level drawings to record the building in its present condition.
- I.2d To partially offset the loss of any other buildings identified during project-specific review as historical resources under CEQA, the project sponsor of the project under review shall, at a minimum, ensure that a complete survey, to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), is undertaken prior to demolition, if any. This survey should include a written description and history, large-format photographic recordation and detailed HABS level drawings to record the building in its present condition.

According to Section 15126.4(b)(2) of the Public Resource Code (CEQA), documentation of a historical resource, by way of historic narrative, photographs and /or architectural drawings (often HABS-Level), as mitigation for the effects of demolition of the resource will typically not mitigate the effects to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the loss of the Union Oil Company Building, and of 347 Fremont Street and 375 Fremont Street, should they be demolished, would be a significant, unavoidable impact even after implementation of the above mitigation measures.

- **IMPROVEMENT MEASURE IDENTIFIED IN THIS EIR**

- ***AREA SURVEY***

- I.3 The Planning Department will undertake an evaluation of the Rincon Hill Plan area for cultural/historical resources. The City-managed survey/evaluation would be funded by contributions from developers of projects within the Plan area. The study would consist of 1) research (beginning with what has been developed to date for the area) on the patterns of history and significance of the area in various contexts (i.e., early San Francisco settlement, labor, Filipino and other ethnic communities, etc.), resulting in a comprehensive context statement for the Plan area, including map locations; 2) architectural evaluation of the area's built environment in relation to the context statement, resulting in individual property evaluations and identification of any clusters, sub-areas, or themes to which the property belongs; and 3) determination of enough resources with sufficient integrity remain to support formation of a historic district.
- This measure would run in parallel with decision-making on the Plan and projects in the Plan area. This improvement measure would not reduce impacts of the Plan to a less-than-significant level.

## **D. ALTERNATIVES**

As noted previously, this EIR evaluates three Plan options at an equal level of detail, as CEQA alternatives. Included in Chapter VI are two additional alternatives: a No Project Alternative and a Preservation Alternative.

## NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A) states that, generally, where a project being analyzed is the revision of an existing land use or regulatory plan—such as the Rincon Hill Area Plan and Planning Code Section 249.1 and the Zoning Maps that implement the area plan—the No Project Alternative should be considered to be continuation of the existing plan, policy or operation into the future. Consistent with this guidance, the No Project Alternative considered in this EIR is the maintenance of the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan and the existing zoning and height and bulk controls.

This alternative could take the form of the Existing Controls (150-foot) Tower Separation Option, analyzed in the body of the EIR text. This option would maintain the 150-foot separation between high-rise towers that is contained in both the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan and in Planning Code Section 270(e)(4), which implements the bulk limits for the area plan’s R Bulk District. However, whereas under existing conditions exceptions to the separation of towers requirements have been granted in accordance with Planning Code Section 271, under the Existing Controls (150-foot) Tower Separation Option, no exceptions to the tower separation provisions would be permitted. No height increase would occur. Alternatively, the No Project Alternative could trend more towards the Extended Pipeline Option, one of the Plan Options Considered and Withdrawn. This option would result in maintenance of existing controls, but with increased permitted heights, and assumes a continuation of the granting of bulk exceptions, allowing towers 82.5-feet apart or closer. Because tower separation exceptions have been granted and rezoning to increase height limits has been approved since the adoption of the Rincon Hill Area Plan and corresponding zoning and height and bulk controls, it is not unreasonable to assume that the No Project Alternative could take on at least some characteristics of the Extended Pipeline Option.

Impacts of the No Project Alternative are likely to fall somewhere between those of the Existing Controls (150-foot) Tower Separation Option and the Extended Pipeline Option. As noted, the Existing Controls Option is analyzed throughout the body of the EIR text. Many of the key physical effects of the Extended Pipeline Option are presented in Section III.B, Visual Quality, and Section III.F, Shadow, where effects of the Extended Pipeline Option are presented alongside those of the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option. Regarding wind, as noted in Section III.G, “In general, for test points in the western portion of the Plan area, where new development under the Plan would be concentrated, the test results were very similar for the scenarios evaluated. To the extent that there were differences in the results, the test scenarios with more towers generally performed better than scenarios with fewer towers, in terms of exceedances of the 36-mph hazard criterion.” This would be anticipated to hold true for the Extended Pipeline Option as well; that is, little change in ground-level winds would be anticipated. Furthermore, as with other alternatives, project-specific wind testing would ensure that no significant impacts would occur.

Effects related to the intensity of development within the Plan area would be somewhat greater under the Extended Pipeline Option concept for the No Project Alternative than they would for the three Plan options analyzed elsewhere in this EIR. Total population within the Plan area would increase to approximately 8,800, compared to a maximum of about 8,200 under the three Plan options analyzed in the EIR, with an increase over existing population of about 7,300 under this option, compared to a



maximum of about 6,700 under the three Plan options analyzed in the EIR. Of the 7,300 increase, about 4,500 would be due to development that could be newly approved, compared to about 3,900 under the three Plan options analyzed in the EIR. The relatively small difference (9 percent of the growth in population compared to existing conditions) would incrementally increase p.m. peak-hour trip generation and vehicle delay at some intersections, but would be unlikely to result in any new or substantially more severe impacts compared to those analyzed in the EIR. Likewise, Plan-generated air quality impacts would increase only marginally, and the difference would not result in new significant effects.

Impacts related to site-specific conditions, such as hazardous materials and archaeology, could be marginally more substantial under the Extended Pipeline Option because more towers likely would translate into more excavation. However, the same mitigation measures as are applicable to the Plan options would reduce these effects to a less-than-significant level.

This alternative, like the three Plan options, would result in a significant unavoidable impact on historical resources resulting from the demolition of the Union Oil (now Bank of America) Clock Tower at 425 First Street and, potentially, the demolition of 347 Fremont Street and 375 Fremont Street.

As with the Plan options analyzed in this EIR, the Extended Pipeline Option (as No Project Alternative) would encourage the continued development of Rincon Hill as a primarily residential neighborhood, consistent with the trend since the adoption of the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan in 1985, and particularly with development over the last few years, while updating the existing Plan's implementation to ensure adequate separation between towers and provide neighborhood services and amenities. The primary difference between the Extended Pipeline Option and the three options analyzed in this EIR would be in terms of visual quality, urban design, and shadow, with the Extended Pipeline Option resulting in the greatest concentration of new residential towers.

## PRESERVATION ALTERNATIVE

- This Alternative would preserve and reuse the three buildings identified as historical resources under CEQA—the Union Oil (Bank of America) Clock Tower and Building, the Edwin W. Tucker & Co. Building (347 Fremont Street), and the 375 Fremont Street building. Otherwise, this alternative would be
- the same as the Preferred Plan Option analyzed in this EIR. Retention of the Union Oil office building and Clock and Tower would result in that site (part of the proposed 425 First Street project site) being unavailable for residential construction. A single residential tower, rather than the two towers proposed by the applicant for that project and assumed in the Preferred Option and the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option, would be constructed at the location of the existing surface parking lot adjacent to the Union Oil Company building (the other part of the proposed 425 First Street project site). As a result, this alternative would include three newly permitted residential towers—one on Harrison Street at Fremont Street, at the northeast corner of the 425 First Street project site; one at 45 Lansing Street; and one near the northwest corner of Harrison and Fremont Streets. The number of housing units would be less than with the Preferred Option but greater than with the Existing Controls Option, because the Preservation Alternative would include the proposed height increases of the Preferred Alternative. Reuse of the buildings at 347 and 375 Fremont Street would also result in an incremental reduction in the number of housing units on those

sites. It is assumed that the number of new housing units would be approximately midway between the 1,630 of the Existing Controls Option and the 2,200 of the Preferred Option.

Because the Preservation Alternative would result in an increase in housing units approximately midway between the increase with the Existing Controls Option and the increase with the Preferred Option, resulting impacts related to the intensity of development, including traffic, population, and air quality, would be with the range of those impacts analyzed in the EIR. Effects on visual quality and shading impacts would be similar to those of the Preferred Alternative, as buildings constructed would be of the same heights, with the one difference being that only a single tower would be constructed at the 425 First Street site. In particular, this would reduce shading on the new park proposed alongside the Fremont Street off-ramp, adjacent to this site.

Impacts related to site-specific conditions, such as hazardous materials and archaeology, would be essentially the same as those of the Preferred Option, as the one less tower would make only a minimal difference in the amount of excavation; the same mitigation measures as are applicable to the Plan options would reduce these effects to a less-than-significant level.

As with the Plan options analyzed in this EIR, the Preservation Alternative would encourage the continued development of Rincon Hill as a primarily residential neighborhood, consistent with the trend since the adoption of the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan in 1985, and particularly with development over the last few years, while updating the existing Plan's implementation to ensure adequate separation between towers and provide neighborhood services and amenities.

Because it would eliminate the Draft Plan's significant impacts on historical resources, this Alternative would be considered the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

---

# CHAPTER II

---

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### A. INTRODUCTION

This document is a “program level” Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Rincon Hill Plan,<sup>2</sup> as proposed by the San Francisco Planning Department. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, a program EIR may be prepared for a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project, related, as in this case, geographically; as logical parts in a chain of contemplated actions; and in connection with the issuance of rules, regulations, plans and other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program. This EIR covers amendments to the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan, an element of the San Francisco General Plan, and the Planning Code and Zoning Maps.

This EIR provides information at a program level of detail about potential environmental impacts that could occur through adoption and implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan, and describes mitigation measures that could reduce or eliminate those impacts. While the EIR analysis is based on assumed development and activity that could occur pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan, individual projects that may be proposed in the future under the Rincon Hill Plan would undergo project-level environmental review to determine whether they could generate further impacts specific to their site, time and configuration.

For CEQA purposes, the proposed project consists of several approval actions: amendments to the General Plan; implementation of related transportation, streetscape, and open space improvements; and the adoption of changes to the Zoning Maps and Planning Code. The proposed plan that is the subject of this EIR is not a development proposal, and, while it would facilitate construction of certain projects, the only specific improvements proposed are in the area of streetscape enhancement and open space (see “Improvements to the Public Realm,” p. 29). Therefore, the EIR’s analysis of physical changes in the environment is based on the assumptions about future development that could occur under the plan; these assumptions are provided below under Section II.D, Project Components.

The project description is taken from the “Rincon Hill Plan–Draft for Public Discussion” published by the Planning Department in November 2003 and revised through “Proposed Plan Refinements” in March 2004 and a “Supplement to the Draft Rincon Hill Plan” dated September 2004. These documents together are referred to in this EIR as the “Draft Rincon Hill Plan” or the “Draft Plan.”

---

<sup>2</sup> As described further below, the “Rincon Hill Plan” that is the subject of this EIR is distinguished from the “Rincon Hill Area Plan” within the San Francisco General Plan, in that the Rincon Hill Plan includes amendments not only to the Area Plan, but also to the City’s Planning Code, including the Zoning Maps.

The Draft Plan evaluated a number of options that would result in a varying amount of new residential units and different combinations of high-rise and mid-rise buildings. The Preferred Option advanced by Planning Department staff and developed through a community planning process would increase certain height limits and reduce the Planning Code–required separation between high-rise residential towers from the existing 150 feet to 115 feet. The Preferred Option–115-foot Tower Separation would also eliminate the current practice under which exceptions to the existing zoning have been granted, pursuant to Planning Code Section 271, thereby increasing the absolute distance between towers, compared to what has been previously approved. This EIR also analyzes two other options including a lesser separation of towers (82.5-foot Tower Separation Option) with the same increase in height limits, and retention and enforcement of the existing tower separation with no change in height limits from the existing controls (Existing Controls–150-foot Tower Separation Option). These three options are analyzed at an equal level, as EIR alternatives, in Chapter III. Other alternatives—a No Project Alternative and a Preservation Alternative—are discussed in Chapter VI. Other options have been considered and withdrawn during the planning process because they do not meet the objectives of the project as effectively as the three options that have been carried forward (see Section F in this chapter). In addition to different numbers of towers at varying separations from one another, each of the options includes, among future development projects analyzed in this EIR, several high-rise projects in the Plan area that are approved but not yet under construction, other mid-rise residential development on non-tower sites, and neighborhood-serving ground-floor retail uses. Where proposed residential high-rise projects are on file with the Planning Department and are consistent with one or more of the three options, those projects are included in the options’ assumptions.

Other than controls relating to height and bulk, and location and number of towers, the controls and zoning changes in the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would apply uniformly to all options; that is, permitted uses, maximum residential density, open space, parking and loading requirements, and proposed street changes and public realm improvements would be the same under all options, regardless of the height and bulk controls ultimately implemented.

## **B. PROJECT SPONSOR’S OBJECTIVES**

The project sponsor is the San Francisco Planning Department. According to the Draft Plan:

“The Planning Department is proposing a new plan and controls for Rincon Hill. In accordance with San Francisco’s *General Plan*, the department aims to transform presently non-residential areas adjacent to downtown into dynamic mixed-use neighborhoods. These new neighborhoods, with Rincon Hill and [the] Transbay [area to the north] as two major components, will contribute significantly to the city’s housing supply and will provide a full range of services and amenities to a growing downtown residential population living in a full-service urban place. The Rincon Hill Plan is part of the comprehensive planning effort for the larger downtown area embodied in the “Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative....” The new planning controls for Rincon Hill are intended to ensure the creation of a high-density residential neighborhood that balances livability and density, preserves sunlight and air, has attractive and livable streets and

open spaces, offers a variety of housing types, allows easy access to shops and services, and generally enhances the area's role as a vital new part of the city.”<sup>3</sup>

The Draft Plan includes the following goals:<sup>4</sup>

- Encourage the development of a dynamic new mixed-use residential neighborhood in the Rincon Hill area.
- Encourage new housing production that meets a variety of housing needs, especially workforce housing, capitalizes upon Rincon Hill's premiere downtown location and rich transit service, and creates a residential environment with strong access to light, air, open space and neighborhood amenities.
- Develop a cohesive urban form for Rincon Hill that fits into the larger form of the downtown, the natural landform, and the waterfront and the Bay.
- Create a variety of new open spaces to meet the needs of a new residential population.
- In accordance with Objectives 2 and 7 of the Transit-First Policy,<sup>5</sup> carefully manage parking supply and pricing to encourage travel by foot, public transportation, and by bicycle.
- In accordance with Objectives 3 and 5 of the Transit-First Policy,<sup>6</sup> create an attractive and human-scaled streetscape of the highest quality along Folsom Boulevard, and make extensive pedestrian improvements to other neighborhood streets such that they become suitable residential environments and integral components of the civic open space system.
- Ensure adequate sunlight and the least amount of wind and shadow on public streets and open spaces.
- Preserve and enhance public views to the Bay, and to the downtown.
- Preserve and enhance the character and scale of finely-grained residential areas within the Rincon Hill area.
- Ensure that new development creates an engaging physical transition between private development and the public realm, with special attention to the pedestrian ground-level experience.

As noted, the Draft Rincon Hill Plan includes three options, distinguished primarily by the number of high-rise residential towers that result, and the required distance between towers and the tower heights. The Draft Plan contains a series of urban design objectives that “must be met in considering the appropriate form for Rincon Hill.” These design objectives are the following:<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> “Rincon Hill Plan—Draft for Public Discussion,” November 2003; p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> “Rincon Hill Plan—Draft for Public Discussion,” November 2003; pp. 14-15.

<sup>5</sup> The City's Transit-First Policy is contained in Section 16.102 of the City Charter. Principle 2 of the Transit-First Policy states, “Public transit, including taxis and vanpools, is an economically and environmentally sound alternative to transportation by individual automobiles. Within San Francisco, travel by public transit, by bicycle and on foot must be an attractive alternative to travel by private automobile.” Principle 7 states, “Parking policies for areas well served by public transit shall be designed to encourage travel by public transit and alternative transportation.”

<sup>6</sup> Principle 3 of the Transit-First Policy states, “Decisions regarding the use of limited public street and sidewalk space shall encourage the use of public rights of way by pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit, and shall strive to reduce traffic and improve public health and safety.” Principle 5 states, “Pedestrian areas shall be enhanced wherever possible to improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians and to encourage travel by foot.”

<sup>7</sup> “Rincon Hill Plan—Draft for Public Discussion,” November 2003; p. 29.

- Create a clear urban form with harmonious skyline transitions to the Transbay area and downtown core to the north.
- Accentuate the topography of Rincon Hill with taller towers concentrated at the top of the hill, while allowing visual permeability in the flatland viewshed.
- Preserve the view of the downtown “mound” from the Bay Bridge
- Preserve views of the Bay Bridge, the Bay, and the East Bay Hills from the downtown office core and key public vantages.
- Minimize shading of public spaces, including new parks in both Transbay and Rincon Hill, and streets, especially Folsom Boulevard and “living streets.” Avoid creating canyons of towers along streets.
- Maximize sky exposure from street level and maintain an airiness to the skyline for neighborhood livability.
- Taper towers down toward the Bay to preserve views and create an appropriate scale along the waterfront.

The options presented in the Draft Plan are described on p. 13.

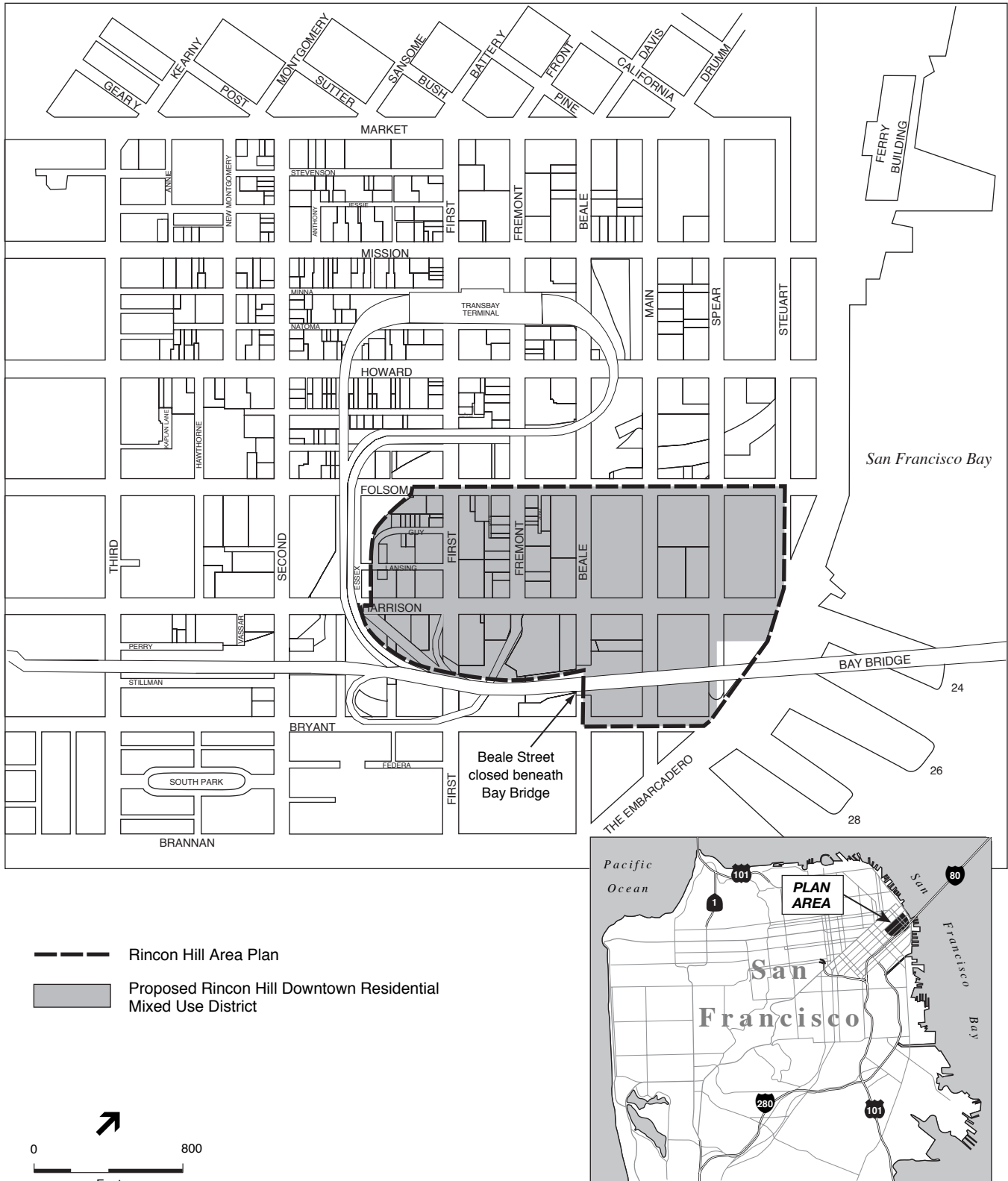
## **C. PROJECT LOCATION**

The Rincon Hill area is situated within the northeast<sup>8</sup> portion of San Francisco, south of the Financial District and north of the South Beach neighborhood. The project area is bounded generally by Folsom Street, Steuart Street, The Embarcadero, Bryant Street, Beale Street, the Bay Bridge approach, and the Transbay Terminal ramps (see [Figure 1](#), Project Location). The project area contains 55 acres of land, is subdivided into over 70 parcels, and consists of portions of Assessor’s Blocks 3749, 3764, 3765, and 3766, and all of Assessor’s Blocks 3744, 3745, 3746, 3747, 3748, 3767, 3768, and 3769.

The topography of the Plan area rises gently from south of Folsom Street and west of The Embarcadero, cresting at the intersections of Harrison and First Streets; on the southwest, at Essex Street, it drops sharply as a result of the historic Second Street Cut. At its apex, Rincon Hill is approximately 100 feet above sea level. The large-scale rectilinear geometry of Rincon Hill’s street grid reflects the area’s once dominant industrial land uses. In contrast to the street network north of Market Street, the blocks in Rincon Hill are typically 550 feet by 275 feet between major streets, approximately twice as large as the blocks north of Market Street.

---

<sup>8</sup> For descriptive purposes, this EIR considers Folsom Street and streets parallel to it (Harrison and Bryant Streets) as east-west streets, while First Street and streets parallel to it (Fremont, Beale, Main, Spear, and Steuart Streets) are considered to run north-south.



SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 1 (Revised)**  
Project Location

## D. PROJECT COMPONENTS

The Rincon Hill Plan (the “proposed project” or the “project”) would create a new zoning district called the Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use (“Rincon Hill DTR”<sup>9</sup>) District and eliminate the existing Rincon Hill Special Use District (Planning Code Section 249.1) and the underlying zoning designations, except that a recently adopted Residential Commercial (RC) Subdistrict would be retained.<sup>10</sup> The new Rincon Hill DTR District would be a new zoning district within the Planning Code, replacing what has been a zoning overlay in Rincon Hill. The project would also revise height limits within the Plan area, reduce podium heights, increase some tower height limits, revise the “R” bulk district (which currently exists only in the Plan area) to reduce the required separation between towers and increase the permitted bulk of towers while eliminating allowable bulk and tower separation exceptions, and amend the Rincon Hill Area Plan. In particular, the area plan would include an extensive series of design guidelines designed to improve the pedestrian environment in the Plan area. The specific elements of the Preferred Option are described below. Also described below and evaluated in this EIR are the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option and the Existing Controls Option, which would differ from the Preferred Option in the amount of separation between towers.

## PLANNING CODE AND ZONING MAP CHANGES

The proposed project would eliminate the existing Rincon Hill Special Use District (SUD) described in Planning Code Section 249.1, including its two original subdistricts (Residential and Commercial/Industrial), as well as the underlying zoning designations within the SUD.<sup>11</sup> In place of the existing controls would be the new Rincon Hill DTR mixed-use district, which, as noted, would retain the existing RC Subdistrict that encompasses portions of the two blocks bounded by Folsom, Spear, Harrison, and Beale Streets. See Figures 2 and 3 for maps of existing and proposed Planning Code use districts.

## *PERMITTED USES*

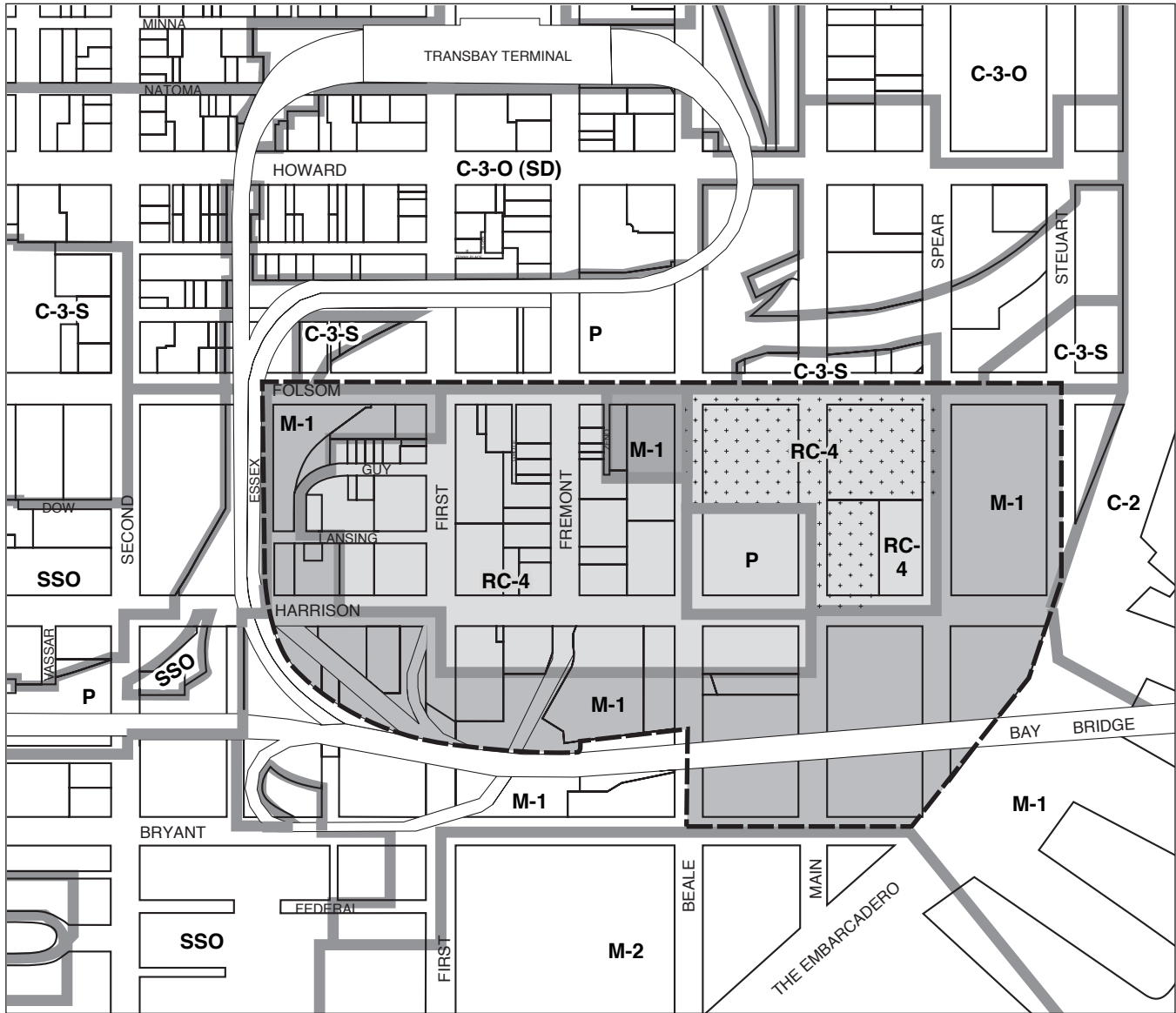
In recognition of its proximity to the downtown office district and its intended mixed-use and primary residential character, uses in the new Rincon Hill DTR District, under all options, would generally be those permitted in the C-3-O (Downtown Office) District, with the exception of hotels, large medical institutions, and massage establishments, which would be prohibited. To ensure a balance of residential and other uses, a minimum of six square feet of residential space would be required for every square foot

<sup>9</sup> DTR is the Plan’s abbreviation for “Downtown Residential Mixed-Use.”

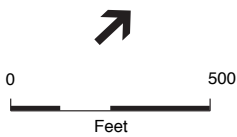
● <sup>10</sup> This RC Subdistrict was adopted in February 2004 in connection with approval of mixed-use projects at 201 Folsom Street and 300 Spear Street. Under the project, it would be retained, slightly reduced in size, and renamed the “Folsom and Main Residential/ Commercial Special Use District.”

<sup>11</sup> There is one parcel that, while within the Plan area, would not be within the proposed Rincon Hill DTR District. This parcel is on the southern half of the irregularly shaped block bounded by Harrison Street, Spear Street, and The Embarcadero; owned by the Port of San Francisco, this parcel (Parcel 1 of Lot 3769) cannot be developed for residential use because of a restriction established as part of the Public Trust doctrine that governs the use of Port lands. If the DTR zoning were applied to this site, housing would be a required use, which would render the land unbuildable. Therefore, the existing M-1 zoning designation would be retained on this parcel, which is at the eastern edge of the Plan area.





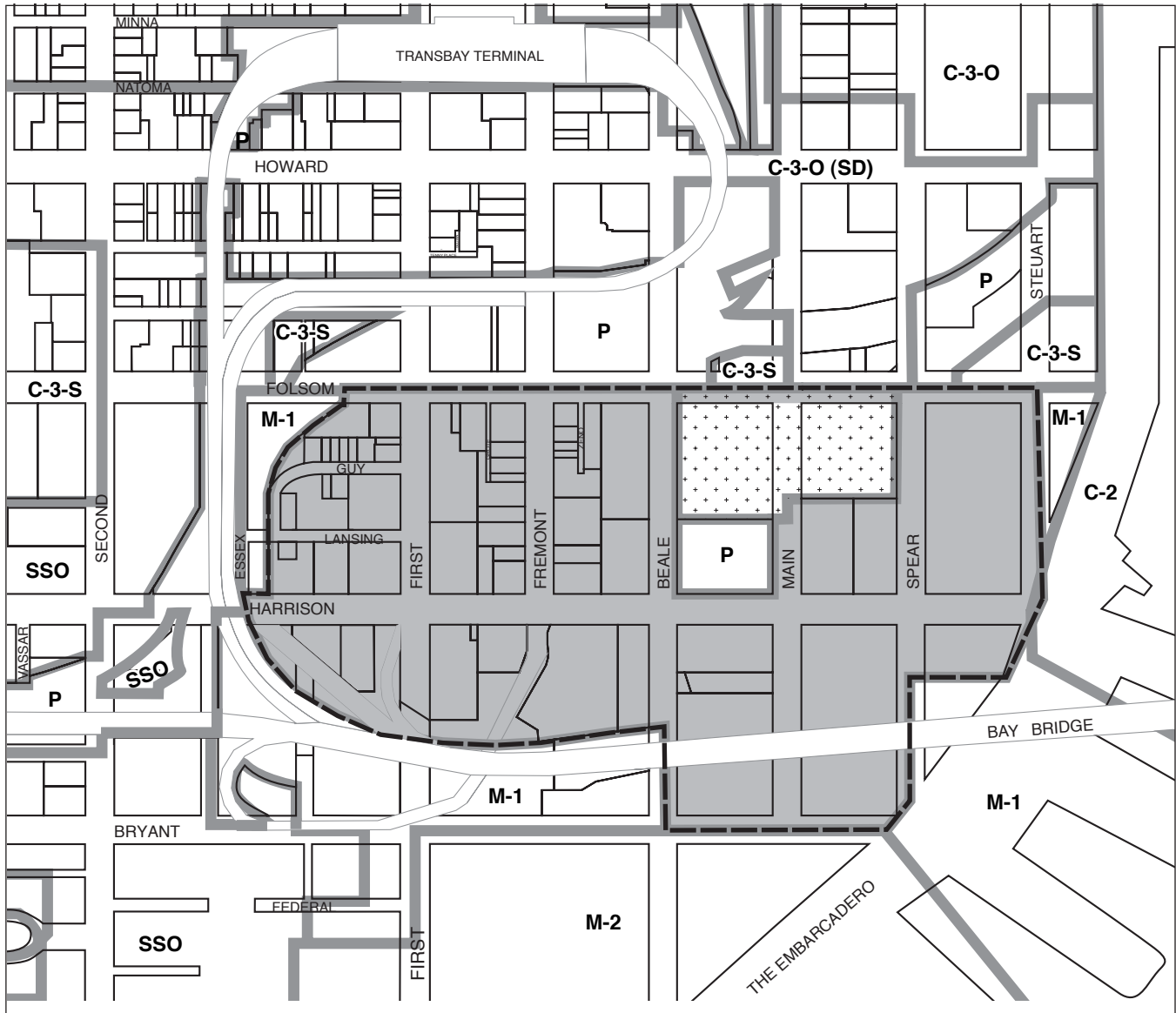
-  Zoning Boundary
-  Rincon Hill Residential Special Use District
-  Rincon Hill Commercial/Industrial Special Use District
-  Rincon Hill Residential/Commercial Special Use District
- RC-4** Residential-Commercial Combined District, High Density
- M-1, M-2** Industrial Districts
- C-3-O, C-3-R, C-3-S** Downtown Commercial Districts (adjacent)
- SSO** South of Market Use District (adjacent)
- P** Public Use District
-  Existing Rincon Hill Special Use District






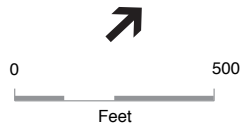
SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 2**  
Existing Planning Code Use Districts



-  Zoning Boundary
-  Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
-  Rincon Hill Residential/Commercial Special Use Subdistrict (to become "Folsom and Main Residential/Commercial Special Use District")
- RC-4** Residential-Commercial Combined District, High Density
- M-1, M-2** Industrial Districts
- C-3-O, C-3-S** Downtown Commercial Districts (adjacent)
- SSO** South of Market Use District (adjacent)
- P** Public Use District



NOTE: Three areas would not be subject to the new zoning:  
 the RC-4 Subdistrict adopted February 12, 2004;  
 the U.S. Postal Service property zoned "P";  
 and a parcel owned by the Port of San Francisco at  
 Spear and the Embarcadero.

SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 3 (Revised)**  
 Proposed Planning Code Use Districts

of new space devoted to other uses (e.g., retail, office, and other non-residential uses), which carries over the current requirement in the Residential Subdistrict of the existing Rincon Hill SUD. Thus, permitted uses would include residential, retail, service, office, and institutions such as schools, places of worship, medical clinics, day-care facilities, and the like, as long as the ratio for residential to other uses is met. Uses in the approved RC Subdistrict would continue to be permitted generally in accordance with those uses allowed in the RC-4 use district, with certain exceptions as described in Planning Code Sec. 249.1(e). (Currently, permitted uses in the SUD are based on the underlying RC-4 and M-1 zoning districts: the former permits high-density residential, retail, and personal service (except massage) uses, and conditionally permits schools and other institutions and hotels, while the latter permits retail, service, and light industrial uses.)

Residential uses would be the only permitted uses above 85 feet in height. (Currently, this restriction applies only in the RC Subdistrict, and takes effect at a height of 200 feet.)

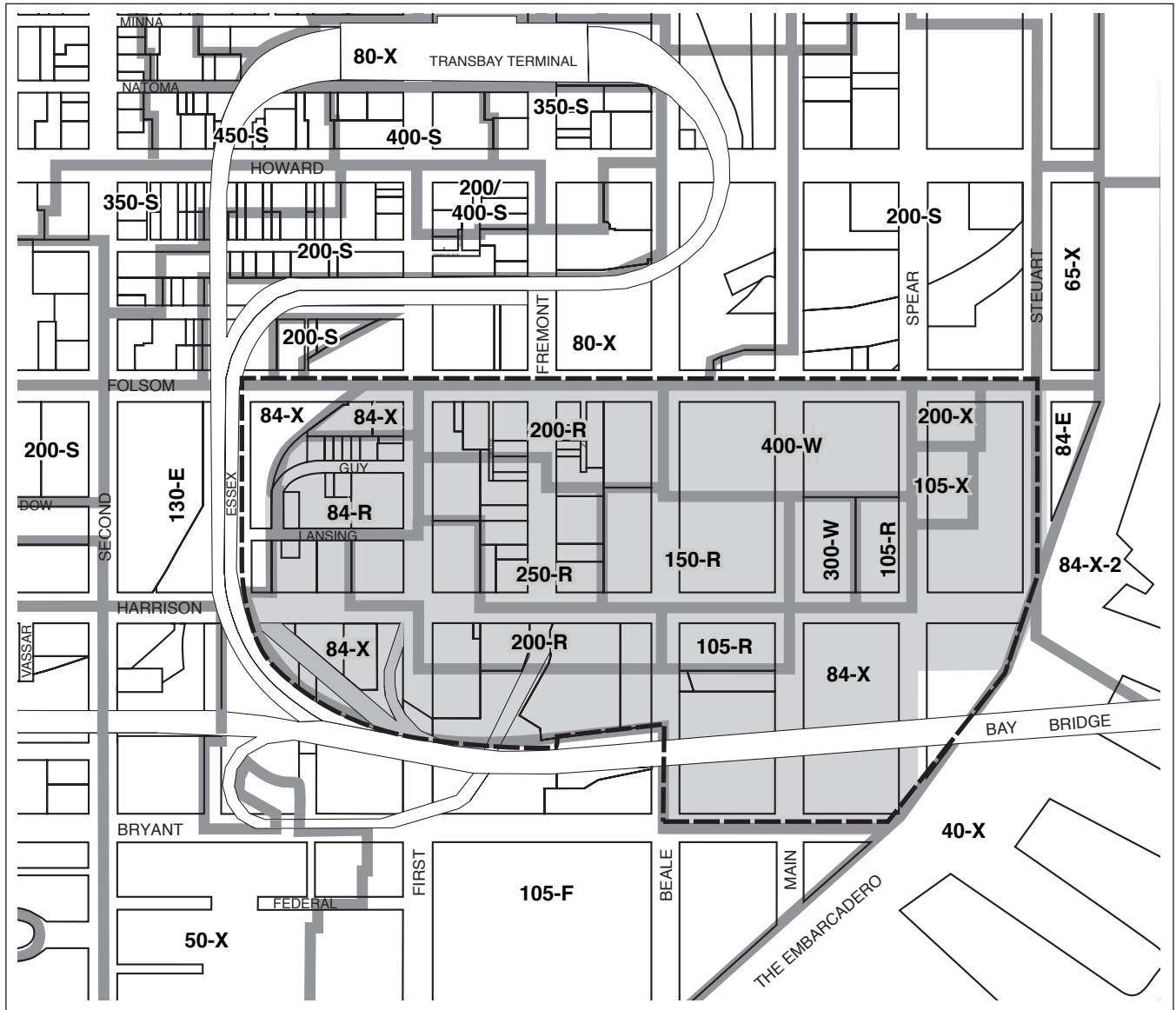
### ***RESIDENTIAL DENSITY***

The current Rincon Hill Residential SUD has no residential density limit; however, the Rincon Hill Commercial-Industrial SUD has a maximum density of 1 unit per 200 square feet of lot area. The proposed Rincon Hill DTR District would have no residential density limit. However, a minimum percentage of units that are two-bedroom and larger would be required in all development.

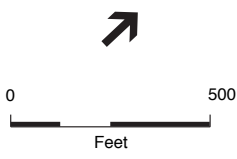
### ***HEIGHT AND BULK***

#### **Height**

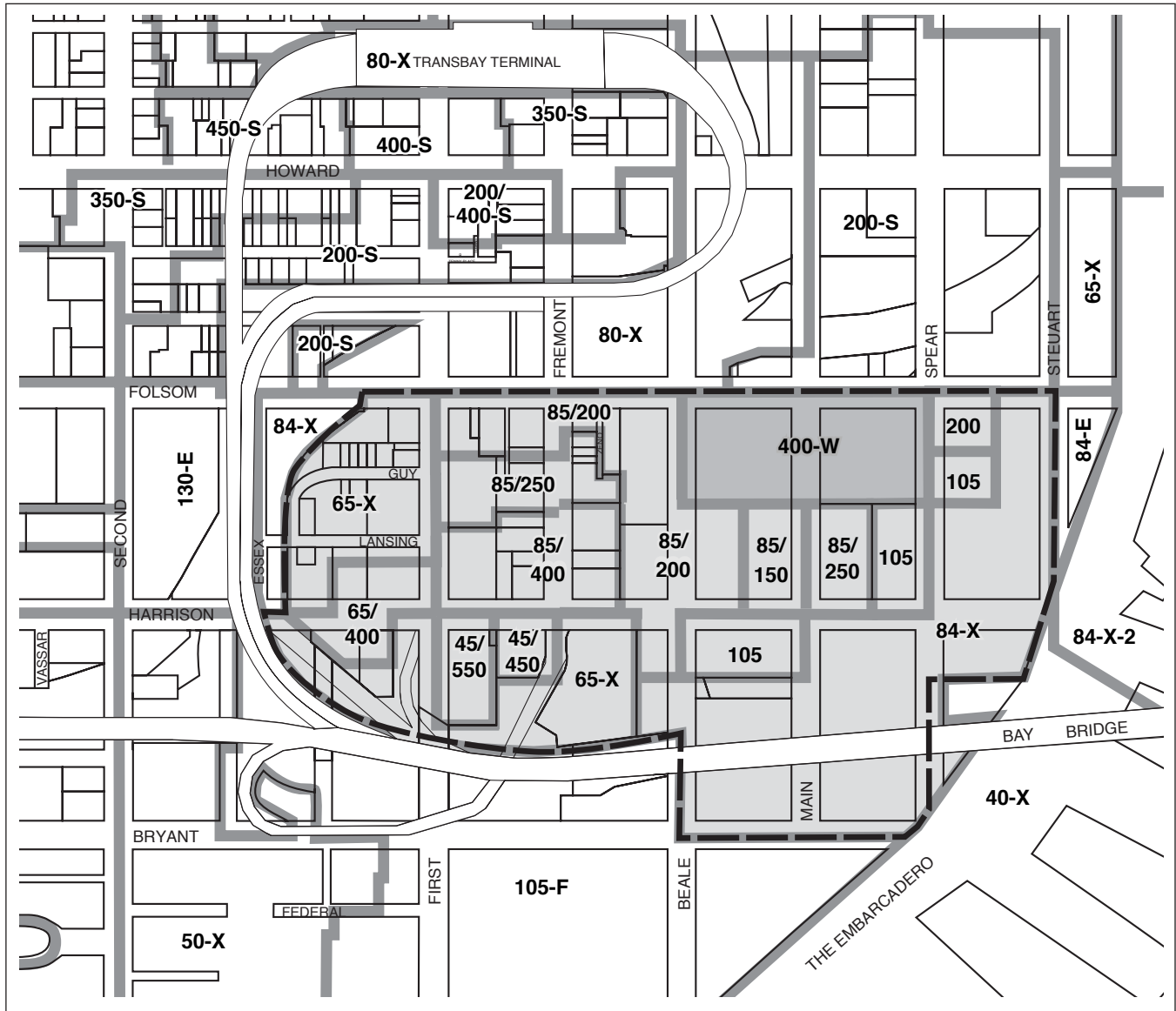
The Preferred Plan Option would increase the maximum height limit for residential towers in parts of the western portion of the Plan area centered around what remains of the historical top of Rincon Hill at First and Harrison Streets. The Preferred Plan Option would retain existing height limits in most of the eastern Plan area, close to the waterfront, and would reduce the height limit in select portions of the Plan area, mostly in the Guy Place-Lansing Street enclave (see Figure 4, Existing Height Limits, and Figure 5, Proposed Height Limits, pp. 10 and 11). In general, the Preferred Option would establish a base, or podium, height throughout most of the Plan area of 85 feet, with towers of various heights permitted above the podium level. The base height would range from 45 feet to 65 feet west of First Street and adjacent to the Bay Bridge west of Beale Street. A large area in the southeast of the Rincon Hill Plan area, which currently has an 84-foot height limit, would essentially remain unchanged, with a height limit of 85 feet. The greatest permitted heights would be around the First/Harrison Streets intersection, where buildings between 400 and 550 feet would be permitted; the most restrictive height limits would exist around Guy Place and Lansing Street, on the block bounded by Folsom, First, Harrison, and Essex Streets, where a podium height of 45 feet and a maximum height of 65 feet, less than the existing 84-foot limit, would be permitted.









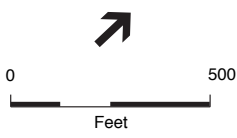
- Height and Bulk District Boundary
- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- Numbers are height limits in feet
- Letter symbols refer to bulk limits in City Planning Code sec. 270
- Existing Rincon Hill Special Use District



SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■  
**Figure 4 (Revised)**  
 Existing Height and Bulk Districts



-  Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
  -  Height and Bulk District Boundary
  -  Rincon Hill Residential Commercial Subdistrict (Approved)  
(to become "Folsom and Main Residential/Commercial Special Use District")
  -  Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District (Proposed)
  - 00** Height limits in feet
  -  Maximum Podium Height
  -  Maximum Tower Height
  - 65/400**
- Plan Area Bulk District is R except where noted



SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 5 (Revised)**  
Proposed Height Districts

As noted, this EIR evaluates more than one option, based on the analysis included in development of the Rincon Hill Plan. Of the two options in addition to the Preferred Plan Option, one (the 82.5-foot Option) assumes the same height and bulk limits as the Preferred Option, and the other (the 150-foot Option) assumes that existing height and bulk limits are maintained. These different potential height and bulk limits are described under Project Options, beginning on p. 13.

### **Bulk and Separation of Towers**

A fundamental aspect of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan is a proposed change from current Rincon Hill “R” bulk district controls in the spacing that would be required between high-rise residential buildings, or towers, which the Plan would define as any portion of a building in excess of 85 feet in height. (The current Rincon Hill “R” bulk district controls define towers as anything over 105 feet tall.) At present, this spacing—called separation of towers—is established at 150 feet; that is, no two high-rise residential buildings in the Plan area can be closer than 150 feet to each other at their nearest points.<sup>12</sup> Currently, however, exceptions may be permitted with Conditional Use authorization, pursuant to Planning Code Section 271.

The Preferred Plan Option would revise the “R” bulk district controls to establish the required distance between towers, including those facing each other across streets,<sup>13</sup> at 115 feet. It would also establish a limit of three towers on each full Rincon Hill block. Additionally, the Plan would increase the permitted bulk of the tallest towers. At present, the portion of buildings between 51 and 105 feet in height would have a maximum diagonal dimension of 200 feet and a maximum average floor area of 20,000 square feet; the tower portion (over 105 feet) of a Rincon Hill building may have a maximum plan dimension of 110 feet measured horizontally and 125 feet measured diagonally, and the average floor area for all tower floors cannot exceed 7,500 square feet. The existing R bulk rules allow the Planning Commission to grant exceptions to the bulk and tower separation controls based on criteria enumerated in Planning Code Section 271. Under the proposed Plan, the “R” bulk district would be revised to include a sliding scale in which towers 240 feet tall or less would have a maximum plan dimension of 90 feet (horizontal) and 120 feet (diagonal) and an average floor area for all tower floors (above 85 feet) of 7,500 square feet, while the tallest towers would have a maximum plan dimension of 115 feet (horizontal) and 145 feet (diagonal) and an average floor area for all tower floors (above 85 feet) of 10,000 square feet. Towers greater than 300 feet in height would be subject to a 10 percent volume reduction for the top third of their height, unless the average floor area is 5 percent less than the permitted maximum. Finally, the proposed Plan would eliminate bulk controls below 85 feet in height; the current controls apply to all portions of buildings above 50 feet in height. The proposed revised bulk limitations are presented in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 6, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> Section 270(3)(4) of the Planning Code states, “In order to provide light and air between structures and to avoid excessive screening of downtown views from the bridge, distances between structures in height districts above 105 feet should not be less than 150 feet.”

<sup>13</sup> Inasmuch as the major streets in the Plan area are typically 82.5 feet wide, this limitation would effectively require that, if two towers are built immediately across the street from one another, at least one tower would have to be set back from the street to achieve the 115-foot separation.

**TABLE 1  
COMPARISON BETWEEN EXISTING PROPOSED BULK CONTROLS**

| Maximum Dimensions<br><b>Building Height (ft.)</b> | Existing <sup>a</sup> |                   | Proposed (Preferred Option) <sup>b</sup> |                     |                      |                      |                      |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|--|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|  | 51-105                | >105 <sup>c</sup> | <85                                      | 85-240 <sup>d</sup> | 241-300 <sup>d</sup> | 301-350 <sup>d</sup> | 351-550 <sup>d</sup> |
| <b>Horizontal (Plan)</b>                           | None                  | 110               | None                                     | 90                  | 100                  | 115                  | 115                  |
| <b>Diagonal (Plan)</b>                             | 200                   | 125               | None                                     | 120                 | 125                  | 145                  | 145                  |
| <b>Average Floor Area (sq. ft.)</b>                | 20,000                | 7,500             | None                                     | 7,500               | 8,500                | 9,000                | 10,000               |
| <b>Volume Reduction</b>                            | None                  | None              | None                                     | None                | None                 | 10% <sup>e</sup>     | 10% <sup>e</sup>     |
| <b>Separation of Towers<sup>f</sup></b>            | N/A                   | 150 feet          | N/A                                      | 115 feet            | 115 feet             | 115 feet             | 115 feet             |

Maximum Number of Towers per Block (Existing)—No Limit  
 Maximum Number of Towers per Block (Proposed, Preferred Option)—3  
 Approximate Number of Towers per Block (Proposed, 82.5-foot Option)—4  
 Approximate Number of Towers per Block (Proposed, 150-foot Option)—2 to 3

- <sup>a</sup> Also applies to 150-foot Option.
  - <sup>b</sup> Also applies to 82.5-foot Option.
  - <sup>c</sup> Applies to all portions of building above 105 feet.
  - <sup>d</sup> Applies to all portions of building above 85 feet
  - <sup>e</sup> Applies to upper third of tower height
  - <sup>f</sup> Separation of Towers varies by option; see “Project Options,” p. 13.
- N/A—Not Applicable

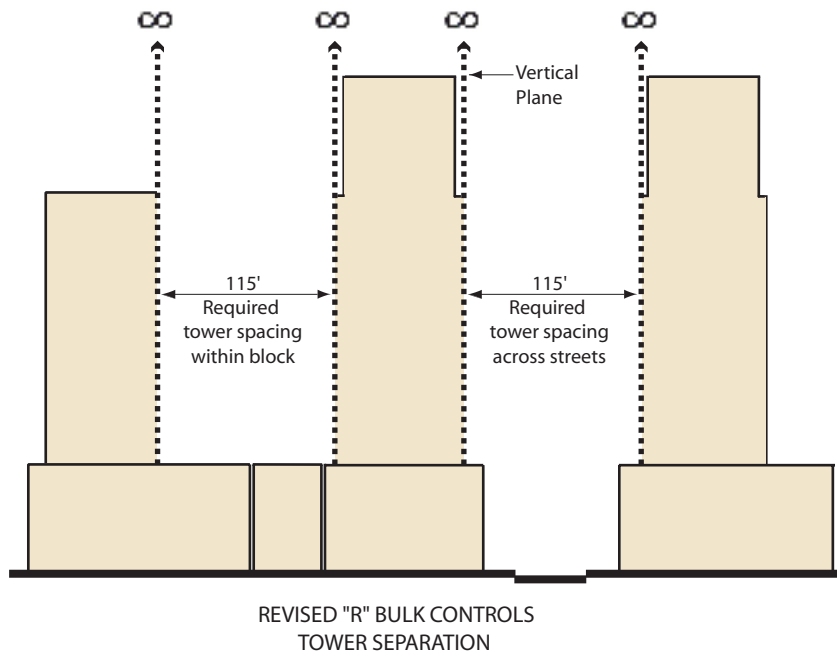
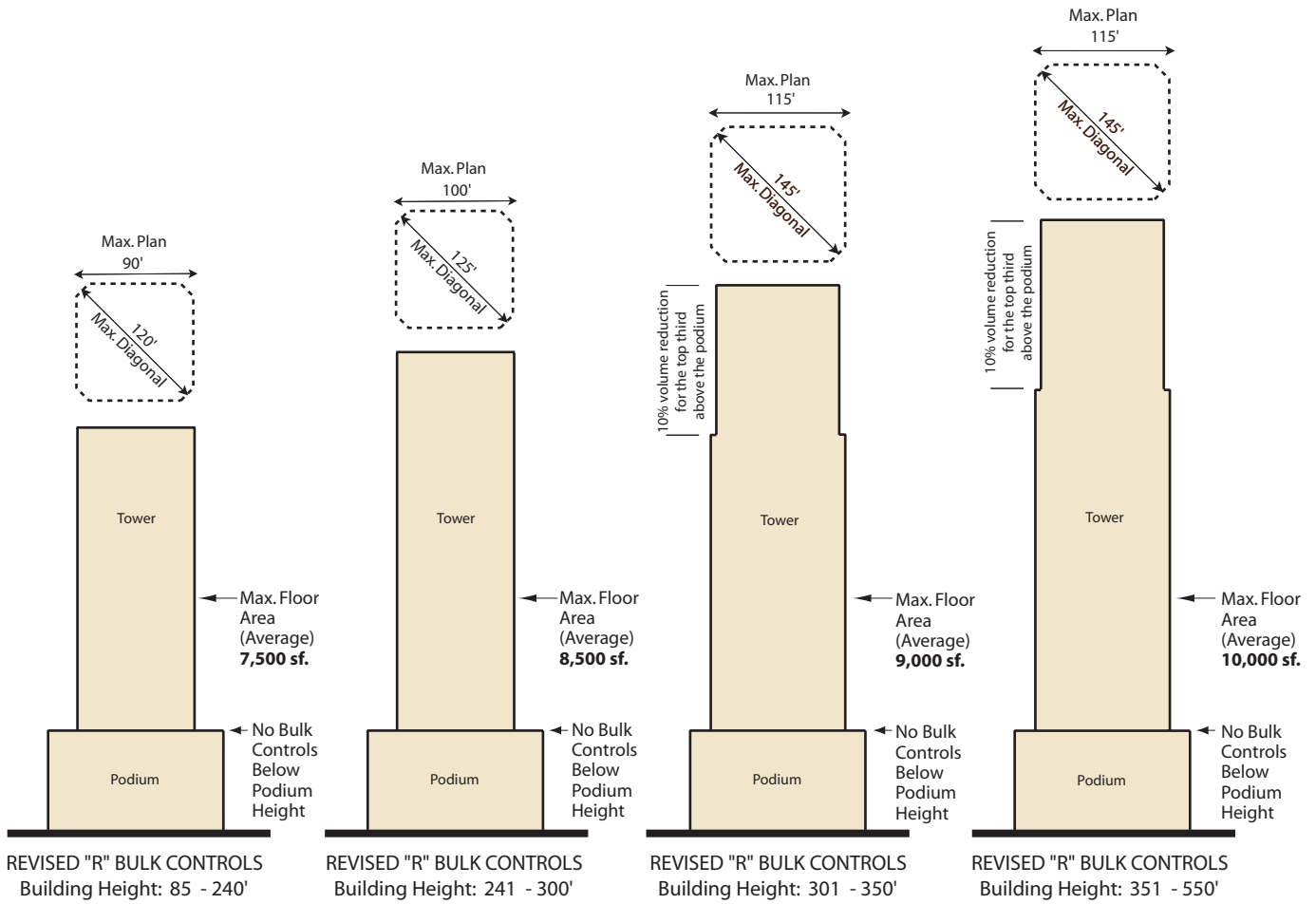
SOURCE: Draft Rincon Hill Plan, 2003; Proposed Plan Refinements, 2004; Planning Staff

Other proposed revisions to the Planning Code, applicable for all Plan options, are presented in Table 2.

**PROJECT OPTIONS**

As described above, current controls for Rincon Hill contain standards for a minimum tower separation of 150 feet and a maximum floor size of 7,500 square feet above a base height of 105 feet. However, current controls also contain provisions for exceptions to be granted to all bulk and separation standards based on criteria in Planning Code Section 271. The exceptions have been granted such that buildings built in the district are generally much bulkier and closer together than envisioned under the existing plan. Therefore, the Planning Department is proposing a new set of controls that would produce an urban form of slender, well-spaced towers that balances street-level neighborhood livability and the creation of a high-density downtown neighborhood. The Department’s analysis has evaluated realistic minimum floor sizes for towers of all heights and established a minimum separation of towers necessary to accommodate taller towers (which are necessarily bulkier) while preserving access to the sky and sunlight from street level and an airy skyline that allows public views to permeate the district.

Each option produces a different mix of unit types (tower units versus podium units) and provides a different character for the district. According to the Draft Plan, “Fewer towers translate to more opportunities to create street-level townhouses that engage the street and create a more fine-grained



SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 6**  
Proposed Bulk Controls



**TABLE 2  
COMPARISON BETWEEN EXISTING USE DISTRICT CONTROLS AND PROPOSED USE DISTRICT CONTROLS**

| Zoning Category   | EXISTING  |   | EXISTING; TO REMAIN <sup>1</sup>   | PROPOSED <sup>2</sup>   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|   | Rincon Hill SUD / Residential (RC-4)  | Rincon Hill SUD / Commercial-Industrial (M-1) | Rincon Hill SUD / Residential-Commercial (RC-4)  | Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use (DTR) District   |
| Height Limit  | Varies from 84 to 250 feet (see Fig. 4)                                     | Varies from 84 to 200 feet (see Fig. 4)       | Varies from 300 to 400 feet (see Fig. 4)   | See Table 1   |
| Bulk Limit (above base)   | See Table 1   | See Table 1                                   | ≤300 ft.: max. width–100 ft; diag.–125 ft.<br>>300 ft.: max. width–115 ft; diag.–145 ft. | See Table 1   |
| Rear Yard (§249.1)  | 80% site coverage   | 80% site coverage                             | 100% site coverage   | 100% site coverage, except 80% site coverage on parcels 80' deep or less  |
| Front Setback -- Upper Story (§249.1)   | 25 ft. for 50% of frontage  | None  | 12.5 ft. for 50% of Folsom Street frontage   | 15-ft. setback above 65 ft., except 20-ft. setback above 45 ft. on Guy and Lansing. Also, sun access must be preserved for 58% of block face on Folsom and west side of north-south streets |
| Off-Street Parking, Residential (spaces) (§150, 151, 153-7, 159-60, 204.5, 249.1) | 1 per dwelling unit   | 1 per dwelling unit                           | 1 per dwelling unit  | No minimum; maximum 1 per unit, of which ½ may be independently accessible; must be below grade.  |
| Off-Street Parking, Cmrc./Industrial (§150, 151, 153-7, 159-60), 204.5, 249.1)    | 1 space per 1,500 sf  | 1 space per 1,000 sf                          | 1 space per 500 sf (retail) [1/1,500 >60,000 sf]; 1 space per 1,000 sf (other)           | Office: max. 7 percent of floor area; Retail: none permitted for <5,000 sf; up to 1/1,500 sf. above 5,000 sq. ft. Other: Maximum = existing minimums.                                       |
| Residential Density, Dwelling Units (§249.1)                                      | No limit  | 1 unit per 200 sq. ft. lot area               | No limit   | No limit  |
| Usable Open Space ( <i>Per Resid. Unit</i> ) (§135, 249.1)                        | 1 sf per 13 sf gross floor area of dwellings                                | 36 sf if private, 48 sf if common             | 36 sf if private, 48 sf if common (§249.1(e)(3)(A))                                      | 75 sf per unit; up to half may be off-site, publicly accessible space   |
| Public Open Space ( <i>Non-residential uses</i> ) (§249.1)                        | Not Required  | 1 sf per 50 gross sf (§249.1(d)(1))           | 1 sf per 50 gross sf (§249.1(e)(3)(B))   | 1 sf per 50 gross sf  |
| Residential - Commercial ratio (§249.1)   | 6:1   | n/a   | 6:1, except for additions of less than 20% of floor area                                 | 6:1   |
| Separation of tower requirements (§249.1)   | 150 ft. for buildings over 105 ft. tall (subject to exceptions in Sec. 271) | Not applicable                                | 82.5 ft. for buildings over 85 ft. tall  | 115 feet, 82.5 feet, or 150 feet, depending on option   |
| Floor Area Ratio (§124)   | None  | 5:1, no premiums                              | 0.75 in new buildings or additions; 5:1 otherwise (not applicable to dwellings)          | None  |

Section numbers (§) refer to the Planning Code.

<sup>1</sup> Applies to Block 3745, Lots 1 and 8, and northern portion of Block 3746 (201 Folsom and 300 Spear project sites).

<sup>2</sup> Applies to all options in all Plan areas except those defined in Note 1, except that height and bulk limits apply only to Preferred Option and 82.5-foot Option.

SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department, March 2004

neighborhood”; that is, fewer towers could result in more visual interest for pedestrians by allowing for individual residential entrances than would otherwise be the case with a single entrance to a large residential tower. Additionally, podium units are less expensive to build, and hence translate to potentially greater affordability within the district. This is a trade-off with absolute quantity of units, which is greater under scenarios with more of an emphasis on towers. Yet each option would produce a

- different quality of neighborhood and city form. According to the Draft Plan, The Preferred Option “balances the quality of the public realm and cityscape with an increase in housing production,” in line with established General Plan policy for the area.

Each of the options includes several projects in the Plan area that are approved but not yet under construction and that, assuming they are built as approved, will bring five new residential towers to the Plan area as part of three approved projects. These projects are:

- 300 Spear Street—two residential towers, one 400 feet (40 stories) tall and the other 350 feet (35 stories) tall, over a podium<sup>14</sup> on the northern half of the block bounded by Folsom, Spear, Harrison, and Main Streets, with approximately 820 units and ground-floor retail space.
- 201 Folsom Street—two residential towers, one 400 feet (40 stories) tall and the other 350 feet (35 stories) tall, over a podium on the northern half of the block bounded by Folsom, Main, Harrison, and Beale Streets, with approximately 725 units and ground-floor retail space.
- 325 Fremont Street—a single 200-foot (21 stories) residential tower with about 50 units. Currently, there is an application on file that, if approved, would increase the number of units to about 70.

Also included in all options are two projects currently under construction and therefore not occupied as of the publication of the Draft Plan in late 2003:

- 333 First Street (The Metropolitan; originally 301 First Street)—two residential towers, one 250 feet (26 stories) tall and the other 200 feet (21 stories) tall, over a podium on the east side of First street at Folsom Street, with approximately 345 units.<sup>15</sup>
- 40-50 Lansing Street, a mid-rise (85-foot tall) residential building with about 80 units between Guy Place and Lansing Street, west of First Street.

Each option further assumes mid-rise residential construction up to 85 feet in height, the same height allowed for tower podiums, on sites where towers would not be permitted as a result of the separation of

- towers requirement; one such project would be at 333 Fremont Street (Case No. 2002.1263), where environmental review is under way for an approximately 90-unit project.

Finally, under each option, neighborhood-serving retail uses are anticipated to be developed in ground-floor space, particularly on Folsom Street, which is designated as the commercial center of both the Rincon Hill and adjacent Transbay neighborhoods in plans for both areas. Up to about 65,000 square feet of retail space is anticipated. Almost half of this space is anticipated to be devoted to a grocery store in

<sup>14</sup> In each case, the tower height is the height above grade, including the portion of the proposed building that is within the 85-foot-tall podium.

<sup>15</sup> The Metropolitan has been completed since the Draft Plan was published in late 2003. However, the project was not occupied when environmental review of the Draft Plan was undertaken.

- the recently approved project at 300 Spear Street. In addition, a small amount of new office space could be accommodated, provided the required residential-to-commercial ratio is met.

The Draft Plan anticipates that more than half of the existing commercial uses in the Plan area, including service businesses such as auto repair, a few light industrial uses, and some office space, would be displaced by new residential development.

Although the proposed controls would permit up to one square foot of non-residential (retail or office) development for every six square feet of residential floor area—a provision proposed to be carried over from the existing controls in the Rincon Hill Special Use District, Residential Subdistrict—none of the Plan options analyzed in this EIR assumes this level of commercial development. Instead, with the exception of ground-floor, primarily retail, commercial space described above, each Plan option assumes that the remaining space in buildings to be constructed within the Plan area would be devoted entirely to residential use. This assumption is based upon the fact that buildings completed in the Plan area in recent years, as well as development proposals currently on file with the Planning Department<sup>16</sup> and recently approved by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors have been entirely residential, or nearly so. Furthermore, economic analysis completed in support of the adjacent proposed Transbay Redevelopment Plan indicates that, while demand for residential units is anticipated to remain strong for the next 20 years, demand for office space (the only other potentially viable upper-story use) is not likely to pick up until at least 2010.<sup>17</sup>

If the Rincon Hill Plan is approved, should one or more development projects be proposed in the Plan area in the future that is inconsistent with the proposed Plan’s residential focus, such project(s) could be subject to further CEQA review.

***PREFERRED OPTION: 115-FOOT TOWER SEPARATION***

The Department’s Preferred Option for the Rincon Hill Plan assumes a 115-foot tower separation and a maximum of three towers per block. This would allow for four towers to be newly permitted, in addition to the two just completed at 333 First Street and the five already approved. The Preferred Option would allow greater tower heights at the top of the hill (near Harrison and First Streets) than under current zoning, to increase housing potential, and to accentuate the topography of Rincon Hill on the skyline, differentiating its form from the downtown core.

- Subsequent to publication of the DEIR, Planning Department staff recommended that the Preferred Option be revised to allow one additional tower up to 400 feet in height on the site of two currently proposed smaller towers, 375 Fremont Street and 399 Fremont Street. The potential ramifications of this revision are discussed in Chapter VIII, Comments and Responses, beginning on p. C&R-5.

<sup>16</sup> Includes proposed residential towers at 425 First Street (Case No. 2003.0029); 375 Fremont Street (Case No. 2002.0449); 399 Fremont Street (Case No. 2003.0169); 45 Lansing Street (Case No. 2004.0481); and 340–350 Fremont Street (Case No. 2004.0552).

<sup>17</sup> San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and San Francisco Planning Department, *Transbay Redevelopment Area Design for Development*, Appendix 2. October 2003.

Projects under review that would be accommodated under this option (with their Planning Department case numbers indicated in parentheses where applicable<sup>18</sup>), in addition to the five approved projects, are:

- 425 First Street (Case No. 2003.0029)—two residential towers, one of 450 feet and one 550 feet tall, over a four-story podium at the southeast corner of First and Harrison Streets. The 450-foot tower would be on Harrison Street at the location of an existing surface parking lot and the 550-foot tower would be on First Street at approximately the location of the existing Bank of America (former Union Oil) office building and Clock Tower. The existing building and Bank of America Clock Tower would be demolished to make way for this approximately 830-unit project.<sup>19</sup>
- 45 Lansing Street (Case No. 2004.0481)—approximately 400-foot residential tower over podium (north side of Harrison Street east of First); about 320 units.<sup>20</sup>
- 340-350 Fremont Street (Case No. 2004.0552)—approximately 400-foot-tall residential tower over podium on the west side of Fremont Street just north of Harrison Street; about 340 units.<sup>21</sup>

As analyzed in the EIR, this option differs from that presented in the November 2003 version of the Draft Rincon Hill Plan in that the Planning Department has determined that only one tower should be built along Harrison Street west of First Street (to the south of the Guy-Lansing enclave) and, because the 45 Lansing Street project on file with the Department, a project at that location is assumed in lieu of a building at the northwest corner of First and Harrison Streets (currently a service station) and in lieu of a tower on the south side of Harrison Street. (The 45 Lansing project is consistent with the required tower separation under this option.) Finally, under this scenario the Department would no longer support a 150-foot tower on Folsom Street just west of First Street.

This option could accommodate all projects for which an application is on file with the Planning Department and that could be built with a tower separation of at least 115 feet.

**82.5-FOOT TOWER SEPARATION**

This option includes all projects for which an application is on file with the Planning Department and that could be built with a tower separation of at least 82.5 feet, and extends to other sites where towers could be built to the same heights as the Preferred Option and with a minimum of 82.5-foot tower separation. This option thus shows the five approved but not yet built towers, and seven additional new towers on “soft sites” (sites where future development appears likely because the sites are currently developed at a low density), in addition to the two just completed at 333 First Street.

<sup>18</sup> Not all projects on file with the Planning Department are included in this option, as some proposed projects would not be permitted due to tower separation requirements of this option.

<sup>19</sup> This is a modified version of the project currently on file with the Department, which would include about 60 fewer units, because the controls would allow more bulk than has been proposed to date.

<sup>20</sup> This is a modified version of the project currently on file with the Department, which would have a more slender tower and about 45 fewer units.

● <sup>21</sup> [Footnote deleted]

This option is intended to illustrate the maximum potential development that could occur should heights as proposed with the Preferred Option be adopted with minimum tower separation controls of 82.5 feet, the width of streets in the district, and the tower separation approved in February 2004 for the projects at 300 Spear Street and 201 Folsom Street.

Based on community input, Planning Department staff believes this option does not provide for adequate spacing between towers, particularly on Fremont Street, and does not preserve adequate sky exposure or sunlight to streets. Under this option, five towers would be developed on Fremont Street between Folsom Street and the south side of Harrison Street.

Projects under review that would be accommodated under this option (with their Planning Department case numbers indicated in parentheses where applicable<sup>22</sup>), in addition to the five approved projects, are:

- 425 First Street (Case No. 2003.0029)—named One Rincon Hill by the developer, this project consists of two residential towers, one of 450 feet and one 550 feet tall, over a podium at the southeast corner of First and Harrison Streets. The 450-foot tower would be on Harrison Street at the location of an existing surface parking lot and the 550-foot tower would be on First Street at approximately the location of the existing Bank of America (former Union Oil) office building and Clock Tower. The existing building and clock tower would be demolished to make way for this approximately 770-unit project.
- 375 Fremont Street (Case No. 2002.0449)—approximately 300-foot residential tower over podium (east side of Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets); about 250 units; or 399 Fremont Street (Case No. 2003.0169)—approximately 350-foot<sup>23</sup> residential tower over podium (also on the east side of Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets); about 300 units. Although both of these two tower proposals have applications on file, they could not both be built and retain the 82.5 foot tower separation from the existing Avalon Towers residential building on Beale Street at Harrison Street, nor from each other. Hence, with this option, only one tower is shown on the east side of the block (at 300 feet in height).
- 340–350 Fremont Street (Case No. 2004.0552)—approximately 400-foot residential tower over podium with about 350 dwelling units (west side of Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets), if the minimum lot size of 1.75 times the tower size can be achieved. This tower is shown further north along the west side of Fremont Street than is currently proposed because it would be possible to build two towers on the west side of Fremont Street and still maintain a 82.5 foot tower separation from each other and from the existing Metropolitan towers (333 First Street).
- 45 Lansing Street (Case No. 2004.0481)—approximately 400-foot residential tower over podium (north side of Harrison Street east of First Street); about 275 dwelling units.
- A 400-foot residential tower over podium at the northwest corner of Fremont and Harrison Streets; about 320 dwelling units.
- A 400-foot residential tower over podium on the south side of Harrison Streets between First and Essex Streets; about 230 dwelling units.

<sup>22</sup> Not all projects on file with the Planning Department are included in this option, as some proposed projects would not be permitted due to tower separation requirements of this option.

<sup>23</sup> This represents an earlier proposal for 399 Fremont Street; the current project on file would be 250 feet tall.

No applications have been filed for development of the last two buildings; these are included to illustrate what could reasonably be anticipated should the proposed new height limits be adopted with a 82.5-foot tower separation. Dwelling unit counts as assumed by Planning staff are based on building size.

This option was not presented in the November 2003 version of the Draft Rincon Hill Plan, although the Draft Plan did include a “Pipeline” option (i.e., projects under review, in the so-called development “pipeline”) that was discussed at length during community workshops from November to March 2004. This Pipeline option is discussed in Section F. of this Chapter as an option considered and withdrawn, as is an 82.5-foot tower separation option presented in the Draft Plan that included an earlier range of height limits, proposed in March 2003. The 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option differs from the November 2003 Draft Plan’s Pipeline option in that the project at 425 First Street is analyzed as currently proposed by the sponsor of the project (one tower on Harrison Street and one tower on First Street south of Harrison Street as compared with the November 2003 Draft Plan’s illustration of both towers on Harrison Street, which represented a previous version of that project); the proposed project at 340–350 Fremont is included because the Department has an application on file; and the last two towers in the list above were not included in the November 2003 Draft Plan’s Pipeline option. Finally, under this option no new residential tower is assumed at the northeast corner of First and Harrison Streets (Sailor’s Union of the Pacific site).

The 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option differs from the earlier 82.5-foot option in the November 2003 Draft Plan (based on the March 2003 proposed heights) principally in that the March 2003 heights would have permitted buildings less tall than those in this Option, which is based on the currently proposed height limits. The March 2003 heights would have permitted two towers at the 425 First Street site, but both would have been on Harrison Street, whereas the current design of that project shows one tower on Harrison and one on First Street south of Harrison. In the current version of the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option, the 45 Lansing Street project on file with the Department is assumed in lieu of a building at the northwest corner of First and Harrison Streets (currently a Union 76 service station) because the 45 Lansing project is consistent with the required tower separation under this option; a single tower is identified on the east side of Fremont Street near Harrison Street because two towers would not meet the 82.5-foot separation from one another; and the approved 325 Fremont Street project is assumed instead of a taller building at the corner of Fremont and Folsom Streets. Finally, under the current option the Department would no longer support a 150-foot tower on Folsom Street just west of First Street.

### ***EXISTING CONTROLS (150-FOOT MINIMUM TOWER SEPARATION)***

This option is based on tower spacing that matches existing controls of 150 feet (which also corresponds to approximately the diagonal dimension of towers), and assumes that the existing controls would be enforced and that the Planning Code would be modified to prohibit the granting of exceptions to permit more closely spaced towers, as is currently permitted by Code Section 271. This is the only option that would not include increased height limits. It would reduce the number of new towers that could be newly permitted to three, as only one tower would be possible on the 425 First Street (Bank of America/Union

Oil Clock Tower) site and around the intersection of Fremont and Harrison Streets due to the required separation. One tower would be permitted on Harrison Street west of First Street, at the site of an existing gas station, for a total of eight towers (including the five already approved), in addition to the two just completed at 333 First Street.

Residential towers included in this scenario include, in addition to the five approved projects,<sup>24</sup> are:

- A 200-foot residential tower over podium at the southeast corner of First and Harrison Streets (Bank of America Clock Tower site); about 280 units
- A 200-foot residential tower over podium at the northwest corner of First and Harrison Streets (the site of an existing Union 76 gas station); about 195 units.
- A 250-foot residential tower over podium at the northwest corner of Fremont and Harrison Streets; about 190 units.

No projects currently under review by the Planning Department would be accommodated under this option in the form in which they are currently configured.

As analyzed in the EIR, this option differs from the 150-foot tower separation option presented in the November 2003 version of the Draft Rincon Hill Plan in that existing height limits would be retained and therefore all of the proposed towers would be shorter than identified in the Draft Plan. Retention of the existing height limits would also mean that only one tower could be built along Harrison Street west of First Street (to the south of the Guy-Lansing enclave). Also, the approved 325 Fremont Street project is assumed instead of a taller building at the corner of Fremont and Folsom Streets. Finally, under this scenario no tower would be permitted on Folsom Street west of First Street under the existing height limit of 84 feet.

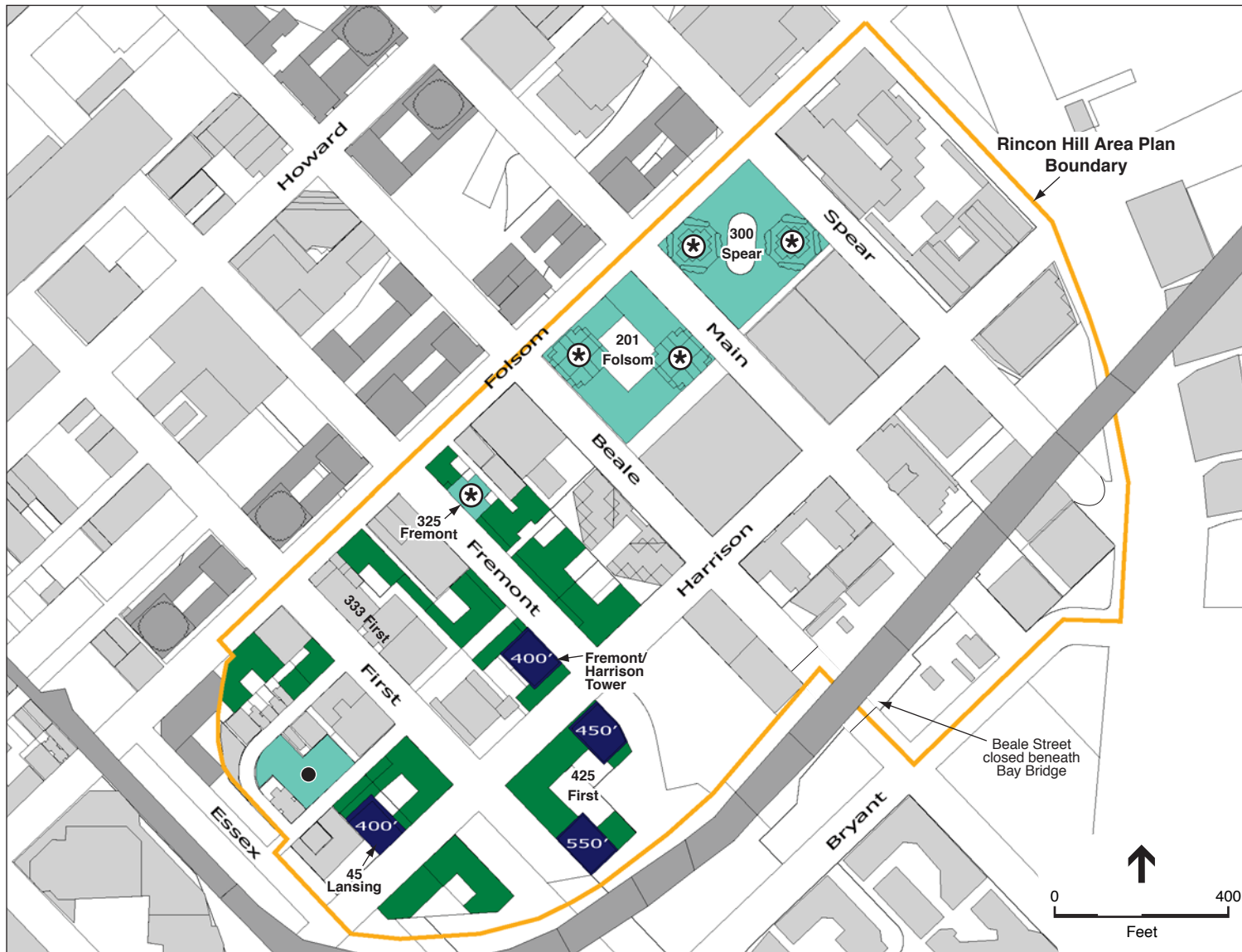
According to the Planning Department, “While several new residential buildings have been built under the [existing controls], these controls have proven difficult to implement and have failed to achieve the key elements of the Rincon Hill Area Plan. Lacking a clear vision for the district’s overall improvement, its character remains industrial, with wide, heavily trafficked streets. The district still lacks basic amenities for residential living—safe and walkable streets and crossings, open spaces, and shops and services to service a growing population.”<sup>25</sup>

Figures 7 through 9 map the three options.

---

<sup>24</sup> No projects currently on file with the Planning Department are included in this option, as both the existing height limit and tower separation requirements of this option would preclude these projects.

<sup>25</sup> “Rincon Hill Plan—Draft for Public Discussion,” November 2003; p. 4.



400' Residential Tower in Plan    
 ■ Podium-level (85') Residential in Plan    
 \* Approved Residential Tower    
 ● Approved 85-Foot Residential

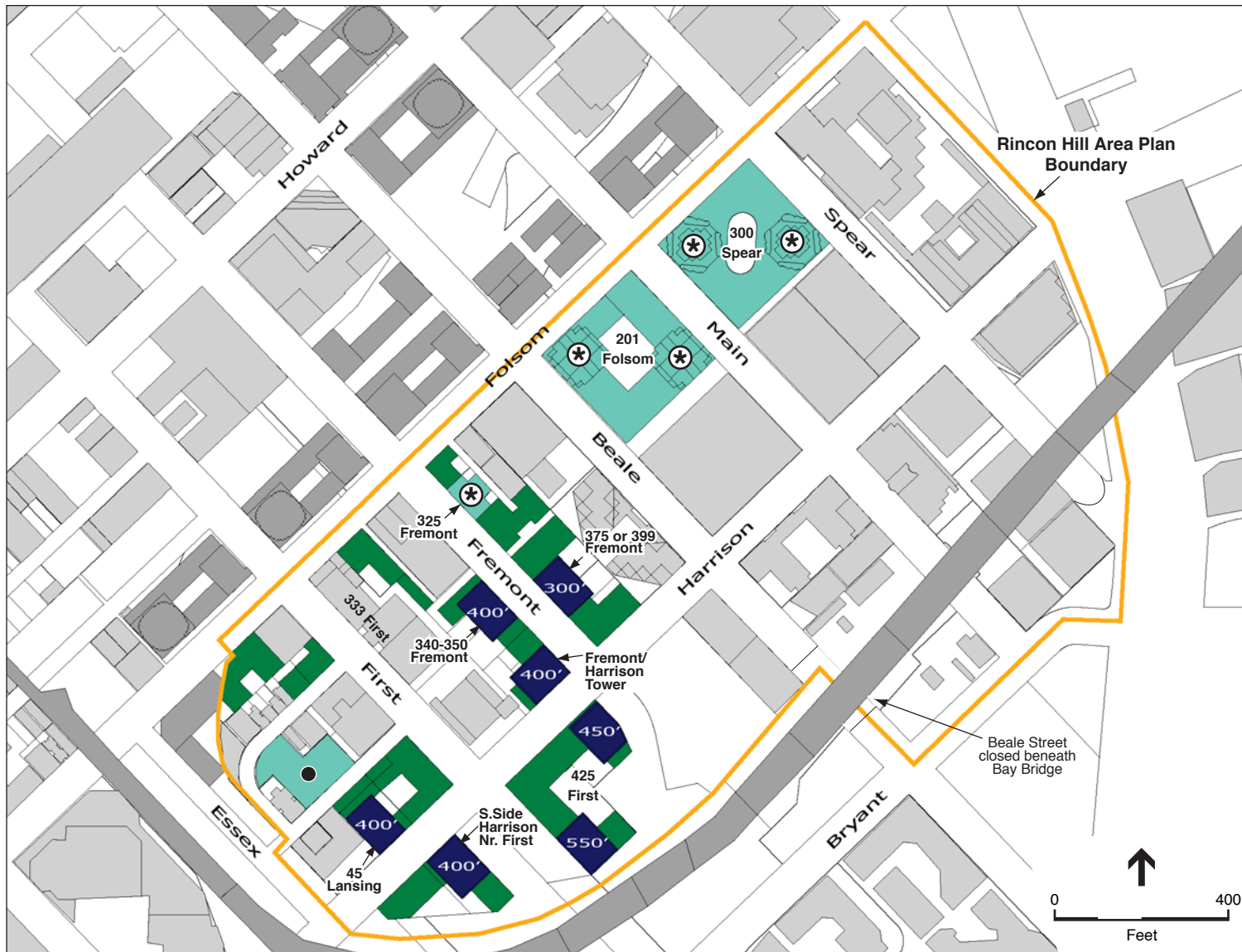
NOTE: Tower locations shown assume ability to achieve minimum lot size of 1.75 times tower floorplate.

SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 7 (Revised)**  
 Preferred Option  
 (115-Foot Tower Separation)





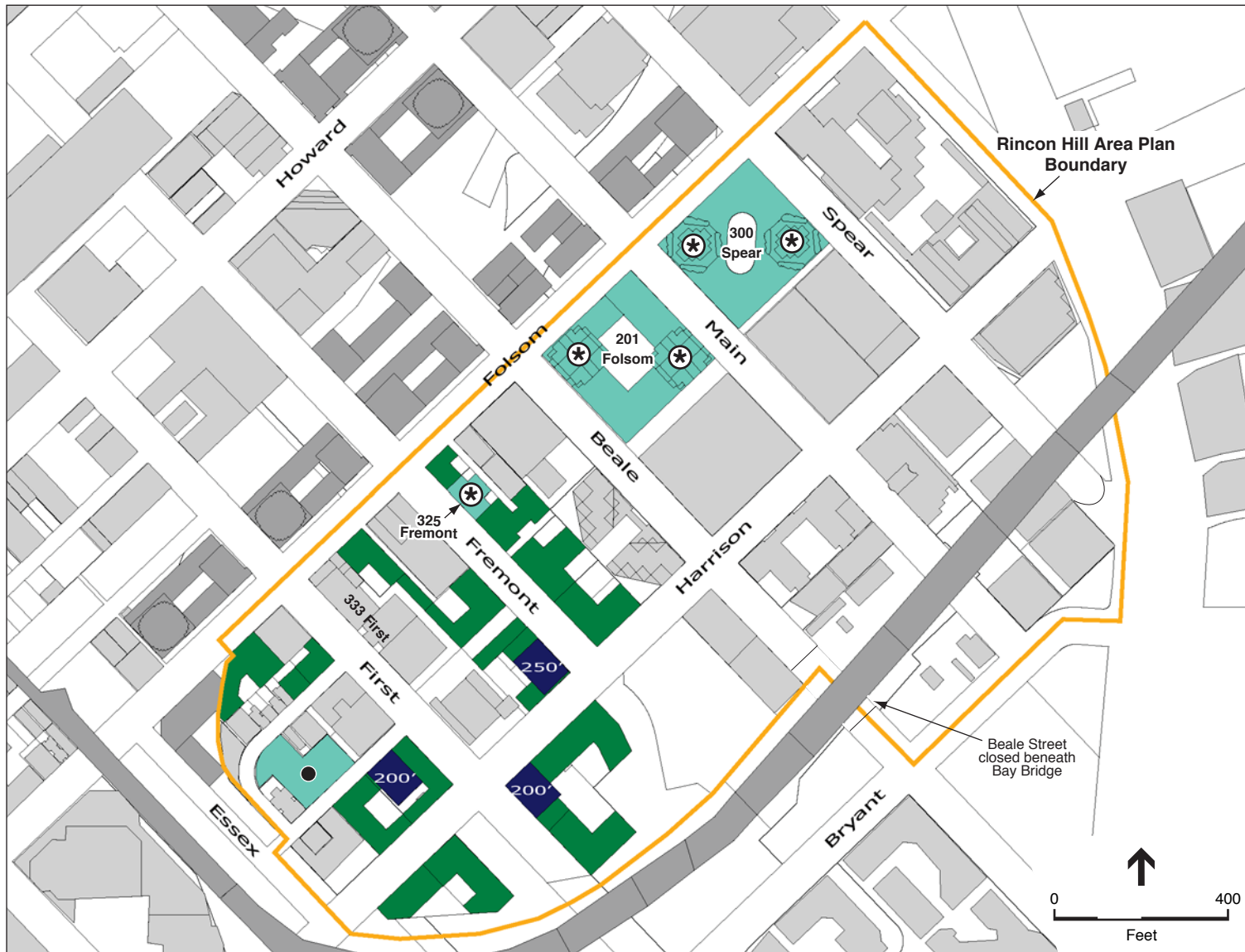
400' Residential Tower in Plan    
   Podium-level (85') Residential in Plan    
 \* Approved Residential Tower    
 ● Approved 85-Foot Residential

NOTE: Tower locations shown assume ability to achieve minimum lot size of 1.75 times tower floorplate.

SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 8 (Revised)**  
82.5-Foot Tower Separation Option



400' Residential Tower in Plan    
 ■ Podium-level (85') Residential in Plan    
 ⊛ Approved Residential Tower    
 ● Approved 85-Foot Residential

NOTE: Tower locations shown assume ability to achieve minimum lot size of 1.75 times tower floorplate.

SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 9 (Revised)**  
 Existing Controls  
 (150-Foot Tower Separation) Option

## HOUSING

The Preferred Option for the Rincon Hill Plan would create the potential for about 2,200 new residential units in the Plan area, adding to the approximately 1,565 units already existing or under construction<sup>26</sup> in Rincon Hill and the 1,595 units approved but not yet under construction.<sup>27</sup> Assuming all approved units are built, the Preferred Option would increase the number of units in the Plan area to a total of about 5,350 units. The other two options would allow for between about 1,650 and 2,850 new units, and a total of between 4,800 and 6,000 units. The amount of development that could be realized under each of the Plan options is presented in Table 3. These assumptions drive various aspects of the analysis in this EIR.

The Rincon Hill Plan seeks to create a mixed-income neighborhood, with a variety of housing unit sizes and types to support a variety of family types. Existing city policy requires that, for developments of 10 units or more that require Conditional Use authorization, at least 12 percent of on-site units be affordable (to households with annual income at or below the area median), or that the equivalent of 17 percent affordable units be constructed off-site (requirements are 10 percent and 15 percent if no Conditional Use authorization is required). Because Rincon Hill at present has little residential presence and few affordable units, in order to create a truly mixed-income neighborhood with housing opportunities for families, seniors and others, this plan would require that all projects of 10 units or more comply with the 12 percent/17 percent affordable housing requirement, regardless of whether Conditional Use authorization is required. The Rincon Hill Plan would also require that a specified additional percentage of residential units be affordable to households with up to 120 percent of area median income to be built in the Plan area; this additional requirement would be developed based on an economic model that would assess the economic value added to land in Rincon Hill as a result of the increased density to be allowed by the Plan.<sup>28</sup>

The Draft Plan promotes housing that could accommodate families, both by requiring that 40 percent of all residential units (other than 100-percent affordable projects, senior/disabled housing, single-room occupancy buildings and other such specialized dwellings) be two-bedroom or larger units,<sup>29</sup> and by encouraging development of housing units located in mid-rise podium-level buildings and in street-fronting townhouses, in addition to high-rise residential units. The Plan anticipates that podium and townhouse units would “afford greater access to open spaces (both private and public) and to the life of the street, making them appropriate for families with children”; podium and townhouse units also could be less expensive than high-rise units, according to the Draft Plan, in that “they are cheaper to construct than tower units, and do not command the price premiums of tower units with views.”<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Including 1,140 existing units, 345 units just completed at 333 First Street, and 80 units under construction at 40-50 Lansing.

<sup>27</sup> Including 820 units at 300 Spear Street, 725 units at 201 Folsom Street, and 50 units at 325 Fremont Street.

<sup>28</sup> The Draft Plan further recommends that, for publicly owned properties (mostly by Caltrans) in the Plan area, in the event that these lands are to be disposed of, the City could acquire these sites in cooperation with non-profit housing developers, thereby providing additional residential units that would be entirely affordable.

<sup>29</sup> Of this 40 percent, one-fourth of the units should have three or more bedrooms, although this is not proposed as a Plan requirement.

<sup>30</sup> The Plan nevertheless states that “affordable and family units should also be located in towers, mixed in with market-rate units.”

**TABLE 3  
RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION ANTICIPATED UNDER EACH PLAN OPTION**

| Option <sup>1</sup>                               | Towers   |                   |           | Units        |                     |              |                     |              |
|---|----------|-------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
|   | New      | Apr. <sup>2</sup> | Total     | New          | Aprvd. <sup>2</sup> | Increase     | Exist. <sup>3</sup> | Total        |
| <b>Preferred (115-ft. Separation)<sup>4</sup></b> | <b>4</b> | <b>7</b>          | <b>11</b> | <b>2,200</b> | <b>2,020</b>        | <b>4,220</b> | <b>1,140</b>        | <b>5,360</b> |
| <b>82.5-foot Tower Separation<sup>4</sup></b>     | <b>7</b> | <b>7</b>          | <b>14</b> | <b>2,845</b> | <b>2,020</b>        | <b>4,865</b> | <b>1,140</b>        | <b>6,005</b> |
| <b>150-foot Tower Separation<sup>4</sup></b>      | <b>3</b> | <b>7</b>          | <b>10</b> | <b>1,630</b> | <b>2,020</b>        | <b>3,650</b> | <b>1,140</b>        | <b>4,790</b> |

<sup>1</sup> Up to about 65,000 square feet of retail space is anticipated to be developed under each option.

<sup>2</sup> Includes 333 First Street (the Metropolitan)—two towers with 345 units—that was under construction and not occupied when the Draft Rincon Hill Plan was published in late 2003.

<sup>3</sup> As of 2000; based on Census 2000 data. The Draft Plan reports a slightly smaller total of existing units (1,106).

<sup>4</sup> Both the Preferred Option and the 82.5-foot Option would involve the same new height limits; the 150-foot Option would maintain existing height limits.

SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department, 2004; Census 2000.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Draft Plan proposes design guidelines that focus on podium-level (85-foot-tall) facades on the theory that the portions of buildings that meet the street would have the greatest influence on the pedestrian experience. The guidelines are intended to provide a consistent street wall that defines the street as a useable, comfortable space; create activity and visual interest along the ground-floor and sidewalk edge; and sculpt buildings to maintain an intimate scale related to width of the street and preserve sunlight and sky exposure in alleys and on important pedestrian streets. These design guidelines would apply to both the Preferred and 82.5-foot Tower Separation options, and it is assumed that they would apply to the Existing Controls–150-foot Tower Separation Option as well.

### *PODIUMS, MASSING, AND ARTICULATION*

For podiums, a minimum average height of 50 feet would be required in most areas to clearly define the street wall (except for required setbacks and where the maximum height is 85 feet or less). Setbacks would be required on streets where residential entries are required to allow for stoops, landscaping, and entryways. Podiums fronting on alleys and mid-block pedestrian paths would be set back above a height of 45 feet to avoid overly darkening the street front. Guidelines would also mandate certain approaches to building massing and articulation, such as a three-part composition at the podium level, with a base, middle, and top section and a strong cornice line. Facades would be articulated by division into smaller vertical sections, and elements such as bay windows and balconies would create a regular rhythm of projections and recesses.

The Guidelines call for emphasis on the verticality of towers by carrying their massing and articulation through the podium to the street and through the use of a “clean, simple palette of colors and materials”

that also would help break down the perceived massing of taller buildings. Unusual shapes that detract from the clarity of the urban form or compete for attention with buildings of greater significance are to be avoided, as are dark colored materials and glass that would conflict with the City's skyline, which is predominantly light in color. Tower tops would be encouraged to be sculpted through provision of a non-occupiable 10 percent height extension for two-thirds of the floor plate of the highest occupied floor.

### ***SUN AND WIND ON PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY***

To maintain direct sunlight on public sidewalks during critical periods of use, towers would be required to preserve a specified "sun access plane" from the top of podiums to the opposite side of the street along the south side of Folsom Street and the west side of north-south streets for no less than 58 percent of each block face. These guidelines would permit one 115-foot-wide tower on a typical 275-foot-long southern block face of Folsom Street and two 115-foot-wide towers on a typical 550-foot western block face of a north-south street.

Requirements for the reduction of ground-level wind currents currently called for in Sec. 249.1(b)(3) would be carried forward in the Rincon Hill DTR District, except that existing Zoning Administrator-granted exceptions permitting wind currents to exceed seating-area or pedestrian-area comfort levels would be limited to a doubling of the otherwise permitted wind speed. (At present, exceptions may be granted up to "the least practical amount" of an increase.)

### ***GROUND-FLOOR TREATMENTS***

The development concept for Rincon Hill provides for active uses on lower floors that would, by orienting uses and activities outward rather than inward, add life and activity to public spaces and allow residents and businesses to have a presence along the street. In combination with a streetscape plan that improves the quality of streets for pedestrian use, individual retail spaces would exist on Folsom Street, much like other neighborhood commercial streets throughout the city. Townhouse units on lower floors would have individual entries from the street, with stoops,<sup>31</sup> landscaping and raised porches. The Draft Plan requires that pedestrian-oriented retail, residential, office, and other community services occupy ground-floor spaces; that ground-floor space suitable for retail use is required for no less than 60 percent of Folsom Street frontages (and is encouraged on Harrison, First, Fremont, Beale and Main Streets on corners and within towers); and that, in general, individual ground floor residential units be provided at intervals of no more than 25 feet on Fremont, First, Main, Spear, and Stuart Streets. The Draft Plan also provides detailed design guidance for ground-floor spaces to encourage pedestrian interest.

### ***GUY-LANSING DESIGN GUIDELINES***

The interior of the block bounded by Folsom, First, Harrison, and Essex Streets has a much different character from the rest of Rincon Hill. At the heart of the block are Guy Place and Lansing Street, which

---

<sup>31</sup> The Draft Plan calls for ground-floor units with direct street access to have a means of access from an interior, disabled-accessible (per Americans with Disabilities Act standards) corridor or lobby if possible.

form a semi-circular alley-like street with its ends on First Street. These narrow 35-foot-wide streets are lined with many small lots and lower scale buildings, creating an intimate and fine-grained enclave and providing quiet and relief from the surrounding major streets. Tailored design controls and height limits are proposed to maintain an appropriate scale and sunlight to these streets.

The design guidelines for the Guy-Lansing enclave would prohibit parcel consolidation except with Conditional Use Authorization; limit lot coverage to 80 percent at all residential levels for parcels of 80 feet in depth or less; require 20-foot setbacks above 45 feet in height along Guy Place and Lansing Street; require ground-floor residential units oriented to the street on Guy and Lansing except where lobbies or parking access is provided; direct parking and loading access off of Guy and Lansing for parcels with more than one street frontage; limit occupancy of ground-floor frontage for parking and loading access to no more than 40 percent or 20 feet; and direct that down-lit pedestrian-scale street lighting be wall-mounted in lieu of free-standing street lighting.

The Draft Plan calls for streets in the Guy-Lansing enclave to be designed for pedestrians, with auto traffic limited to low-speed parking and loading access, with existing limited on-street parking maintained. The Draft Plan also recommends ensuring that local traffic in and out of Guy Place and Lansing Street not be obstructed by Bay Bridge traffic on First Street, possibly by employing raised and planted medians on First Street south of Lansing Street, along with improved signage and, if necessary, “soft-hit” flexible stanchions separating the local and bridge lanes between Folsom and Lansing Streets.

## PARKING AND LOADING

### ***PARKING***

In accordance with the City Charter’s Transit-First Policy, and given Rincon Hill’s adjacency to downtown and access to both transit and urban services, the Draft Plan seeks to retire minimum parking requirements and establish a parking maximum to encourage travel by foot, bicycle and transit, while meeting the on-site parking needs of new development and promoting creation of an active, walkable neighborhood. The following standards for parking and loading would apply to all three options analyzed in this EIR.

#### **Off-Street Parking**

- There would be no minimum off-street parking requirement for any use.
- All parking would be required to be located below street grade. For sloping sites with a grade change of greater than ten feet, no less than 60 percent of the parking would have to be below grade. Any portions not below grade would have to be lined by active uses for a minimum depth of 25 feet.
- Project sponsors would need to ensure that parking will be sold or rented separately from residential units and commercial spaces in perpetuity.

- Project sponsors would have to ensure in perpetuity that parking would only serve those uses for which it is accessory, and under no circumstances would be sold, rented or otherwise made available as commuter parking.
- Parking would not be permitted as a principal use.
- The number of accessory parking spaces permitted would be as follows:
  - Residential uses: up to one space per unit, provided that all spaces in excess of 1 space per 2 units are tandem spaces or otherwise not conventionally independently accessible.<sup>32,33</sup> For projects of more than 100 units, between two and five spaces must be made available at no cost to car-sharing or site-based car rental programs. At least one bicycle parking space must be provided for every two units.
  - Office uses: maximum of 7 percent of gross leasable area, consistent with C-3-O (downtown) zoning.
  - Retail uses: None permitted for less than 5,000 sq. ft.; up to 1 space per 1,500 sq. ft. of occupied floor area above 5,000 sq. ft.
  - All other uses: Maximums equal to existing minimums in Planning Code Section 151.

### **Off-street Loading**

There would be no minimum off-street loading requirement for any use. Off-street loading would be permitted for residential buildings and for uses with more than 10,000 square feet of commercial space. No more than four loading spaces may be provided for all uses for any one development.

### **Access to Off-Street Parking and Loading**

Parking and loading access would be limited, both in terms of the number of lanes and the width of lanes. Additionally, the Draft Plan proposes certain limitations on the use of specific streets for parking and loading access; in particular, to minimize interruptions on the planned pedestrian-friendly frontage of Folsom Street, parking could not be accessed from Folsom Street for lots with frontage on another street.

## **IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PUBLIC REALM**

A comprehensive streetscape and open space plan is proposed for Rincon Hill under all options analyzed in this EIR. This plan calls for sidewalk widenings, tree plantings, street furniture and the creation of new public spaces along streets throughout the district, intended to create an inviting and vibrant public realm in Rincon Hill that meets the needs of a diverse range of new residents, including families with children. The streetscape plan was developed to support and encourage new development, especially ground floor uses and activities, to take full advantage of the public space that the street provides. Under the Draft

<sup>32</sup> Individual parking spaces would not be required to be independently accessible and could be smaller than required under current Planning Code requirements. Techniques that increase parking efficiency would be encouraged, including the use of valets and mechanical parking stackers.

<sup>33</sup> Upon initiation of the following or equivalent transit services, permitted accessory parking for residential uses is proposed to be reduced to a maximum of 1 space for every 2 units: (1) Bus or rail service in the Folsom/Harrison Street corridor with vehicle headways under 10 minutes throughout the day; (2) Geary corridor subway service with a station on Folsom Street between Second and Fremont Streets.

Plan, new development would be required to implement portions of the streetscape plan as a condition of approval, with potential additional funding from a neighborhood benefit district for both the streetscape plan and for parks and open space and other public amenities.

### ***PARKS AND OPEN SPACE***

The following open space provisions would apply:

- Seventy-five square feet of usable open space would be required for every dwelling unit. At least 40 percent of this open space would be required to be common and publicly accessible at, or nearly at, street grade.
- One square foot of public open space would be required per 50 square feet of non-residential uses.
- Publicly accessible open space off-site could be counted toward up to 50 percent of the open space requirements, provided the space meets certain standards for sunlight access and relief from excessive wind.
- Open space funds collected as part of an assessment district, Mello Roos district, or other means would be directed to purchasing and improving as public open space the parcel adjacent to the Fremont Street off-ramp at Harrison Street, and the implementation of the sidewalk treatments along Plan area streets.
- Additional open space would be created along Essex Street, including the hillside and useable space at the top of the hill along Guy Place and Lansing Street. Essex Street should receive similar treatment to the district's other proposed "living streets" (see below), with a widened and landscaped east sidewalk and pocket parks, as per the Transbay Redevelopment Plan. Removal of a northbound lane and the median could allow for an up to 35-foot-wide linear open space at the foot of the hillside.

### ***MID-BLOCK PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS***

The blocks between Folsom and Harrison Street, from Steuart to First Streets, are proposed in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan to have mid-block pedestrian pathways. An expansive walkway exists on the easternmost such block, through Hills Plaza, and such pathways were required as part of the recently approved projects on Folsom Street between Spear and Beale Streets. The Draft Plan calls for a continuation of these mid-block walkways between Folsom and Harrison from First to Beale Streets, and also between Harrison and Bryant Streets, from Beale to Spear. The Draft Plan proposes that specific criteria be established for the accessibility and design of these pathways, including a minimum clear width for pedestrian travel, adjacent uses, lighting, and that there be no changes in grade other than those necessitated by natural topography.

### ***STREET CHANGES***

The Draft Plan calls for a number of changes in the configuration of streets within the Plan area to shift the street environment from one built almost entirely around vehicular movement to one that is more accessible and accommodating to pedestrians. At the same time, the Plan recognizes that key streets in the Plan area, particularly First and Fremont Streets, will continue to serve as feeder streets to and from the Bay Bridge.



- **First Street:** Between Folsom and Harrison Streets, retain all four lanes, but narrow the easternmost lane by up to 5 feet and widen the adjacent sidewalk. Build raised landscaped medians south of Lansing Street, where there are currently striped medians, to prevent drivers from jumping center-lane bridge queues by using side lanes meant for local access.
- **Fremont Street:** Between Folsom and Harrison Streets, eliminate one southbound lane, for a resulting configuration of one southbound and two northbound lanes; widen the east sidewalk 8 to 10 feet.
- **Harrison Street:** Narrow the eastbound lane from 18 to 12 feet, and add space to the north sidewalk. Add “soft-hit” stanchions between the two northernmost lanes to prevent drivers from jumping center-lane bridge queues by using side lanes meant for local access. At the Harrison Street intersections with First and Fremont Streets, align through-traffic movements by reconfiguring the eastbound turn from the Fremont Street off-ramp and narrowing the eastbound lane. A peak-hour bus lane would be created on westbound Harrison Street between the Embarcadero and First Street by instituting a p.m. peak-hour tow-away zone and widening the existing westbound parking lane.
- **Folsom Street:** Lined with neighborhood-serving retail, restaurants, and services, Folsom Street is intended to be the commercial heart of the Transbay and Rincon Hill neighborhoods, and the civic and transportation spine linking the neighborhood to the rest of the South of Market and the waterfront. A legislated fifteen-foot setback on the north side of the street (currently lined mostly with vacant public parcels to be redeveloped as part of the Transbay Development plan) would enable Folsom Street to be redesigned as a grand civic street. The existing westbound lane would be extended from Main to Fremont Street. Consistent with the Redevelopment Agency’s Transbay Draft Design For Development, implement one of two “Folsom Boulevard” alternatives, both of which would include three eastbound traffic lanes and one westbound lane, compared to four eastbound lanes at present. The “partial boulevard” alternative would create a landscaped median to define a pedestrian realm that includes the westbound lane on the north side of the street; the north sidewalk would be about 18 feet wide and the south sidewalk unchanged at 10 feet in width. The other alternative would feature no medians, but would widen both sidewalks to about 18 feet. (Both sidewalks are currently 10 feet in width.) It is noted that the ultimate configuration of Folsom Street will be subject to longer-term examination of traffic and transit throughout the entire South of Market area.
- **Main, Beale, and Spear Streets:** Between Folsom and Bryant Streets (except Spear, between Folsom and Harrison only) convert each of these one-way streets to two-way operation, with one travel lane in each direction (Beale and Main are currently two-way streets south of Folsom Street). Apply a “living streets” treatment whereby streets are prioritized for pedestrian activity and open space over auto needs. Elements would include a reduction in space for auto traffic, with two 11-foot travel lanes and a parking lane on either side, sidewalks widened to 32 feet on one side (generally the east side) of the street, to allow for pedestrian circulation, double rows of street trees and pocket open spaces, front yard setbacks, and active uses (such as living rooms or dining rooms) facing the street. Beale Street, currently closed to traffic beneath the Bay Bridge as a security measure, could be reopened to traffic if permitted by Caltrans; alternatively, Beale Street could be opened only to pedestrian and bike access and remain closed to vehicles. Right-turn pockets would be provided at the intersections of Main/Folsom, Main/Harrison, Main/Bryant, Beale/Folsom, and Spear/Harrison Streets (northbound Beale at Folsom, northbound Main at Folsom, southbound Main at Harrison, northbound Main at Harrison, southbound Main at Bryant, and southbound Spear at Harrison), and an additional peak-hour southbound (tow-away) lane would be provided on Main Street from Folsom to Harrison.
- **Guy Place and Lansing Street:** As described above under “Guy-Lansing Design Guidelines,” p. 27, these two streets would be converted to pedestrian-priority streets, but no change is proposed to the number of lanes or allowable auto access.

**TRANSIT**

The Draft Plan encourages walking as the primary way that people living in Rincon Hill and Transbay will move about due to the proximity to downtown, regional transit hubs at the Transbay Terminal, Muni Metro and BART below Market Street, and the Ferry Building, and the anticipated development of a neighborhood retail center focused on Folsom Street. However, the Plan also recognizes that there is limited transit service between the Rincon Hill/Transbay neighborhood and the rest of San Francisco, and

therefore recommends evaluation of a series of potential Muni improvements achievable in the short term to link the Plan area with the remainder of the City. These include potentially extending the #1 California and/or #41 Union bus lines one block south to turn around on Folsom Street instead of Howard Street, or on Bryant Street if Beale Street can be opened to buses under the Bay Bridge; increasing service on #12 Folsom and #10 Townsend bus lines; and creating owl (late night) service to the area, possibly along Folsom Street. No funding has been identified for Muni to implement these service extensions. Additional longer-term transit improvements could be implemented following completion of an areawide study of the entire South of Market area.

### ***COMMUNITY FACILITIES***

Neither the Rincon Hill Plan area nor the adjacent Transbay area currently has any substantial community facilities. The Draft Plan proposes that the Sailors' Union of the Pacific building at the northeast corner of First and Harrison Streets be rehabilitated for reuse, in part, as a Community Center. The Plan calls for a portion of funds collected as part of a neighborhood assessment district to be earmarked for the rehabilitation of the Sailor's Union building, and the creation of at least 22,000 square feet of space for community use.

The San Francisco Public Library does not propose a new branch library in Rincon Hill; however, a portion of funds collected as part of a neighborhood assessment district would be used for library services at other branch libraries, such as the new Mission Bay facility, offsetting the increased demand at those branches from Rincon Hill's new residents.

### **PRESERVATION**

The Draft Plan would retain, but modify, under all options, the preservation objective from the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan, Objective 27, "Preserve and adaptively reuse those buildings in the area which have particular architectural or historical merit or which provide a scale and character of development consistent with the plan." Historically significant buildings identified for preservation in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan include: Sailor's Union of the Pacific, 450 Harrison Street; Klockar's Blacksmith Shop, 443-447 Folsom Street; Hills Brothers Coffee Company, 2-30 Harrison Street; Joseph Magnin Warehouse, 29-35 Harrison Street; Hathaway Warehouse, 400 Spear Street; Union Oil Building and Clock Tower (now Bank of America Building and Clock Tower), the clock tower portion of which has subsequently been significantly altered), 425 First Street; Coffin-Redington Building, 301 Folsom Street; and Gimbel Brothers Candy Factory, 501 Folsom Street.

All of these historic resources, with the exception of the Bank of America Clock Tower, Klockar's Blacksmith Shop, and the Sailor's Union of the Pacific, have been recently rehabilitated. Given the alterations that have occurred in the past to the former Union Oil Clock Tower (now Bank of America Clock Tower) and the residential project now proposed there, the Draft Plan does not recommend preservation of this building. The Draft Plan discourages demolition or significant alteration of the remaining historic structures and encourages "sensitive reuse and rehabilitation." The Draft Plan

proposes that to upgrade and rehabilitate the Sailor’s Union Building, and convert of portions of the building to public, community uses. (Preservation is discussed further in Section III.I, p. 186.)

## GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

As the proposed Rincon Hill Plan that is the subject of this EIR would include a revision of the Rincon Hill Area Plan, an Element of the General Plan, the area plan would be amended as necessary to conform to the development controls described above. The text of the area plan would be updated and its maps revised to reflect the proposed changes. To implement the revised area plan and the greater focus on residential, rather than commercial, land use, changes would be made to the Planning Code, height and bulk districts. Specifically, the following maps would be amended: Map 2, Existing Land Use Map; Map 3, Land Use Plan; Map 4, Height Limits; Map 5, Publicly Accessible Open Space Opportunities; and Map 6, Pedestrian Street Location. The Pedestrian Street Location Map and text would be amended to provide greater flexibility in providing mid-block passages.

Except as necessary to maintain consistency with the proposed concepts described in the Draft Rincon Hill Plan analyzed in this EIR, existing objectives and policies of the Rincon Hill Area Plan would remain substantially the same. Given the proposed focus on residential development, the portion of Objective 3 calling for new “industrial, service and office uses . . . in designated locations” would be deleted. Objectives 24 and 25, which pertain to provision of adequate residential parking and joint use of parking structures, would be revised to reflect the Plan’s proposals regarding parking. Finally, Objective 27, regarding preservation, would be revised to acknowledge that the Plan would consider housing a more important goal than retention of the Union Oil (now Bank of America) Clock Tower.

## E. APPROVAL PROCESS

### ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This Draft EIR will undergo a 45-day public review period, including a public hearing before the Planning Commission, during which comments on the information presented herein will be accepted. Following the public review period, responses to written and oral comments received from the public and agencies will be prepared in a Comments and Responses document. The Comments and Responses document will also include any staff initiated changes to the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR, together with the Comments and Responses document, make up the Final EIR and will be taken together to the Planning Commission. The Commission will then consider certification of the Final EIR under the California Environmental Quality Act, including consideration of whether it is adequate and accurate. Certification of the Final EIR may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors.

### APPROVALS REQUIRED

Approval and implementation of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would require the following actions, with acting bodies shown in italics:

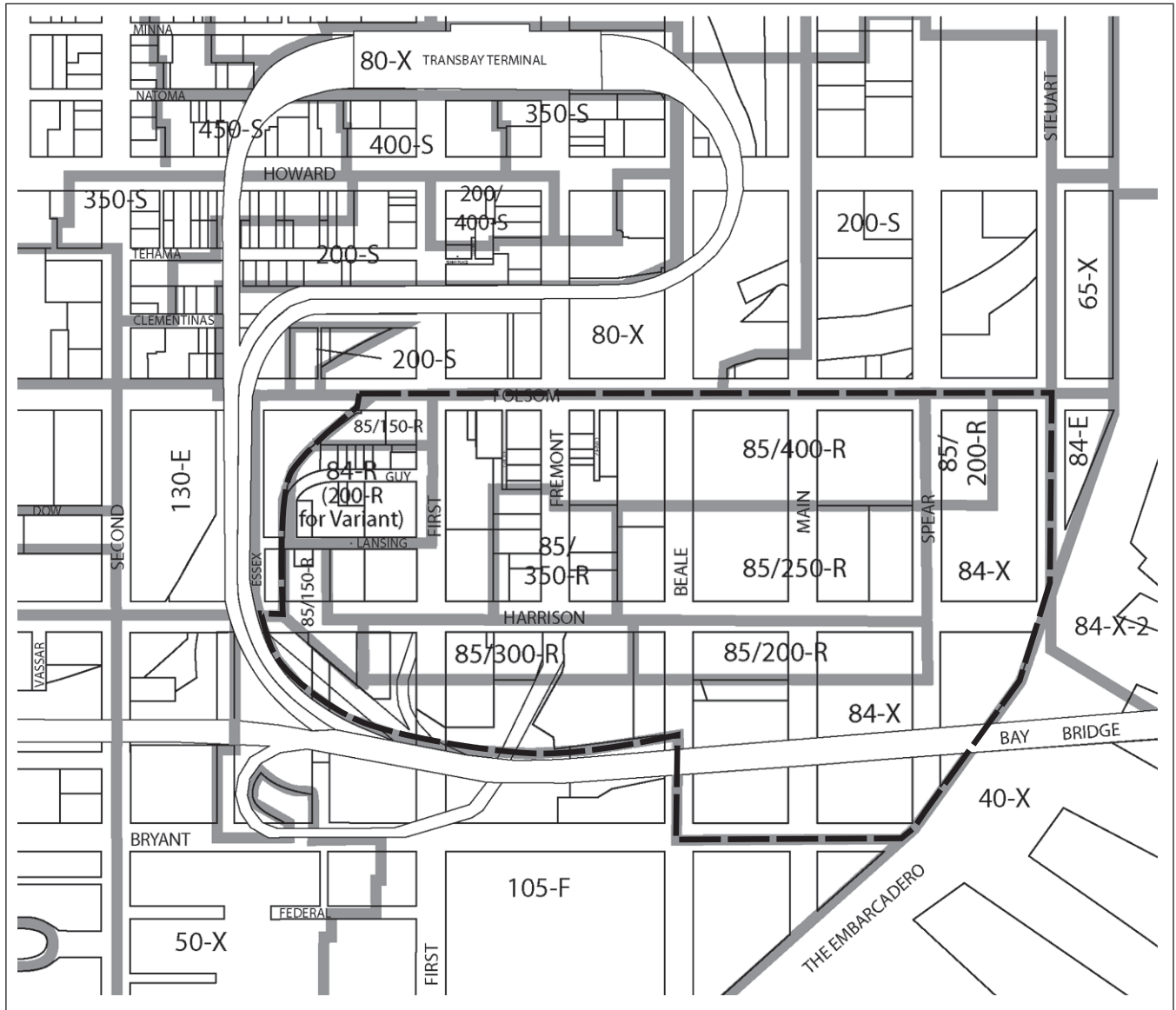
- Amendment of the General Plan Rincon Hill Area Plan to conform to the concepts of the currently proposed Rincon Hill Plan (the project), as outlined above. *Planning Commission recommendation; Board of Supervisors Approval*
- Determination of consistency of the proposed rezoning (Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District and Zoning Map and Height and Bulk Map changes) with the General Plan and Planning Code Section 101.1 Priority Policies. *Planning Commission recommendation; Board of Supervisors Approval*
- Amendment of the Planning Code to rescind the existing Rincon Hill Special Use District, eliminate existing underlying zoning within the Plan area (except the Residential/Commercial district approved in February 2004 and the U.S. Postal Service site), revise the “R” bulk district, and adopt the proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District. *Planning Commission recommendation; Board of Supervisors Approval*
- Amendment of the Planning Code Zoning Maps to change height limits throughout the Plan area. *Planning Commission recommendation; Board of Supervisors Approval*
- Street and sidewalk improvements, including changing some one-way streets to two-way flow, restriping as needed, and widened sidewalks. *Departments of Parking and Traffic and Public Works Approval; consultation with Fire Department, Muni, and other city agencies; review by city’s Interagency Staff Committee on Traffic and Transportation (ISCOTT); Board of Supervisors Approval (of curb changes, traffic changes, and certain other on-street changes)*
- Approval of financing mechanism (Mello Roos District or other option) for public improvements, and acquisition of necessary lands for certain improvements, such as the proposed park adjacent to the Fremont Street off-ramp, currently owned by Caltrans. *Board of Supervisors Approval, with Planning Commission recommendation and/or General Plan consistency finding as necessary; Recreation and Park Commission acceptance of park, if applicable*
- Determination that the proposed park site adjacent to the Fremont Street off-ramp is a surplus parcel. *Caltrans*
- In November 1986, the voters of San Francisco approved Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative, which, among other things, established eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood-serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service land uses from commercial office development and enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project which requires an Initial Study under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), or adopting any zoning ordinance or development agreement, and before taking any action that requires a finding of consistency with the General Plan, the City is required to find that the proposed project, legislation, or action is consistent with the Priority Policies. The motion by the Planning Commission and the resolution by the Board of Supervisors approving or disapproving the proposed rezoning and General Plan amendments will contain the analysis determining whether the project is in conformance with the Priority Policies.





## **F. PLAN OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND WITHDRAWN**

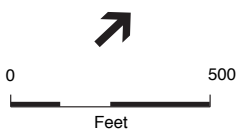
The following four options were identified for consideration by Planning Department staff, which subsequently determined not to carry them forward in the EIR. The first three of these options were presented in the November 2003 Draft Rincon Hill Plan, while the fourth was originally intended to represent a maximum possible development scenario.

### **PIPELINE/PROPOSED PROJECTS (AS OF NOVEMBER 2003 DRAFT PLAN)**

This option included all projects for which an application was on file with the Planning Department as of November 2003; that is, projects in the so-called development “pipeline,” as well as the five approved but not yet built projects and two sites where applications had not been formally filed but where developers and/or property owners had engaged Planning staff in discussions about potential projects. Permitted heights were to be those proposed in March 2003 (see Figure 10, p. 35). This option included 11 towers: four new towers and the five already approved, in addition to the two just completed at 333 First Street.



-  Rincon Hill Area Plan
-  Height and Bulk District Boundary
- 00** Height limits in feet
-  Maximum Podium Height
-  Maximum Tower Height



SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 10**  
March 2003 Heights

Residential towers included in this scenario (with their Department case numbers indicated in parentheses where applicable), in addition to the five approved projects, were:

- 425 First Street (Case No. 2003.0029)—two 350-foot residential towers over a podium on the south side of Harrison Street east of First Street, on the site of the existing Bank of America (former Union Oil) office building and Clock Tower and an adjacent surface parking lot, with about 750 units;<sup>34</sup>
- 375 Fremont Street (Case No. 2002.0449)—approximately 350-foot residential tower over podium (east side of Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets), with about 250 units;
- 399 Fremont Street (Case No. 2003.0169)—approximately 350-foot<sup>35</sup> residential tower over podium (east side of Fremont Street at Harrison Street), with about 300 units;
- a 400-foot tower on the site of the Sailors’ Union of the Pacific building at the northeast corner of First and Harrison Streets; and
- a 400-foot tower on the north side of Harrison Street west of First Street (approximately the location of the currently proposed 45 Lansing Street project).

Planning staff noted in the November 2003 Draft Plan that “the pipeline shows a snapshot in time and does not include all potential sites. There is no discipline of a minimum spacing of towers (multiple towers are proposed as close to each other as 60 feet) and there is no overall coordination to preserve sunlight and sky exposure. Nor is there significant concern with the sculpting of heights for an optimal skyline.” Additionally, it is noted by Planning staff that the Pipeline Option represents only a “snapshot” in time, and does not necessarily reflect true long-term development prospects.

### 82.5-FOOT MINIMUM TOWER SEPARATION, MARCH 2003 HEIGHTS

This scenario was based on a tower separation of 82.5 feet—the width of streets in the district, and the tower separation approved in February 2004 for the projects at 300 Spear Street and 201 Folsom Street—and height controls developed in March 2003, early in the Rincon Hill planning process. In general, permitted height under these controls (see Figure 10) were to be greater along the south side of Folsom Street than with the Preferred Option heights, which are shown in Figure 5, p. 11. Along Harrison Street, the March 2003 height limits were to be greater east of Beale and lesser west of Beale than under the Preferred Option heights. The March 2003 height controls were to have a maximum permitted height of 400 feet in the Plan area, compared to the Preferred controls’ maximum height of 550 feet. This option included some proposed projects on file with the Planning Department as of the publication of the Draft Rincon Hill Plan in November 2003, where they would be consistent with the controls, and other logical sites where new podium buildings and towers might be built under these controls. This scenario included 13 towers: six new towers and the five already approved, in addition to the two just completed at 333 First Street.

<sup>34</sup> This is a modified version of the project currently on file with the Department, which would have two taller towers, one on Harrison Street and one to the south, on First Street. The project on file could only be approved if the Preferred height controls are adopted.

<sup>35</sup> This represents an earlier proposal for 399 Fremont Street; the current project on file would be 250 feet tall.

Residential towers included in this scenario (with their Planning Department case numbers indicated in parentheses where applicable, although current proposals may differ<sup>36</sup>), in addition to the five approved projects<sup>37</sup>, were:

- 425 First Street (Case No. 2003.0029)—two 300-foot residential towers over a podium on the south side of Harrison Street east of First Street, on the site of the existing Bank of America (former Union Oil) office building and Clock Tower and an adjacent surface parking lot, with 575 units;
- 340–350 Fremont Street (Case No. 2004.0552)—approximately 350-foot residential tower over podium (west side of Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets), with about 285 units;
- a 400-foot tower near the northwest corner of First and Harrison Streets with about 350 units (either on the site of an existing Union 76 gas station or at the site of the proposed 45 Lansing Street project);
- a 350-foot residential tower over podium on the east side of Fremont Street near Harrison Street, with about 285 units;<sup>38</sup>
- a 300-foot residential tower (rather than 150 feet as put forth in the Draft Plan) over podium on the south side of Harrison Street between First and Essex Streets, with about 150 units;
- a 350-foot residential tower over podium at the northwest corner of Fremont and Harrison Streets, with about 285 units; and
- a 150-foot tower on the south side of Folsom Street just west of First Street, with about 115 units.

Planning staff stated in the November 2003 Draft Plan that this option would result in an “undesirable cluster” of up to five towers on Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison and Streets. “Additionally, built out to its fullest extent, Harrison Street could also become canyoned with numerous towers,” according to the Draft Plan.

### MINIMUM SKY EXPOSURE: 20 PERCENT BLOCK COVERAGE, 115-FOOT TOWER SEPARATION

This option was virtually identical to the Preferred Option as set forth in the November 2003 Draft Plan. This option, which was based on the March 2003 heights (see Figure 10, p. 35), differed from the Preferred Option analyzed in this EIR primarily in that this option identified two tower sites along Harrison Street west of First Street (to the south of the Guy-Lansing enclave), compared to one with the Preferred Option, and this option included a 150-foot tower on Folsom Street just west of First Street. Also, this option included an earlier version of the 425 First Street project, with both towers on Harrison Street, compared to one on Harrison and one on First, as currently proposed and as included in the Preferred Option. Finally, this option included a 300-foot building at the corner of Fremont and Folsom Streets instead of the approved 325 Fremont Street project that is included in the Preferred Project. Given

<sup>36</sup> Several of the buildings for which case numbers are given represent modified versions of the projects currently on file with the Planning Department.

<sup>37</sup> The approved 325 Fremont Street project was assumed instead of a taller building at the corner of Fremont and Folsom Streets.

<sup>38</sup> A single tower is identified on the east side of Fremont Street near Harrison Street because two towers would not meet the 82.5-foot separation from one another and from the existing Avalon towers on Beale Street.



the similarities between this option and the Preferred Option, particularly as to the 115-foot tower separation, it was deemed unnecessary to carry forward the Minimum Sky Exposure Option for further analysis.

### “EXTENDED PIPELINE”—PROPOSED PROJECTS AND “SOFT SITES”

This option was intended to illustrate the maximum potential development that could occur should the Preferred heights (see Figure 5, p. 11) be adopted but limitations on tower separation not be enforced. This option essentially could be construed as being a continuation of existing practices in the Plan area but with greater height limits because, while the current controls ostensibly require a 150-foot tower separation, projects—such as the two projects permitted on Folsom Street in February 2004—have been approved with substantially less distance between towers using existing exceptions in the Planning Code, which are based on criteria enumerated in Section 271 of the Code.<sup>39</sup> This scenario thus included all projects proposed (with an application on file at the Planning Department) as the Draft EIR was published, as well as the five approved but not yet built towers, and four additional towers on so-called “soft sites” (sites where future development appears likely because the sites are developed at low density) for a total of 15 towers: eight new towers and the five already approved, in addition to the two just completed at 333 First Street.

Residential towers included in this scenario (with their Department case numbers indicated in parentheses where applicable), in addition to the five projects, were:

- 425 First Street (Case No. 2003.0029)—two residential towers, one of 450 feet and one 550 feet tall, over a podium at the southeast corner of First and Harrison Streets. The 450-foot tower would be on Harrison Street at the location of an existing surface parking lot and the 550-foot tower would be on First Street at approximately the location of the existing Bank of America (former Union Oil) office building and Clock Tower. The Bank of America Clock Tower and building would be demolished to make way for this approximately 770-unit project.
- 375 Fremont Street (Case No. 2002.0449)—approximately 300-foot residential tower over podium (east side of Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets); about 250 units.
- 399 Fremont Street (Case No. 2003.0169)—approximately 350-foot<sup>40</sup> residential tower over podium (east side of Fremont Street at Harrison Street); about 300 units.
- 340–350 Fremont Street (Case No. 2004.0552)—approximately 400-foot residential tower over podium (west side of Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets); about 350 units.
- 45 Lansing Street (Case No. 2004.0481)—approximately 400-foot residential tower over podium (north side of Harrison Street east of First); about 275 units.
- A 400-foot residential tower over podium at the northwest corner of Fremont and Harrison Streets; about 320 units.
- A 400-foot residential tower over podium at the northwest corner of First and Harrison Streets (the site of an existing Union 76 gas station); about 310 units.

<sup>39</sup> Other projects that have been approved with less than 150-foot tower spacing include the Avalon Towers on Beale Street (50 feet between towers) and 333 First Street (approximately 82 feet between towers).

<sup>40</sup> This represents an earlier proposal for 399 Fremont Street; the current project on file would be 250 feet tall.

- A 400-foot residential tower over podium on the south side of Harrison Street between First and Essex Streets; about 230 units.
- A 130-foot residential tower over podium on the south side of Folsom Street just west of First Street; about 110 units.

No application has been filed for development of the last four buildings; these are included in the “Extended Pipeline” option to illustrate the Planning Department’s notion of what could reasonably be anticipated should the proposed new height limits be adopted and projects continue to be approved with minimal spacing between towers. Unit counts are as assumed by Planning staff based on building size.

This option was not presented in the November 2003 version of the Draft Rincon Hill Plan, although the November 2003 Draft Plan did include a “Pipeline” option. This Extended Pipeline option differed from the Draft Plan’s Pipeline option in that the project at 425 First Street was included as currently proposed by the sponsor of that project (one tower on Harrison Street and one on First Street south of Harrison, as compared with the November 2003 Draft Plan’s illustration of both towers on Harrison); the proposed project at 340–350 Fremont Street was included because the Department has an application on file; and the last four towers in the list above were not included in the November 2003 Draft Plan’s Pipeline option. Finally, no development was assumed at the northeast corner of First and Harrison Streets (Sailors’ Union of the Pacific site) because no development proposal is on file.

Planning Department staff determined that this option did not provide for adequate spacing between towers (some towers are proposed as close to each other as about 50 feet, approximately the distance between the two Avalon Towers on Beale Street at Harrison), particularly on Fremont Street and there was no overall coordination to preserve sunlight and sky exposure. Under this scenario, an “undesirable cluster of up to six towers would occur” on Fremont Street between Folsom Street and the south side of Harrison Street, and another group of towers would cluster around First and Harrison Streets.

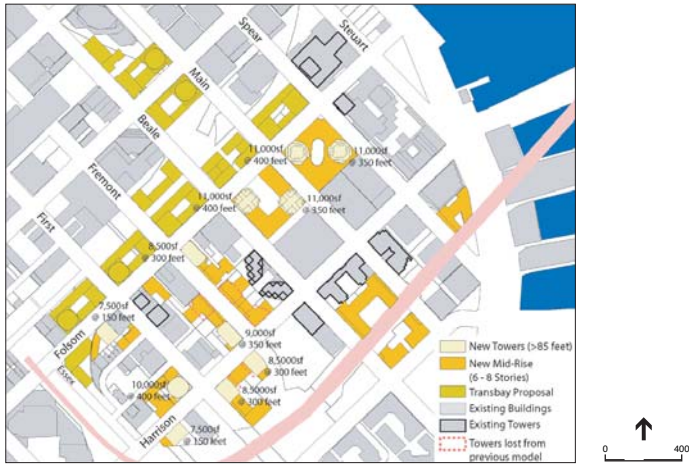
The four options considered and withdrawn are depicted in Figure 11.



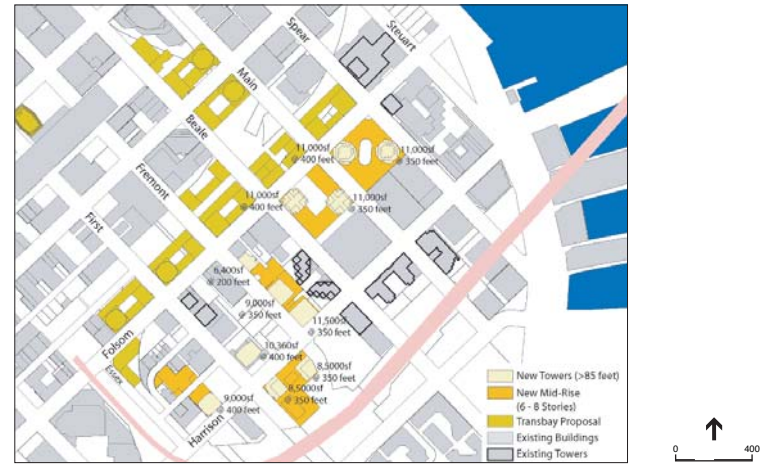
82.5-Foot, March 2003 Heights



Extended Pipeline



November 2003 Minimum Sky Exposure



November 2003 Pipeline

SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 11**  
Options Considered and Rejected

# CHAPTER III

## ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND IMPACTS

---

### A. LAND USE, PLANS, AND POLICIES

#### SETTING

##### *EXISTING LAND USES*

###### **Project Area**

The large-scale rectilinear geometry of Rincon Hill's street grid reflects the area's once dominant industrial land uses. In contrast to the street network north of Market Street, the blocks in the Rincon Hill Plan area are typically 550 feet by 275 feet, approximately twice as large as the blocks north of Market Street.

The western portion of the Plan area, in the vicinity of Guy Place and Lansing Street, and the eastern portion along Beale and Main Streets (see Figure 12), are primarily residential. The Guy Place/Lansing Street area is characterized by small lots and lower-scale buildings fronting on the 35-foot wide Guy-Lansing Street loop. This area has experienced substantial redevelopment in the past decade, including a number of three- to eight-story multi-family residential buildings, which range from approximately 25 to 85 feet in height. A few single-family dwellings are also located along Guy Place.

Larger-scale residential developments are located on Beale, Main, First and Harrison Streets. Table 4 lists the larger existing and approved but not yet occupied residential projects by location, number of towers and stories, building height, and number of dwelling units.

In recent years former industrial buildings have been rehabilitated to house residential or live/work uses. Two prominent examples of adaptive reuse in Rincon Hill include the Coffin-Redington Building (also known as Embarcadero Lofts) at 300 Beale Street, which now includes ground-floor office space and 53 loft units, and 346 First Street, a five-story former light industrial building that now contains 28 live/work units. In addition, the recently approved (and currently under construction) 40-50 Lansing Street project will replace a former vacant light industrial building with approximately 81 residential units in a new five- to eight-story building.

**TABLE 4  
EXISTING AND APPROVED LARGE-SCALE RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS IN RINCON HILL**

| <b>Property</b>               | <b>Location</b>      | <b>Buildings/<br/>Towers</b> | <b>Stories/Height</b> | <b>Units</b> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Portside Condominiums         | 403 Main / 38 Bryant | 2                            | 8, 9 (85 ft.)         | 220          |
| Avalon Towers                 | 388 Beale            | 2                            | 20 (248 ft.)          | 226          |
| The Baycrest                  | 201 Harrison         | 2                            | 10, 11 (120 ft.)      | 288          |
| The Bridgeview                | 400 Beale            | 1                            | 26 (250 ft.)          | 245          |
| Hills Plaza <sup>a</sup>      | 345 Spear            | 1                            | 19 (225 ft.)          | 67           |
| The Metropolitan <sup>b</sup> | 333 First            | 2                            | 21, 26 (200-250 ft.)  | 342          |
| 300 Spear <sup>c</sup>        | 300 Spear            | 2                            | 35, 40 (350-400 ft.)  | 820          |
| 201 Folsom <sup>c</sup>       | 201 Folsom           | 2                            | 35, 40 (350-400 ft.)  | 725          |
| 325 Fremont <sup>c,d</sup>    | 325 Fremont          | 1                            | 21 (200 ft.)          | 54           |

<sup>a</sup> Residential component only; also includes retail and office space. Residential units occupy 11 stories in 19-story building.

<sup>b</sup> Recently completed; not yet fully occupied.

<sup>c</sup> Approved but not yet constructed.

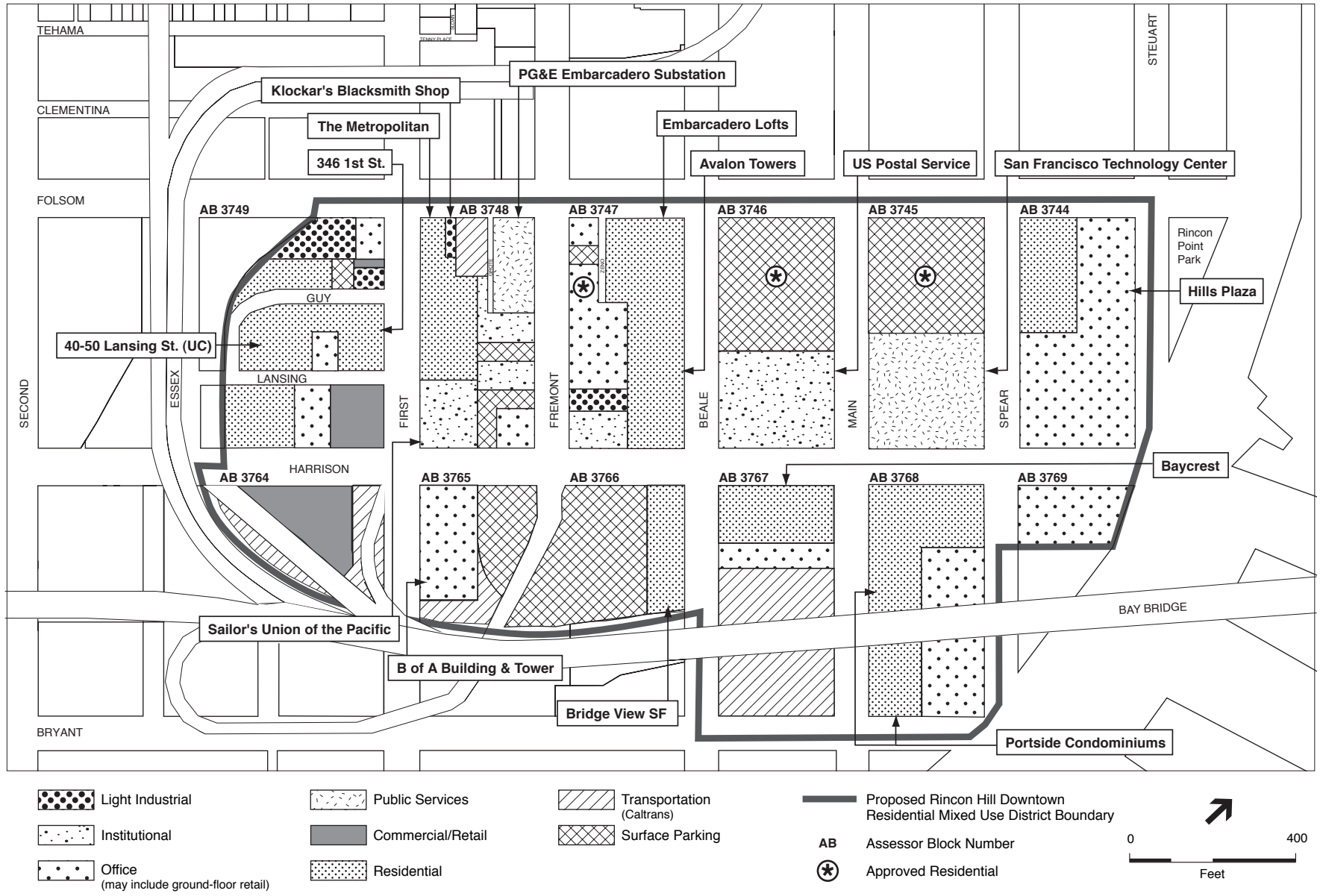
<sup>d</sup> An application is on file that, if approved, would increase the number of units at 325 Fremont to about 70.

SOURCE: 300 Spear Street (2000.1090E) and 201 Folsom Street (2000.1073E) Final EIRs; ESA, 2004.

Light industrial and commercial uses are located throughout the Plan area. A Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) substation is located at 401 Folsom Street. The recently completed San Francisco Telecom Center 1 is located at 360 Spear Street. The historic, two-story Edwin Klockar’s Blacksmith Shop at 443-447 Folsom Street houses one of two known extant blacksmith operations in San Francisco.

While most high-rise office uses are generally located to the north and west of the project area, some office uses are located within the Rincon Hill Plan area. The most prominent point of reference in the Plan area is the 15-story Bank of America Building and Clock Tower (formerly the Union Oil Co. Building), which includes an office building and parking garage, at 425 First Street on top of Rincon Hill.<sup>41</sup> Other office/commercial uses include the retail and office portions of the mixed-use Hills Plaza complex at 2-30 Harrison Street, ground-floor commercial space in other mixed-use rehabilitation projects such as the above-noted 300 Beale Street, telecommunications facilities, and office space—some vacant—in 2- to 3-story buildings on the east side of Fremont Street. Institutional and public service uses are generally concentrated in Assessor’s Block 3748 around First and Harrison and First and Fremont Streets. These institutional uses include the Sailor’s Union of the Pacific building at 450 Harrison Street,

<sup>41</sup> As noted in Chapter II, Project Description, and described further in Section III.I, “Historical Resources,” this building is proposed for demolition as part of a new high-rise residential project.



SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department; Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 12**  
Existing Land Uses  
and Major Buildings

the Seafarer's Union/Marine Engineers Beneficial Association building at 360 Fremont Street, and a building owned by the Catholic Archdiocese and currently used as a homeless shelter at Fremont and Harrison Streets. The United States Postal Services operates an 8-story postal annex at 390 Main Street. Finally, there is a Union 76 service station at First and Harrison Streets.

Since the demolition of the Embarcadero Freeway in the early 1990s, various parcels within and surrounding Rincon Hill have been vacated and are now occupied by surface parking uses. Surface parking lots are located mainly along the north and south sides of Folsom Street, as well as along Harrison Street at Fremont Street adjacent to the Bay Bridge off-ramp. In September 2004, the Planning Commission approved the 201 Folsom and 300 Spear Street projects which would construct residential uses on two of these lots; the projects would consist of two 85-foot podia with two towers each, one fronting on Folsom Street and one set back, located between Beale and Spear Streets. In total, these two projects would provide about 1,550 dwelling units.

Other transportation-related uses in the Plan area include the Bay Bridge anchorage at Beale and Bryant Streets in the southern portion of the Plan area.

## **Project Vicinity**

### ***Financial District***

The Financial District, historically located north of Market Street, is composed of high-rise office buildings, most with ground floor retail. As described in the Downtown Plan (an Area Plan contained within the General Plan), the Financial District spills across Market Street to the south as far as Folsom Street, sharing a border with the Rincon Hill Plan area. Along Spear and Main Streets, high-rise office buildings extend south nearly to Folsom Street. Between Market and Howard Streets, the Second Street corridor is characterized by historic office buildings, with ground floor retail, at a height of 100 feet or less. These structures make up part of the New Montgomery/Second Street Conservation District of the Downtown Plan area. Some older industrial buildings between Market and Folsom Streets have been converted to retail, office, and residential uses. Former warehouses are being used for office buildings, factory outlets, live-work spaces, and media studios. In some instances, residential uses are located in converted commercial buildings, above the ground floor.

Recent development projects south of Market Street include new office buildings at 55 Second Street (near Market Street), 101 Second Street (at Mission Street), 199 Fremont Street (at Howard Street), and 560 Mission Street (near Second Street). Another office building, the Gap headquarters, has been constructed immediately adjacent to the study area, at Folsom and Spear Streets. Recently completed residential projects include 246 Second Street (near Folsom) and 199 New Montgomery Street (at Howard; nearing completion).

A large portion of the Financial District is zoned C-3-O (Downtown Office), including the blocks south of Market Street, roughly to Minna Street. Just south of this area is the C-3-O (SD) zoning district—Downtown Office Special Development—which is an area created to direct unused development potential

near the downtown core. The C-S-S (Downtown Support) District, which is located northwest of the study area near Third Street, accommodates functions such as wholesaling, printing, business services, and parking.

***Proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area***

North of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan area across Folsom Street, the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Project Area has been the focus of a number of land use and transportation planning efforts. The proposed Transbay Redevelopment Project Area covers the area directly north of the Rincon Hill Plan area, and is generally bounded by Mission, Main, Spear, Folsom, Essex, Harrison, Second, and Minna Streets. After the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, a substantial portion of this area previously dominated by the Embarcadero Freeway was opened up as a result of freeway demolition; resulting parcels are now vacant and used for surface parking. Following freeway demolition, planning studies were initiated to reconsider the appropriate land use controls for the newly vacant parcels.

The series of proposed zoning and height district changes resulting from a number of planning studies in the Transbay area are the subject of the *Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension/Redevelopment Project EIS/EIR* (City and County of San Francisco, 2002), published by the City and County of San Francisco, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, and the Federal Transit Administration. The EIS/EIR analyzes a new Transbay Terminal, extension of Caltrain commuter rail service from its current terminus at Fourth and Townsend Streets to the Transbay

- Terminal, and the proposed Redevelopment Plan.<sup>41a</sup>

At full build out, the proposed *Transbay Design for Development*—the Redevelopment Agency’s planning document for the area—would result in roughly 4.14 million square feet of residential uses (approximately 3,400 residential units, including affordable housing), approximately 965,000 square feet of office uses, 475,000 square feet of hotels, and approximately 30,700 square feet of retail use, with a total of about 5.6 million square feet of development. These uses would be constructed in three main zones: the Transbay Residential Zone, containing most of the area’s residential uses, located between Main and Beale Streets and along Folsom Boulevard from Essex to Spear Streets; the Terminal Hub, consisting of office, mixed use housing and hotel development; and the Transbay Terminal and Ramp Environs, consisting mainly of moderate-scale infill development consistent with the urban form of adjacent the New Montgomery/Second Street Conservation District. Existing height and bulk districts would be amended to accommodate buildings of up to 550 feet. An enhanced open space network including parks and pedestrian greenways is also included in the plan.

The San Francisco Redevelopment Agency certified the Final EIS/EIR on April 20, 2004.<sup>42</sup> The Redevelopment Agency has not formally adopted the Transbay survey area as a redevelopment plan and project area. Consequently, the land use designations and height and bulk amendments proposed as part

● <sup>41a</sup> In addition to new Transbay Terminal, off-site midday bus storage would serve Golden Gate Transit and AC Transit beneath the Bay Bridge approach to the west and east, respectively, of Third Street.

<sup>42</sup> Legal challenges under CEQA were filed by three parties in July 2004 and as of publication of this Draft EIR were pending, in *Meyers Natoma Venture LLC et. al. v. City and County of San Francisco* (“CCAF”), Sup. Ct. No. 504-363; *South Beach SOMA Coalition v. CCSF*, Sup. Ct. No. 504-366; and *Friends of Second Street, et. al. v. CCSF*, Sup. Ct. No. 504-365.



of that plan are not yet official City policy. Existing zoning in the Transbay area is primarily C-3-O (SD) (Downtown Commercial—Special Development), with areas of P (Public) Use Districts.

### ***South of Market***

The South of Market (SOMA) area is generally bounded by Mission Street to the north, Townsend Street to the south, South Van Ness Avenue to the west and Second Street to the east. SOMA borders the proposed Rincon Hill Mixed Use District to the west and southwest. It is dominated by light industrial manufacturing and office uses, although substantial amounts of residential development—mainly in the form of live-work lofts—have been constructed within recent years. SOMA also contains cultural uses, generally clustered around the Yerba Buena Center, and entertainment uses along Folsom and Eleventh Streets.

Zoning in SOMA is mainly SSO (Service / Secondary Office) and SLI (Service / Light Industrial); these zoning districts are located south of the C-3-S district, extending to Townsend Street.

### ***Northeastern Waterfront***

The Northeastern Waterfront Planning Area extends from Aquatic Park to China Basin. This planning area contains four subareas, two of which, the Ferry Building Subarea and the South Beach Subarea, are directly adjacent to the proposed Plan area on the east. The Ferry Building Subarea surrounds the Ferry Building at the foot of Market Street and The Embarcadero, and is linked to the South Beach Subarea by the waterfront promenade along The Embarcadero. Since the 1980s, the South Beach Subarea has been transforming into a residential and commercial mixed-use neighborhood, although it still retains some of its industrial and maritime operations and still includes a considerable amount of land zoned for manufacturing uses. Recent development includes new high-rise and mid-rise residential structures and SBC Park, home of the San Francisco Giants baseball club.

Zoning in the Northeastern Waterfront area is mainly industrial, especially along the waterfront. The M-2 (Heavy Industrial) zoning district is located south of the existing boundaries of the Rincon Hill Special Use District and extends to Mission Bay. However, both the South Beach and Mission Bay North redevelopment areas permit and have encouraged residential development in those areas.

### ***Rincon Point-South Beach Redevelopment Area***

Abutting the proposed Rincon Hill Plan area on the east and on the south, the Rincon Point-South Beach Redevelopment Area is a 115-acre redevelopment project composed of two non-contiguous geographic areas along San Francisco's northeastern waterfront. Since 1981, the area has been transformed from unused warehouses, cargo storage yards, and dilapidated piers into a new mixed-use development. Redevelopment Agency data indicate that the project area now includes more than 2,500 residential units (with 26 percent set aside for low- and moderate-income households), more than 1 million square feet of commercial space (including Rincon Center and Gap Inc. headquarters office building), and a 700-berth

marina at South Beach Harbor that is fully occupied. This area also includes Rincon Park along The Embarcadero and SBC Park stadium.

### ***Port of San Francisco***

The Port of San Francisco has jurisdiction over a 7-1/2 mile band of property that extends from Fisherman’s Wharf to India Basin, and that includes the area that fronts the eastern boundary of the Rincon Hill Plan area. This portion of the Port’s property is within the Ferry Building and South Beach/China Basin subareas of the Port’s Waterfront Land Use Plan. The Port has recently completed Rincon Park, in conjunction with the Redevelopment Agency, and plans two restaurants in the southern portion of the park, as well as the Ferry Building renovation just north of the Rincon Hill Plan area. To the south, at Piers 30-32, the new Bryant Street Pier project is approved, to include a new cruise terminal and mixed-use development, with residential units now under construction on the “seawall lot” to the west across The Embarcadero.

## ***PLANS AND POLICIES***

### **San Francisco General Plan**

The San Francisco General Plan contains ten elements (Commerce and Industry, Recreation and Open Space, Residence, Community Facilities, Urban Design, Environmental Protection, Transportation, Air Quality, Community Safety, and Arts), that include goals, policies, and objectives for the physical development of the City. In addition, the General Plan includes area plans that encompass specific geographic areas, and include goals and objectives specific to each planning area. The following General Plan policies are among those applicable to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan:

#### ***Urban Design Element***

- Objective 1: Emphasis of the characteristic pattern which gives to the city and its neighborhoods an image, a sense of purpose, and a means of orientation.
- Policy 1.1: Recognize and protect major views in the city, with particular attention to those of open space and water.
- Policy 1.3: Recognize that buildings, when seen together, produce a total effect that characterizes the city and its districts.
- Policy 1.5: Emphasize the special nature of each district through distinctive landscaping and other features.
- Policy 1.6: Make centers of activity more prominent through design of street features and by other means.
- Policy 1.7: Recognize the natural boundaries of districts, and promote connections between districts.
- Policy 1.8: Increase the visibility of major destination areas and other points for orientation.
- Objective 2: Conservation of resources which provide a sense of nature, continuity with the past, and freedom from overcrowding.

- Policy 2.4: Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.
- Policy 2.6: Respect the character of older development nearby in the design of new buildings.
- Objective 3: Moderation of major new development to complement the city pattern, the resources to be conserved, and the neighborhood environment.

*Fundamental Principles for Major New Development*

These fundamental principles [for Objective 3] ... reflect the needs and characteristics with which [the General] Plan is concerned, and describe measurable and critical urban design relationships in major new development.

1. The relationship of a building's size and shape to its visibility in the cityscape, to important natural features and to existing development determines whether it will have a pleasing or a disruptive effect on the image and character of the city.
  - A. Tall, slender buildings near the crown on a hill emphasize the form of the hill and preserve views.
  - B. Extremely massive buildings on or near hills can overwhelm the natural land forms, block views, and generally disrupt the character of the city.
  - C. Low, smaller-scale buildings on the slopes of hills, at their base and in the valleys between complement topographic forms and permit uninterrupted views.
  - D. Low buildings along the waterfront contribute to the gradual tapering of height from hilltops to water that is characteristic of San Francisco and allows views of the Ocean and the Bay. Larger buildings with civic importance, as evidenced by a vote of the people, providing places of public assembly and recreation may be appropriate along the waterfront at important locations.
  - E. Larger, taller buildings can blend pleasantly with small-scaled areas if the change in scale is not excessive and if their form or surface pattern is articulated to reflect the existing scale.
2. Building siting and massing with respect to street pattern influence the quality of views from street space.
  - A. Tall buildings on the tops of hills allow clear views down streets.
  - B. Tall buildings on slopes of hills severely restrict views from above.
3. Clustering of larger, taller buildings at important activity centers (such as major transit stations) can visually express the functional importance of these centers.
4. The relationship between areas of low, fine-scaled buildings and areas of high, large-scaled buildings can be made more pleasing if the transition in building height and mass between such areas is gradual.
5. Taller or more visually prominent buildings can provide orientation points and increase the physical distinction, variety and contrast of large areas with similar streets and buildings, particularly areas of unrelieved monotony.
6. When highly visible buildings are light in color, they reinforce the visual unity and special character of the city.

7. Buildings which meet the ground and reflect the slope of the hill relate to the land form.
  8. The use of unusual shapes for tall office, hotel or apartment buildings detracts from the clarity of urban form by competing for attention with buildings of greater public significance. The juxtaposition of several such unusual shapes may create visual disorder.
  9. Unique building forms can appropriately signify major community facilities.
  10. Major public buildings of symbolic importance may be appropriately located in highly visible settings.
  11. A building situated in a visually dominant position, whose exterior is blank and uninteresting, does not relate to surrounding development and tends to repel the observer's attention.
  12. A long or wide building becomes excessively bulky in appearance when its height significantly exceeds that of buildings in the surrounding area.
  13. A bulky building creates the most visual disruption when seen from a distance as the dominant silhouette against a background and/or foreground of much smaller structures.
  14. Bulky buildings that intrude upon or block important views of the Bay, Ocean or other significant citywide focal points are particularly disruptive.
  15. Plazas or parks located in the shadows cast by large buildings are unpleasant for the user.
    - A. Large buildings can be oriented to minimize shadows falling on public or semi-public open spaces.
    - B. The height and mass of tall, closely packed buildings can be shaped to permit sunlight to reach open spaces.
  16. Corner plazas can be pleasing if the streets are not excessively wide and if surrounding properties are developed with buildings that define the space well.
  17. Elevated pedestrian levels in large developments, if they relate visually and functionally to the street-level pedestrian system, are easy to find and use and contribute to the consistency of development. A clearly expressed transition from an elevated pedestrian system to the sidewalk ties the two systems together visually and functionally.
  18. Buildings of a uniform height provide good spatial definition of larger public squares or plazas. Larger public open spaces surrounded by irregular buildings are poorly defined.
- Policy 3.2: Avoid extreme contrasts in color, shape and other characteristics which will cause new buildings to stand out in excess of their public importance.
- Policy 3.3: Promote efforts to achieve high quality of design for buildings to be constructed at prominent locations.
- Policy 3.4: Promote building forms that will respect and improve the integrity of open spaces and other public areas.
- Policy 3.5: Relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the city pattern and to the height and character of existing development.
- Policy 3.6: Relate the bulk of buildings to the prevailing scale of development to avoid an overwhelming or dominating appearance in new construction.
- Objective 4: Improvement of the neighborhood environment to increase personal safety, comfort, pride and opportunity.

*(Selected) Fundamental Principles for Neighborhood Environment*

These fundamental principles ... reflect the needs and characteristics with which [the General] Plan is concerned, and describe measurable and critical urban design relationships in the neighborhood environment.

1. The livability, amenity and character of residential areas are greatly enhanced by trees, more so than by any other single element.
2. In areas where houses have no front yards, a sense of nature can be provided by planting in the sidewalk area.
4. Open space and landscaping can give neighborhoods an identity, a visual focus and a center for activity.
6. Wide, generous sidewalk areas provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and pedestrian amenities.
  - A. Portions of wide sidewalks can be turned into children's play areas, and sitting areas for adults.
  - B. In intensive shopping areas, wide sidewalks allow free pedestrian movement, and provide room for benches for resting and shelters for transit patrons.
7. Interesting details in the design of street furniture, paving and other features in pedestrian area can increase the amenity and character of streets.
8. Wide streets can be narrowed at the intersections and landscaped to provide sitting areas and visual amenity.
10. Parking garages lack visual interest if they have extensive rows of doors, blank walls or exposed vehicles. Extensive curb cuts prevent planting and other enhancement of the street, eliminate curb-side parking and are potentially dangerous to pedestrians.
  - A. Arcades create some visual interest where long garage facades or multiple driveways cannot be avoided.
  - B. Restricting entry and exit points minimizes curb cuts.
  - C. A basement garage one-half level down brings the building closer to street level and increases visual interest for pedestrians.
  - D. The inclusion of stores at ground level maintains continuity of pedestrian activity on what would otherwise be a sterile street frontage of parking garages in a commercial area.
11. Fast and heavy traffic on residential streets makes them unattractive for pedestrian activities, and generates irritating dirt and noise.
12. Excessive speeds and amounts of traffic in residential neighborhoods can be reduced by a variety of design techniques, including narrowing of streets or intersections, landscaping, diversion of traffic and closing of streets.
  - A. Visually narrow street spaces assist in reducing the speed of traffic. Most drivers tend to reduce speed in confined spaces, since confinement narrows the field of vision and creates a sense of rapid movement.
  - B. Diversion of cars from a straight path in a residential neighborhood is an effective way of discouraging through traffic.

- C. Modifying long, wide, straight sections of street eliminates the opportunity or temptation for vehicles to speed.
- 14. Separation of pedestrian and vehicle movement eliminates conflicts and contributes to pedestrian comfort. Pedestrians and vehicles can be separated by creating separate levels or by prohibiting traffic from certain streets.
- 16. Continuity of interest and activities at ground level in commercial buildings adjacent to pedestrian ways creates rich street life and enhances pedestrian experiences.
  - A. Stores contribute both visual interest and activity to the street in downtown and district shopping areas and are the principal generators of street life.
  - B. Office lobbies usually lack interest for the passerby, and they can detract from a good shopping environment.
  - C. Major office buildings contribute more to street life if they have commercial activity at ground level.
- 18. Alleys and small streets which are usable as part of the general network of pedestrian and service ways are potential areas of activity and interest.
- 21. Pedestrian scale can be achieved at the base of large vertical building surfaces by the use of arcades, emphasis of horizontal divisions, texture and other architectural details.
- 22. The undergrounding of overhead utility wires enhances the appearance of streets and neighborhoods.
- 23. Attractive and well-maintained public buildings, streets and parks can stimulate private improvements.
- 25. Parks on hillsides can be developed for sitting areas with views, and for unusual recreational facilities that take advantage of the hill, such as a long slide for children.
- 31. Street rights-of-way carried through to the water allow views directly to the waterfront and provide a sense of contact with the water.

- Policy 4.1: Protect residential areas from the noise, pollution and physical danger of excessive traffic.
- Policy 4.2: Provide buffering for residential properties when heavy traffic cannot be avoided.
- Policy 4.6: Emphasize the importance of local centers providing commercial and government services.
- Policy 4.8; Provide convenient access to a variety of recreation opportunities.
- Policy 4.11: Make use of street space and other unused public areas for recreation.
- Policy 4.13: Improve pedestrian areas by providing human scale and interest.

Overall, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan responds affirmatively to the above Urban Design objectives, policies, and principles aimed at protecting the City's aesthetic values and sense of place, and at creating positive neighborhood environment. There is a potential conflict involved in introducing residential uses into a heavily trafficked neighborhood where two streets—First and Fremont—essentially serve as freeway on- and off-ramps. However, the Draft Plan responds to this potential conflict by proposing to buffer residential uses by widening sidewalks and, in the case of First Street, separating local traffic from Bay Bridge traffic.

***Transportation Element***

- Objective 1: Meet the needs of all residents and visitors for safe, convenient and inexpensive travel within San Francisco and between the city and other parts of the region while maintaining the high quality living environment of the bay area.
- Policy 1.2: Ensure the safety and comfort of pedestrians throughout the city.
- Policy 1.3: Give priority to public transit and other alternatives to the private automobile as the means of meeting San Francisco’s transportation needs, particularly those of commuters.
- Policy 1.6: Ensure choices among modes of travel and accommodate each mode when and where it is most appropriate.
- Policy 2.5: Provide incentives for the use of transit, carpools, vanpools, walking and bicycling and reduce the need for new or expanded automobile and automobile parking facilities.
- Objective 3: Maintain and enhance San Francisco’s position as a regional destination without inducing a greater volume of through automobile traffic.
- Policy 3.3: Develop and maintain an efficient system of arterials and thoroughfares to distribute traffic from regional freeways within and through San Francisco’s street grid in conjunction with the bay region’s nine-county metropolitan transportation system (MTS).
- Policy 4.5: Provide convenient transit service that connects the regional transit network to major employment centers outside the downtown area.
- Objective 7: Develop a parking strategy that encourages short-term parking at the periphery of downtown and long-term intercept parking at the periphery of the urbanized bay area to meet the needs of long-distance commuters traveling by automobile to San Francisco or nearby destinations.
- Objective 11: Establish public transit as the primary mode of transportation in San Francisco and as a means through which to guide future development and improve regional mobility and air quality.
- Policy 11.1: Maintain and improve the transit preferential streets program to make transit more attractive and viable as a primary means of travel.
- Policy 11.3: Encourage development that efficiently coordinates land use with transit service, requiring that developers address transit concerns as well as mitigate traffic problems.
- Objective 12: Develop and implement programs in the public and private sectors, which will support congestion management and air quality objectives, maintain mobility and enhance business vitality at minimum cost.
- Objective 13: Promote the development of marketing strategies that encourage and facilitate the use of transit and other alternatives to the single-occupant automobile for shopping, recreation, cultural and other non-work trips.
- Objective 21: Develop transit as the primary mode of travel to and from downtown and all major activity centers within the region.

- Policy 21.1: Provide transit service from residential areas to major employment centers outside the downtown area.
- Objective 23: Improve the city's pedestrian circulation system to provide for efficient, pleasant, and safe movement.
- Policy 23.6: Ensure convenient and safe pedestrian crossings by minimizing the distance pedestrians must walk to cross a street.
- Objective 24: Improve the ambience of the pedestrian environment.
- Policy 24.3: Install pedestrian-serving street furniture where appropriate.
- Objective 26: Consider the sidewalk area as an important element in the citywide open space system.
- Policy 26.2: Partially or wholly close certain streets not required as traffic carriers for pedestrian use or open space.
- Policy 26.3: Encourage pedestrian serving uses on the sidewalk.
- Objective 27: Ensure that bicycles can be used safely and conveniently as a primary means of transportation, as well as for recreational purposes.
- Policy 27.1: Expand and improve access for bicycles on city streets and develop a well-marked, comprehensive system of bike routes in San Francisco.
- Policy 27.3: Eliminate hazards to bicyclists on city streets.
- Objective 28: Provide secure and convenient parking facilities for bicycles.
- Policy 28.1: Provide secure bicycle parking in new governmental, commercial, and residential developments.
- Objective 29: City government should play a leadership role in increasing bicycle use.
- Policy 29.1: Consider the needs of bicycling and the improvement of bicycle accommodations in all city decisions and improve accommodation as much as possible.
- Objective 34: Relate the amount of parking in residential areas and neighborhood commercial districts to the capacity of the city's street system and land use patterns.
- Policy 34.1: Regulate off-street parking in new housing so as to guarantee needed spaces without requiring excesses and to encourage low auto ownership in neighborhoods that are well served by transit and are convenient to neighborhood shopping.
- Policy 34.3: Permit minimal or reduced off-street parking supply for new buildings in residential and commercial areas adjacent to transit centers and along transit preferential streets.

In general, it appears that the proposed Rincon Hill Plan responds affirmatively to the above Transportation objectives and policies, in that the Draft Plan, like the Transportation Element, emphasizes the use of alternatives to the automobile and attempts to de-emphasize parking that could otherwise displace other uses.



***Residence Element***

- Objective 1: To provide new housing, especially permanently affordable housing, in appropriate locations which meets identified housing needs and takes into account the demand for affordable housing created by employment growth.
- Policy 1.4: Locate infill housing on appropriate sites in established neighborhoods.<sup>43</sup>
- Objective 2: To increase the supply of housing without overcrowding or adversely affecting the prevailing character of existing neighborhoods.<sup>44</sup>
- Policy 2.1: Set allowable densities in established residential areas at levels which will promote compatibility with prevailing neighborhood scale and character.
- Objective 12: To provide a quality living environment.
- Policy 12.1: Assure housing is provided with adequate public improvements, services and amenities.<sup>45</sup>
- Policy 12.4: Promote construction of well designed housing that conserves existing neighborhood character.<sup>46</sup>
- Policy 12.5: Relate land use controls to the appropriate scale for new and existing residential areas.<sup>47</sup>
- Objective 13: To provide maximum housing choice.
- Policy 13.2: Promote adaptability and maximum accessibility of residential dwellings for disabled occupants.<sup>48</sup>
- Policy 13.3: Increase the availability of units suitable for special user groups with special housing needs including large families, the elderly, and the homeless.<sup>49</sup>
- Policy 13.7: Expand opportunities for home ownership without significantly diminishing the supply of rental housing.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>43</sup> In May 2004, the Planning Commission adopted the General Plan Housing Element, which, if approved by the Board of Supervisors, would replace the existing Residence Element, adopted in 1990. Policies of this draft Housing Element are discussed herein for informational purposes. For example, Policy 1.4 of the draft Housing Element also calls for locating infill housing on appropriate sites in residential neighborhoods. (This draft policy is not adopted as part of the General Plan.)

<sup>44</sup> Objective 1 of the Housing Element states, “Identify and maximize opportunities to increase the supply of housing in appropriate locations citywide.” (This policy is not adopted as part of the General Plan.)

<sup>45</sup> Policy 11.2 of the Housing Element calls for housing to be provided with adequate services. (This draft policy is not adopted as part of the General Plan.)

<sup>46</sup> Policy 11.5 of the Housing Element calls for well-designed housing that enhances neighborhood character. (This draft policy is not adopted as part of the General Plan.)

<sup>47</sup> Policy 11.6 of the Housing Element states, “Employ flexible land use controls in residential areas that can regulate inappropriately sized development in new and existing neighborhoods, while maximizing the opportunity for housing near transit.” (This draft policy is not adopted as part of the General Plan.)

<sup>48</sup> Policy 8.8 of the Housing Element states, “Promote the adaptability and maximum accessibility of residential dwellings for disabled and elderly occupants.” (This draft policy is not adopted as part of the General Plan.)

<sup>49</sup> Policy 8.6 of the Housing Element states, “Increase the availability of units suitable for users with supportive housing needs.” (This draft policy is not adopted as part of the General Plan.)

<sup>50</sup> Policy 8.9 of the Housing Element states, “Encourage the provision of new home ownership opportunities through new construction so that increased owner occupancy does not diminish the supply of rental housing.” (This draft policy is not adopted as part of the General Plan.)

In general, it appears that the proposed Rincon Hill Plan responds affirmatively to the above Residential objectives and policies, in that all options for the Draft Plan call for increasing the amount of housing in the Plan area. Additionally, the Draft Plan provides for an increase in affordable housing within the Plan area, as compared to the percentage of affordable units required under existing City policy.

***Open Space and Recreation Element***

- Objective 2: Develop and maintain a diversified and balanced citywide system of high quality public open space.
- Policy 2.1: Provide an adequate total quantity and equitable distribution of public open spaces throughout the city.
- Policy 2.3: Preserve sunlight in public open spaces.
- Policy 2.7: Acquire additional open space for public use.

In general, it appears that the proposed Rincon Hill Plan responds affirmatively to the above objectives and policies, in that the Draft Plan calls for provision of new open space (i.e., the proposed park adjacent to the Fremont Street off-ramp and “living streets” treatment of several north-south streets) in a neighborhood that current has minimal open space.

***Rincon Hill Area Plan***

The project area is located within the Rincon Hill Plan area, which generally extends from Essex Street to Steuart Street and The Embarcadero, and from Folsom Street to the Bay Bridge and Bryant Street. The Rincon Hill Plan was adopted in 1985 as “a Plan for the emergence of a new mixed-use neighborhood on Rincon Hill, a twelve-block area close to downtown” (p. II.3.1). The Plan described Rincon Hill as a “high priority housing site” because it was a “large area and one in which some high-rise buildings would be appropriate,” where “the land is presently underutilized,” and “[h]ighrise and midrise buildings on Rincon Hill can enjoy some of the best vistas in the Bay” (p. II.3.1). The Rincon Hill Area Plan originally recognized two subdistricts: a residential subarea, located in the core of the area; and a commercial/industrial subarea, generally located along the perimeter of the Rincon Hill area. A third, Residential/Commercial Subdistrict was adopted in early 2004, covering sites on the south side of Folsom Street between Beale and Spear Streets.

The project proposes, for the most part, to retain existing objectives and policies of the Rincon Hill Area Plan. Following are the objectives in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan:

**Land Use**

- Objective 1: To create a unique residential neighborhood close to downtown which will contribute significantly to the City’s housing supply.
- Objective 2: To create space for additional uses which will provide needed services for the resident population.
- Objective 3: To allow existing industrial, service and office uses to remain and create new such uses in designated locations. (Proposed to be revised; see p. 57.)

---

### **Housing**

- Objective 4: To provide quality housing in a pleasant environment that has adequate access to light, air and open space.
- Objective 5: To lower the cost of housing to make it more affordable.
- Objective 6: To preserve existing housing units on Guy Place and Lansing Street.

### **Urban Design**

- Objective 7: To achieve an aesthetically pleasing residential community.
- Objective 8: To capitalize on the unique qualities of Rincon Hill, specifically its sweeping views of the Bay, its proximity to downtown, and its relationship to the waterfront and Bay.
- Objective 9: To respect the natural topography of the Hill and follow the policies already established in the Urban Design Element which restrict height near the water and allow increased height on the top of hills.
- Objective 10: To preserve views of the Bay and the Bay Bridge which are among the most impressive in the region.
- Objective 11: To maintain view corridors through the area by means of height and bulk controls which insure carefully spaced slender towers rather than bulky, massive buildings.
- Objective 12: To reduce the present industrial scale of the streets by creating a circulation network through the interior blocks, creating a street scale comparable to those in existing residential areas elsewhere in the City.
- Objective 13: To reduce the widths of Main, Spear, and Beale streets to create additional developable area as well as new pedestrian space.
- Objective 14: To keep wind speeds at a comfortable level.
- Objective 15: To encourage a human scale streetscape with activities and design features at pedestrian eye level.

### **Recreation and Open Space**

- Objective 16: To develop facilities for passive and active recreation serving residents, employees and visitors.
- Objective 17: To link the area to the major public open spaces and to the waterfront promenade at the foot of the hill.
- Objective 18: To coordinate parks and pedestrian pathways with projects encompassed in the Northeastern Waterfront Plan and the South Beach—Rincon Point Redevelopment Plan.
- Objective 19: To create publicly accessible scenic overlooks and viewing areas.
- Objective 20: To create an inviting and pleasant pedestrian corridor to the financial district.

**Circulation**

- Objective 21: To create safe and pleasant pedestrian networks within the Rincon Hill Area, to Downtown, and the Bay.
- Objective 22: To reduce widths of selected streets to those which meet circulation needs and complement residential use.
- Objective 23: To improve transit service to and from Rincon Hill.
- Objective 24: To provide sufficient off street parking space for residents. (Proposed for revision; see below)
- Objective 25: To encourage joint use of parking structures. (Proposed for revision; see below)
- Objective 26: To reduce congestion at bridge ramps by improving loading patterns.

**Preservation**

- Objective 27: To preserve and adaptively reuse those buildings in the area which have particular architectural or historical merit or which provide a scale and character of development consistent with the plan. (Proposed for revision; see below)

As part of the project, some of the above objectives may be modified, but most would remain as written. As described in Chapter II, Project Description, the text of the Rincon Hill Area Plan would be updated and its maps revised to reflect the proposed concepts described in the Draft Rincon Hill Plan analyzed in this EIR. Given the proposed focus on residential development, the portion of Objective 3 calling for new “industrial, service and office uses ... in designated locations” would be deleted. Objectives 24 and 25, regarding parking, would be revised to reflect the Plan’s proposals regarding parking. Finally, Objective 27, regarding preservation, would be revised to acknowledge that the Plan would consider housing a more important goal than retention of the Union Oil (now Bank of America) Clock Tower. The Area Plan maps also would be amended. Therefore, the proposed project, as it calls for amending the area plan, would be consistent with the Rincon Hill Area Plan when amended.

It is noted that conflict with a General Plan policy does not, in itself, indicate a significant effect on the environment within the meaning of CEQA. To the extent that physical environmental impacts may result from such conflicts, such impacts are analyzed in this EIR. The General Plan contains many policies that may address different goals. In addition to consideration of inconsistencies affect environmental issues, other potential inconsistencies with the General Plan are considered by the Planning Commission independently of the environmental review process, as part of the decision to approve or disapprove a proposed project. Any potential conflict not identified in this environmental document would be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project, which are analyzed in this EIR.

### ***Sustainability Plan for San Francisco***

In 1993, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors established the Commission on San Francisco's Environment, charged with, among other things, drafting and implementing a plan for San Francisco's long-term environmental sustainability. The notion of sustainability is based on the United Nations definition that "a sustainable society meets the needs of the present without sacrificing the ability of future generations and non-human forms of life to meet their own needs." The Sustainability Plan for San Francisco was a result of community collaboration with the intent of establishing sustainable development as a fundamental goal of municipal public policy (Department of the Environment, 1997).

The Sustainability Plan is divided into 15 topic areas, 10 that address specific environmental issues (Air Quality; Biodiversity; Energy, Climate Change and Ozone Depletion; Food and Agriculture; Hazardous Materials; Human Health; Parks, Open Spaces and Streetscapes; Solid Waste; Transportation; and Water and Wastewater), and five that are broader in scope and cover many issues (Economy and Economic Development; Environmental Justice; Municipal Expenditures; Public Information and Education; and Risk Management). Additionally, the Sustainability Plan contains indicators designed to create a base of objective information on local conditions and to illustrate trends toward or away from sustainability. Although the Sustainability Plan became official City policy in July 1997, the Board of Supervisors has not committed the City to perform all the actions sketched out in the plan. The Sustainability Plan serves as a blueprint, with many of its individual proposals requiring further development and public comment.

### **San Francisco Planning Code**

The Planning Code, which incorporates by reference the City Zoning Maps, governs land uses, densities and configuration of buildings within San Francisco. Permits to construct new buildings or to alter or demolish existing ones may not be issued unless the proposed project conforms to the Planning Code or an exception is granted pursuant to provisions of the Planning Code.

San Francisco Planning Code Section 249.1 established the Rincon Hill Special Use District (SUD) to protect the existing environment and to further the goals and policies contained in the Rincon Hill Area Plan. Planning Code Section 249.1 states that the purpose of the Rincon Hill SUD is to "convert an under-utilized and outmoded industrial area to a unique residential neighborhood close to downtown which will contribute significantly to the City's housing supply, create tapered residential buildings, provide an appropriate mixture of retail sales and personal services to support new residential development, provide a buffer of office and parking use between the bridge and the freeway ramps and the housing sites, and allow the existing industrial, service and office uses to remain [intact in the district]." The Planning Code divides the Rincon Hill SUD into three subareas: a Residential Subdistrict, the largest subarea, located at the core of the SUD; a Commercial/Industrial Subdistrict located mostly along the northern, eastern and southern perimeter of the SUD; and a new Residential/Commercial Subdistrict, added in February 2004 in connection with approval of mixed-use projects at 201 Folsom Street and 300 Spear Street, that covers the south side of Folsom Street between Beale and Spear Streets.

The SUD is an overlay, with underlying zoning in the Plan area consisting of three zoning districts: RC-4 (Residential-Commercial Combined District, High Density), M-1 (Light Industrial), and P (Public) Use Districts (see Figure 2, Planning Code Use Districts, p. 7 in Chapter II). The RC-4 District represents the predominant zoning district in the Rincon Hill SUD, in the Residential and Residential/Commercial Subdistrict. In the RC-4 Residential Subdistrict, the Planning Code currently requires 6 square feet of residential space for every 1 square foot of commercial space. In addition to residential development, the RC-4 zoning district permits convenience goods and services in or below the ground story (in most instances), and prohibits automotive-oriented establishments. Residential density in the RC-4 zoning district is limited to one unit per 200 feet of lot area. Table 2, p. 15 in Chapter II, summarizes other controls in the RC-4 Use District.

M-1 Districts in the Plan area are located in two discrete areas, one at the southwest corner of Folsom and Beale Streets, and the other extends in a semi-circle along the perimeter of the Rincon Hill SUD, in the Commercial/Industrial Subdistrict. M-1 District permit light industry, especially transportation-dependent uses, and a number of institutional uses. Residential development is conditionally permitted at the density of, in this instance, the RC-4 District. Table 2, p. 15 in Chapter II, summarizes other controls in the M-1 Use District.

P zoning is restricted to one-fourth of the block bounded by Folsom, Spear, Harrison, and Main Streets, where a U.S. Postal Service facility is located.

The current Rincon Hill Area Plan consists of six height and three bulk districts (see Figure 4, Existing Height and Bulk Districts). Heights range from 84 feet to 400 feet, while the allowable bulk is an R, a W, or an X. The R bulk district, which applies to all of the existing Rincon Hill SUD except the newly approved Residential/Commercial Subdistrict along Folsom Street between Beale and Spear Streets, allows a maximum horizontal building length (plan length) of 200 feet, and a maximum diagonal dimension of 200 feet above 51 feet in height, and, above 105 feet in height, allows a maximum plan dimension of 110 feet and a maximum diagonal dimension of 125 feet. The W bulk district, which applies to the newly approved Residential/Commercial Subdistrict, permits a maximum plan length of 110 feet and a maximum diagonal dimension of 125 feet for towers up to 300 feet tall, and a maximum plan length of 115 feet and a maximum diagonal dimension of 145 feet for buildings over 300 feet tall. There are no bulk limitations in the X bulk district.

## IMPACTS

### ***SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA***

A project would have a significant impact if it would:

- Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community; or,
- Have a substantial adverse impact on the existing character of the vicinity.

## ***LAND USE CHANGES***

The proposed Rincon Hill Plan would replace the current SUD and two of its three subdistricts with a new Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed-Use (DTR) District. The existing underlying zoning districts would be eliminated in the area covered by the new Rincon Hill DTR District, which would be a new zoning district within the Planning Code. Under two of the options analyzed, the zoning changes proposed in the Rincon Hill Plan would also change existing height and bulk districts to intensify and expand residential land uses in the Plan area, primarily by encouraging the development of mid- and high-rise buildings, between Folsom and Harrison Streets west of Spear Street, and along the south side of Harrison Street between Fremont and Essex Streets. The most intense new residential development in the Plan area is anticipated along Fremont Street (between Folsom and Harrison Streets) and around the intersection of First and Harrison Streets, as well as on the south side of Folsom Street between Spear and Beale Streets, site of the four residential towers approved in February 2004.

- The Rincon Hill DTR District would increase residential densities in an area in which residential land use is quickly expanding. In contrast to the existing Rincon Hill Commercial-Industrial SUD where maximum residential density is established at one unit per 200 feet of lot area, the proposed Rincon Hill DTR controls would have no residential density limit. Additionally, the proposed height and bulk controls would likely become a catalyst for future mid- and high-density residential projects by yielding a greater possible number of dwelling units per lot area. The increased number of residential units would fuel demand for neighborhood-serving commercial uses either within or in close proximity to the Plan area. Existing commercial/industrial land uses would be retained as nonconforming uses. The proposed Rincon Hill Plan would continue to encourage a greater amount of future residential growth rather than commercial growth.

Commercial development in the area would be limited to the lower levels of future residential buildings (below 85 feet), and to a maximum of one square foot of non-residential use for each six square feet of residential use, as is the case under existing controls in the Rincon Hill Residential Subdistrict. The Rincon Hill Plan requires such uses for projects fronting on the south side of Folsom Street, and encourages ground floor retail space along Harrison, First, Fremont, Beale, and Main Streets. As a result, the Rincon Hill DTR District would be anticipated to reduce the number of sites currently used for surface parking and the number of existing underutilized buildings, and increase the amount of housing and commercial activity in the Plan area, especially at the ground level. These effects, taken together, could increase the number and type of “destinations” and mix of uses within Rincon Hill, with associated increases in pedestrian activity.

Permitted densities would be compatible with existing residential densities in the area, and would complement densities to the north and west of the Plan area in the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area and in adjacent areas such as the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area (e.g., the Paramount residential tower and St. Regis Museum Tower, at Third and Mission Streets). Existing commercial and residential uses along the southern perimeter of the Rincon Hill Plan area (e.g., the San Francisco Telecom Center, the Baycrest and the Portside Condominiums) would provide a transition in scale and use to the existing

and planned mix of residential, commercial and recreational uses to the immediate south of Rincon Hill (e.g., Bayside Village, and the San Francisco Cruise Ship Terminal and the associated residential project now under construction at Bryant and Beale Streets).

In general, therefore, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would encourage the continued development of Rincon Hill as a primarily residential neighborhood, consistent with the trend since the adoption of the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan in 1985, and particularly with development over the last few years, while updating the existing Plan's implementation to ensure adequate separation between towers and provide neighborhood services and amenities. The Plan would produce a change in the character of the area, but the change would be in keeping with City goals.

This EIR evaluates the Preferred Option, which calls for a 115-foot separation between towers, as well as two other options. The essential differences in the options are based on tower spacing. The Preferred option includes towers spaced at least 115 feet from one another, which would result in a maximum of three towers per block. This option would result in foreseeable future development concentrated near First and Harrison Streets at the top of Rincon Hill (with fewer towers on Fremont Street, compared to options assuming lesser space between towers), consistent with the General Plan's policy of locating tall, slender buildings on hilltops to emphasize the form of the hill and to preserve public views. Under this scenario, four new towers could be permitted, in addition to the five already approved and two recently completed.

The greatest number of towers within any of the options analyzed in this EIR would be accommodated by the 82.5-foot minimum tower separation option. Under this option, tower spacing would relate to the width of area streets and up to seven new towers could be accommodated in the Plan area, in addition to the five already approved and two recently completed. Five of these towers would be clustered on Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets and around the intersection of First and Harrison Streets.

The 150-foot minimum tower separation option would retain existing height limits and thus would reduce the number of new towers to three, in addition to the five already approved and two recently completed, given the minimum tower separation requirements. In this option, the Bank of America Clock Tower site at First and Harrison Street could accommodate only one tower, rather than the two currently proposed.

In terms of land use, the effects of any of these options would essentially be the same. The primary differences between these options would be the number of dwelling units that could be constructed in the area (see Section III.D, Population and Housing).

Where differences in permanent residential populations could result in environmental effects, these effects are analyzed in the respective sections of this EIR (e.g., Traffic, Air Quality, and Noise).



### ***NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER AND COMPATIBILITY***

The proposed Rincon Hill Plan area currently has pockets of residential uses interspersed with underutilized buildings and surface parking lots. Any of the options included in the proposed Rincon Hill DTR District would result in the addition of publicly accessible open spaces and ground floor retail that would create “destinations” within the neighborhood. Rincon Hill’s proximity to the Financial District and the downtown area, and to BART and other transit, increases the likelihood that the project would increase foot traffic and result in a 24-hour presence throughout the area. The core residential area would link existing housing development in the district’s eastern and western areas.

Over time, the Plan assumes that it is likely that smaller parcels could be consolidated to allow buildings with larger footprints. However, the requirement for setbacks at specified heights and the requirement for slender towers separated by at least 115 feet would reduce the overall appearance of “walls” of high-rise development along Folsom and Harrison Streets, as well as along First, Fremont, Beale and Main Streets, although 85-foot-tall buildings could be built on sites where towers would not be permitted. Furthermore, the potential for such consolidation would be minimized in the Guy Place-Lansing Street enclave by the substantially lower height limits proposed there under the proposed Plan, compared to other locations in the Plan area.

The predominant high-density residential land use designation would encourage residential development, which would be compatible with existing development in the Plan area, as well as development under construction in and around Rincon Hill. The proposed Plan acknowledges the need for affordable housing and a mix of housing types. The plan requires future projects to adhere to the City’s inclusionary housing requirements, which require 12 percent of on-site or 17 percent of off-site units be affordable; unlike citywide rules, within the Plan area, this requirement would apply to all projects, regardless of whether Conditional Use authorization is required. Further, there would be an additional affordability requirement at 120 percent of median income, based on economic analysis. Moreover, the plan sets forth the goal for the unit mix to be varied, with a minimum of 40 percent two-bedroom units or larger.

New residential uses in the Plan area would increase the demand for open space and recreation uses, which are deficient within Rincon Hill. The plan seeks to address this lack of open space by planning for a future park on a parcel currently owned by Caltrans, located to the east of the Fremont Street off-ramp from the Bay Bridge. In addition, the plan proposes a number of improvements to the public realm under the title of “living streets,” which includes sidewalk widenings with pocket parks, tree plantings, and street furniture. Implementation of the plan’s “living streets” would provide approximately 30,000 square feet of new active open space, changing the area’s character from one primarily defined by its historic industrial development pattern to an active, predominately high-density mixed-use neighborhood.

In summary, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan options discussed above would neither disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community, nor would any of the Plan options have a substantial adverse impact on the existing character of the vicinity, and project land use impacts would not be significant.

### ***CUMULATIVE EFFECTS***

Implementation of the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Project Area could result in substantial amounts of new housing, commercial (including office, retail, and hotel) and open space uses north of Rincon Hill.

Folsom Street would act as a transition between the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Project Area and the Rincon Hill Plan area, and could be transformed from a relatively quiet (except during rush hour as traffic heads for the freeway) street bordered by numerous undeveloped parcels to a built-out boulevard with residential and commercial uses side-by-side and a large amount of pedestrian traffic. This street would play an important role in defining the identity of both the Transbay Area and Rincon Hill Plan area as a seamless border between two neighborhoods, providing a mix of jobs, housing and support services. Development foreseen under the Transbay Redevelopment Plan, coupled with the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, would ultimately lead to a more intense urban character of both areas. If the full package of proposed planning controls is implemented, the mix of land uses would bridge the predominately high-density, intensive commercial uses to the north in the downtown core with a mix of residential, commercial, support and open space uses in the Transbay Area giving way to predominately high-density residential uses within Rincon Hill.

Intensified residential uses at the core of the Rincon Hill area would complement the Transbay development, and provide a corridor of residential and compatible commercial uses linked to the Financial District and the downtown. Implementation of the Rincon Hill DTR District and the Transbay Terminal/Redevelopment project would have the cumulative effect of intensifying land uses in currently underdeveloped areas of the city adjacent to downtown. This could provide new opportunities for downtown employees to live in proximity to their workplaces. Together with cumulative development, however, the proposed project would neither disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community, nor would it have a substantial adverse impact on the existing character of the vicinity, in that both the Rincon Hill and Transbay areas would represent continuation of existing development trends and therefore cumulative land use impacts would not be significant.

---

### **REFERENCES—Land Use, Plans and Policies**

City and County of San Francisco, *2000.048E San Francisco Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension/Redevelopment Project*, Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report, October, 2002

City and County of San Francisco, Department of the Environment, *The Sustainability Plan for the City of San Francisco*, 1997.

## B. AESTHETICS, VISUAL QUALITY AND URBAN DESIGN

### SETTING

#### *VISUAL CHARACTER*

The visual character of Rincon Hill is varied, reflecting the evolution an early 20th century industrial and residential area to an urban neighborhood characterized by a mix of uses and building types, without a high degree of visual definition or coherence. The existing visual character of Rincon Hill is defined by its topography, location, and prevailing urban form; the geometry of its street grid and surrounding transportation infrastructure; and variety of building types, including early 20th century warehouses and residential enclaves, contemporary office complexes, and most-recently, mid- and high-rise residential uses.

Rincon Hill's topography rises from the east near the waterfront at Spear Street to the west around First Street, and crests at approximately 100 feet above sea level. From the north at Folsom Street, Rincon Hill rises more gradually to the south to Harrison Street. Along its western side, Rincon Hill's topography steps down to Essex Street. From the south, the natural landform of Rincon Hill is visible between the Bay Bridge Anchorage and approaches along Bryant Street.

In 1847, Jasper O'Farrell extended the north of Market street grid to the South of Market, overlaid on Rincon Hill's existing topography.<sup>51</sup> The SOMA street grid shifts abruptly 45 degrees to the east along its diagonal alignment north of Market Street and results, in the Rincon Hill area, in blocks about twice as large as those to Market Street's north.<sup>52</sup> Transportation infrastructure influences the visual character of Rincon Hill by creating strong visual boundaries and voids within the proposed Plan area. Near the foot of Folsom Street, where the now-demolished Embarcadero Freeway commanded the north side<sup>53</sup> of the street for 30 years, the expanse of pavement and parked vehicles provides no visual amenity (Figure 13, upper photo). This image is repeated on parts of the south side of the street, where commercial and US Postal Service (USPS) Annex parking lots are interspersed among occasional buildings. The restored Embarcadero Lofts (historic Coffin-Redington building) on Beale Street, the renovated Hills Plaza, the Gap headquarters and Hills Plaza buildings at Spear Street, contrast against large expanses of asphalt parking lots.

---

<sup>51</sup> Throughout San Francisco's history, transportation projects such as the Second Street Cut and the Bay Bridge have altered Rincon Hill's original topography by greatly reducing its height.

<sup>52</sup> In general, blocks faces along Folsom, Harrison and Bryant Streets (the east-west streets) have a 5275-ft. frontage, and blocks perpendicular to them (the north-south streets) have an 550-ft. frontage. Blocks are larger west of First Street.

<sup>53</sup> The northern side of Folsom Street is part of the proposed Transbay Terminal Redevelopment Project Area and is not included within the boundaries of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan area.



Folsom and Main Street to the west



Bay Bridge anchorage and overhead span from Spear Street

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 13**  
Visual Setting Photos

The elevated span of the Bay Bridge dominates views in a southerly direction along Rincon Hill, and visually defines the southern extent of the Plan area. In places, the Bay Bridge Anchorage lacks ornament and formal variation and tends to be absorbed by surrounding structures, except where Rincon Hill falls away and the anchorage and bridge steel work take on sculptural qualities (Figure 13, lower photo). South of Bryant Street, mid-rise residential structures and a collection of warehouses in the South End Historic District set against the water's edge are characteristic of Rincon Hill's visual environment along the Bay.

The buildings in the western portion of Rincon Hill, bounded by Folsom, First, Harrison and Essex Streets in the Guy-Lansing Street loop (Assessor Block 3749), convey their historic character in design and materials; the block's scale is mixed, as are its land uses. Predominately a residential enclave, the block is interrupted by two narrow, 35-foot-wide streets: Lansing, which dead-ends at Essex Street on the western end of the project area, and Guy Place, which curves eastward to First Street. Building heights generally range from one to five stories (up to 85 feet), and front on the street with no setback. Mature street trees line portions of Guy Place. This pattern of narrow streets with smaller-scale development creates a sense of enclosure at the street level (Figure 14, upper photo). Former light industrial uses are also located along First Street at the corners of Folsom Street and Guy Place. These buildings are of masonry construction, typically have larger footprints and are bulkier than other buildings within the block. In recent years, these buildings have been adaptively reused and converted to residential or office uses.

Since the mid 1980s, a number of residential buildings have been constructed in Rincon Hill. Residential buildings are located throughout the Plan area. Examples include the moderne-inspired Portside Condominiums on Spear and Harrison Streets; the residential tower at Hills Plaza along Spear Street (Figure 14, lower photo); the jutting, angular Avalon Towers on Beale Street; Rincon Hill's tallest residential building, the Bridgeview, on Beale Street with the Baycrest Apartments to its west; and, the Metropolitan, consisting of two towers along First and Folsom Streets (Figure 15). These buildings generally consist of a podium with one or two towers and range in height from 85 to 250 feet; some have balconies, and most orient the bulk of their towers east to take advantage of Bay views. Residential buildings are accessible from one or more entries; some, like Hills Plaza, are in mixed use buildings.

Commercial and institutional uses are located along First and Fremont Streets. Smaller-scaled, turn of the century commercial structures front on the eastern and western sides of Fremont Street and on Harrison Street, west of First Street (Figure 16). These structures are generally two to three stories, some with surface parking between them. Institutional uses are interspersed with commercial uses along First and Fremont Streets, and include two unions; a union hiring hall; a health and welfare fund office; an outpatient medical clinic; and a residence and dining hall providing temporary homeless shelter.

Despite its ongoing evolution into a residential neighborhood, Rincon Hill does not contain a high level of pedestrian amenity. Sidewalks are narrow, generally 10 to 12 feet, and as little as 7 feet along parts of Harrison Street, and contain no pedestrian street lighting; overhead utility lines are visible along





Guy Place from First Street



The Gap Headquarters building (left) and the residential tower at Hills Plaza (right)

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 14**  
Visual Setting Photos



Avalon Towers



The Bridgeview



The Baycrest



The Metropolitan





Fremont Street, at Harrison Street



Harrison Street, at First Street

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 16**  
Visual Setting Photos



Folsom Street, and public seating and gathering areas are generally enclosed within private developments, though some buildings, such as Hills Plaza, provide publicly accessible pedestrian passageways with plazas. Landscaping is limited to a few locations along building frontages (e.g., along Spear Street), neighborhood parks are deficient in the area, with the nearest public open spaces located along The Embarcadero (e.g., Rincon Point Park and Herb Caen Way), in SOMA (e.g., South Park) or at Yerba Buena Gardens, all outside of the Plan area.

Rincon Hill thus acts as a transition zone for the adjoining financial, waterfront, residential, service, industrial, and institutional uses, and with its visual character defined by an aggregation of parts of surrounding neighborhoods.

### ***VISUAL RESOURCES***

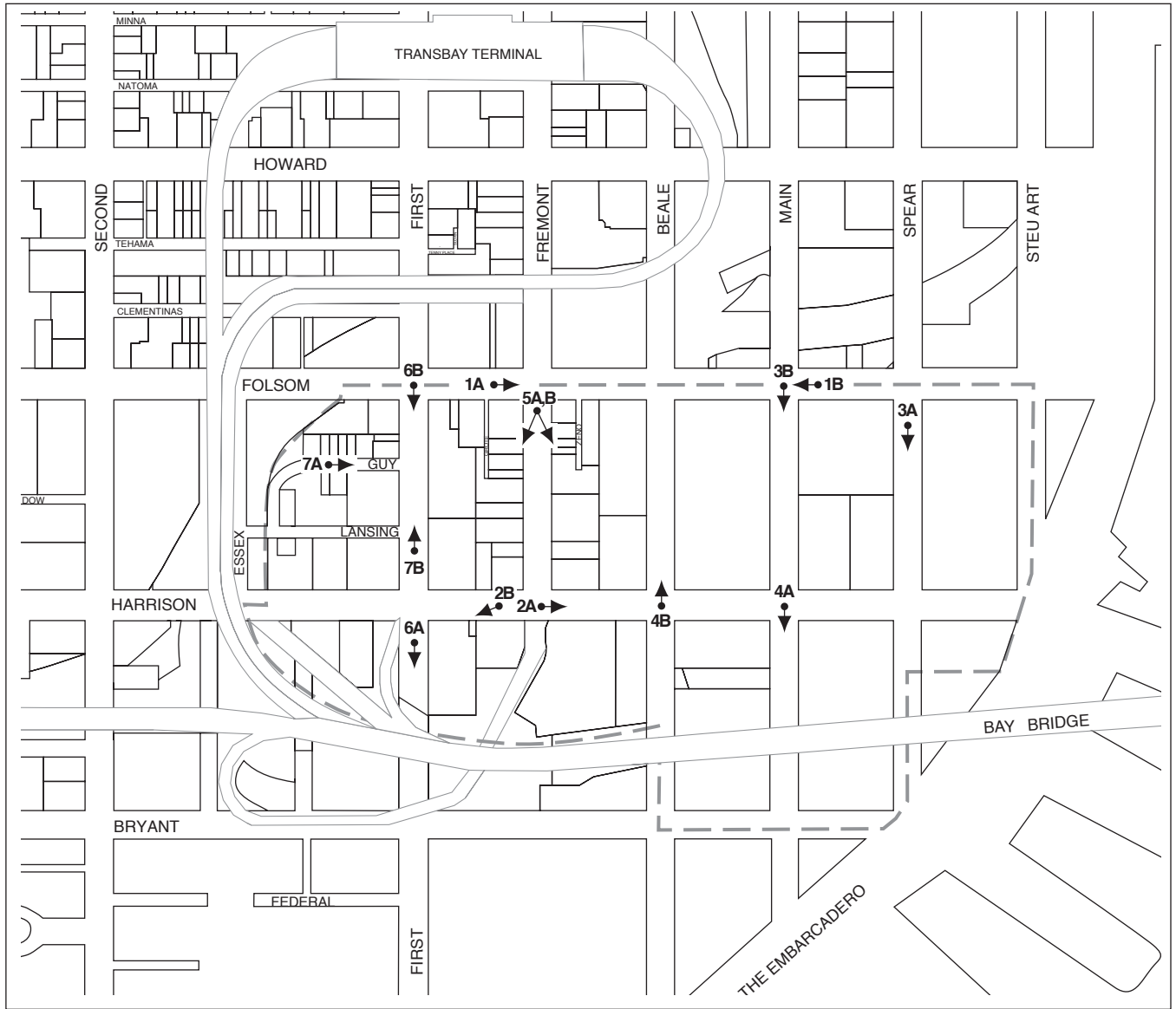
Other than its topography, Rincon Hill lacks individual natural landscape and built features with scenic resource value, and does not contain a visually remarkable diversity of vegetation. While several buildings exhibit architectural styles of historical interest, Rincon Hill has a limited number of structures that have been recognized as possessing exceptional design or historic value either in themselves or because they represent the work of major architects. Notable exceptions are William Gladstone Merchant's streamlined-moderne Sailor's Union of the Pacific Building at 450 Harrison Street; Klockar's Blacksmith Shop at 443-447 Folsom Street; the Hills Brothers Coffee Company by George Kelham at 2-30 Harrison Street; the Joseph Magnin Warehouse at 29-35 Harrison Street, designed by George Applegarth in 1918; the Hathaway Warehouse at 400 Spear Street; the Bank of America (former Union Oil Co.) Clock Tower by Louis Hobart; the Coffin-Redington building by Frederick Meyer at 301 Folsom Street; and the Gimbel Brothers Candy Factory at 501 Folsom Street. Some of these buildings have been renovated and adapted to accommodate more modern uses such as office/loft conversions. For more information, see Section III.I, Historical Resources.

### ***VIEWS***

#### **View Corridors**

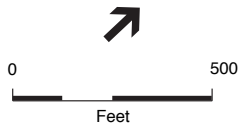
View corridors are described by physical elements such as buildings that guide lines of sight and control view directions available to pedestrians and motorists. View corridors include the total field of vision visible from a specific vantage point. Public view corridors are areas in which views are available from publicly accessible viewpoints, such as from city streets and other public spaces. Photos are included in this section to supplement the descriptions of publicly accessible views, described below. Representative views described in this section are included on the Viewpoint Location Map ([Figure 17](#)).

Due to its location near the eastern edge of the City, its varied terrain, and the low-rise character of most of its developed uses, Rincon Hill provides a rich variety of views. Unobstructed long-range views of major regional landmarks are available and include the Bay, Treasure Island, Yerba Buena Island, the



**LEGEND**

- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- Viewpoint and Direction of View Corridor



SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 17**  
Viewpoint Location Map

East Bay Hills, the Bay Bridge, Twin Peaks, and the downtown skyline, as discussed below. Rincon Hill also affords smaller-scale views, such as streetscapes in which visual interest is provided by architectural elements, intermittent street-level views into narrow alleyways (e.g., Zeno Place) and through buildings (e.g., Hills Plaza). In some places, trees and other vegetation line building frontages.

### **East-West Streets**

East-west axial views provide street view corridors that currently terminate at the waterfront and include the view corridors down Folsom and Harrison Streets as well as a portion of Bryant Street. In these axial views, long-range views of Twin Peaks to the west and the Bay, Bay Bridge, and Yerba Buena Island and Treasure Island to the east provide the corridor's visual endpoints and, consequently, a measure of orientation. Because the visual landmarks generally visible along the east-west corridors are natural features, they also provide strong, and under some lighting and water conditions, dramatic, contrast with the built urban environment.

Bay views to the east are partially framed by buildings of varying height along Folsom Street. Views dissipate over surface lots before terminating at the Bay and Yerba Buena Island to the east ([Viewpoint 1A, Figure 18](#)). Views to the west along Folsom Street are of surface parking lots, warehouses, a PG&E substation, and the Metropolitan condominium towers ([Viewpoint 1B, Figure 18](#)). The north side of Folsom Street is less densely developed than its south side, with fewer buildings defining the street edge. At Essex Street, an elevated ramp crosses Folsom Street and visually divides the western portion of Rincon Hill from the adjacent South of Market Neighborhood. Mid-rise buildings outside of the Plan area (e.g., Marathon Plaza, Courtyard Marriott Hotel) are visible west of the ramp on its north and south sides; views permeate underneath and terminate at Twin Peaks in the distance.

From Harrison and Fremont Streets looking east, the hill slopes gradually downward toward the waterfront ([Viewpoint 2A, Figure 19](#)). Tall residential buildings lining Harrison's southern frontage (e.g., Bridgeview, Baycrest), and a mix of uses along its northern frontage (e.g., Avalon Towers, USPS Annex, Hills Plaza) frame views of the water's edge that centers on the eastern span of the Bay Bridge. Looking west, existing views uphill are limited due to Harrison Street's slope, and terminate at the intersection of First and Harrison Streets at the top of Rincon Hill. The Bank of America Clock Tower acts as prominent visual feature and point of orientation on the hilltop; it is visible not only from within Rincon Hill but also from the Bay Bridge and in southerly views from downtown ([Viewpoint 2B, Figure 19](#)).

Views along Bryant Street to the west (from Spear, Main, and Beale) are defined by the exposed rock faces and the height of the Bay Bridge anchorage and its associated vehicular on-ramps. To the south, the Bayside Village residential complex is visible. To the east, views are defined by the overhead span of the Bay Bridge, piers, and other waterfront uses lining The Embarcadero, and expanses of open water of the San Francisco Bay.



Viewpoint 1A - Looking east along Folsom Street



Viewpoint 1B - Westerly view along Folsom Street

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 18**  
Representative View Corridors





Viewpoint 2A - Easterly view along Harrison Street



Viewpoint 2B - Bank of America Clock Tower, Harrison at First Street

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 19**  
Representative View Corridors

### North-South Streets

North-south axial views within the area (e.g., Spear, Main, Beale, Fremont, First and Essex Streets) typically focus on structures set against expanses of sky. Many of these structures may be regional landmarks, and include downtown office towers to the north and the Bay Bridge to the south. From Folsom Street, existing southerly views along Spear Street include the residential tower of the Hills Plaza building, office buildings, and the Bay Bridge Anchorage. To the west, the San Francisco Telecom Center is set back behind surface parking ([Viewpoint 3A, Figure 20](#)). At Harrison Street, building heights taper down, constrained by the Bay Bridge's 110-foot overhead span. Views at the terminus of Spear Street along The Embarcadero are framed by the bridge and open sky. To the north, high-rise office buildings frame views on both sides of Spear Street.

Southerly views along Main Street from Folsom Street are defined by surface parking and the eight-story USPS Annex on the west side of the street; to the east, the telecom center is visible ([Viewpoint 3B, Figure 20](#)). South of Harrison Street, the Portside Condominiums and the massive concrete anchorage of the Bay Bridge, including its long steel connectors on its underside, are visible. Views to the south down Main Street currently are of the Bay but will soon include views of a mid-rise residential building (with a tower) on a seawall lot associated with the San Francisco Cruise Ship Terminal Project. The Baycrest and Portside Condominiums frame views at the corner of Harrison and Main ([Viewpoint 4A, Figure 21](#)). Northerly views along Main Street include office towers in SOMA and the downtown.

Along Folsom Street, southerly views down Beale Street include the surface parking in front of the USPS Annex to the east, and The Embarcadero lofts and Avalon Towers to the west. Harrison Street is elevated where it crosses Beale Street, and both the Harrison Street overpass and the Bay Bridge span obstruct through-views to the south. Looking north from Harrison above the bridge crossing Beale Street, views terminate at downtown office buildings. As shown in [Viewpoint 4B \(Figure 21\)](#), because of the shifted North of Market Street grid, views of the 101 California Street building terminate in the center of the Beale Street viewshed.

Views along Fremont Street to the south (at Folsom) are framed by small-scale, two and three-story buildings to the east, and the PG&E substation to the west ([Viewpoint 5A, Figure 22](#)). The substation dominates views at the southwestern corner ([Viewpoint 5B, Figure 22](#)).

From within the proposed Plan area, north-south axial views through Rincon Hill are interrupted by the rise in the hill's topography at First Street and at Fremont Street, with the Bay Bridge approach creating a visual barrier along Harrison Street ([Viewpoint 6A, Figure 23](#)). Views to the north include the wall of downtown office towers.

Southerly views along First Street are emphasized by larger-scale uses along its eastern street frontage and accentuated by the rise in Rincon Hill's topography. Views include the 200- to 250-foot towers of the Metropolitan condominiums, the slightly protruding building mass of the Sailor's Union Pacific





Viewpoint 3A - Spear Street, at Folsom Street, looking south



Viewpoint 3B - Main Street, at Folsom Street, looking south

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 20**  
Representative View Corridors



Viewpoint 4A - Main Street, looking south from Harrison Street



Viewpoint 4B - Beale Street, looking north from Harrison Street

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 21**  
Representative View Corridors





Viewpoint 5A - West side of Fremont Street looking north from Folsom Street



Viewpoint 5B - East side of Fremont Street looking north from Folsom Street

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 22**  
Representative View Corridors



Viewpoint 6A - Fremont Street looking south toward Harrison Street



Viewpoint 6B - First Street looking south from Folsom Street

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 23 (Revised)**  
Representative View Corridors



Building and the Bank of America Clock Tower at Harrison Street. Along the west side of First Street, existing buildings are shorter than those across the street, and include the four-story brick Gimbel Brothers Candy Factory building at 501 Folsom Street and a four-to-five story converted light industrial (loft) building adjacent to the Lansing/First Street intersection ([Viewpoint 6B](#), [Figure 23](#)).

In the context of larger scale views along First Street, views to the west along Guy Place and Lansing Street are of smaller scaled buildings fronting on a narrow street. Because of the curvature of Guy Place and Lansing Streets, views into this predominately residential area terminate at residential buildings or at trees at the ends of the streets. From Guy Place and Lansing Street, short-range views terminate at the Metropolitan's podium on First Street, flanked by its two towers ([Viewpoint 7A](#), [Figure 24](#)).

Rincon Hill's form is discernable to the east in southerly views along Essex Street. From Folsom Street, views are of surface parking and the residential uses located on the hill along Guy Place and Lansing Streets. Trees and shrubs are visible on the hillside. To the east, views are of the elevated Bay Bridge off-ramps, which are under construction.

### ***URBAN FORM***

San Francisco's skyline may be characterized by a general pattern of densely clustered high-rise commercial development in the downtown core that tapers off to low-rise development at its periphery. This compact urban form signifies the downtown as the center of commerce and activity and produces a downtown "mound," distinctive from the City's numerous hills. Although distinctive, this form is neither smooth nor uniform. A range of building heights in the downtown creates gaps, peaks, dips and inconsistencies within this pattern, allowing taller buildings and building tops to stand out in profile against the sky. The tension between conformity and variety in the skyline results in a readable and recognizable image for San Francisco, with notable landmarks such as the Transamerica Pyramid, sitting apart from the "mound."

South of the Transbay Terminal, from Main Street westward, the Terminal and its associated bus ramp system and rights-of-way have constrained post-World War II development, and building heights along the southern edge downtown tend to drop off abruptly, characterized by a mix of low-rise, early 20th century buildings, surface parking, and bus off-ramps; only 301 Howard Street and the more recently built 199 Fremont Street have been developed at large scale within the loop created by the terminal ramps. By contrast, east of Main Street, the southern edge of the downtown high-rise urban form has not been constrained by the Transbay Terminal, and the transition southward is more gradual, with several 1960s-era high-rise office buildings extending south beyond Howard Street. This is particularly evident in views from the Bay Bridge approaching the City.

To the east, comparatively low buildings along the waterfront contribute to the tapering of height from hilltops to water. The transition from inland to the waterfront is marked by a gradual stepping down of building heights, as is recommended by the Rincon Hill Area Plan and the Urban Design Element of the General Plan. Nearby buildings on the waterfront, such as Hills Plaza and the Gap building, incorporate



Viewpoint 7A - Easterly view from Guy Place



Viewpoint 7B - First Street looking north

an intricate, staggered design and are set back from the waterfront above their bases and upper levels. This design approach acknowledges the meeting of land and water while respecting the natural topography of the area; reduces the appearance of a towering street wall; and maintains a pedestrian-scaled environment close to the waterfront.

West of Essex Street, office, hotel and residential uses extend into the South of Market neighborhood at a similar (mixed) scale.

### **Element in the Cityscape**

Rincon Hill is a component in panoramic views of the City, and it is part of the dynamic view sequences experienced while entering the City from the south and east. Existing views from Treasure Island are characterized by the area's natural features which include wide, open expanses of the San Francisco Bay in the foreground in contrast to the dense cluster of man-made features—specifically high-rise buildings in the City's downtown core—in the mid-ground, set against a background of the distant hills to the west. From this vantage point, certain elements unique to the region stand out and provide the viewer with a measure of orientation: the towers, span and elevated deck of the Bay Bridge frame the southern edge of these views; a pattern of mid-rise buildings in the Rincon Hill and South of Market neighborhoods that gradually step up in height to around Mission Street; and the densest cluster of high-rises visible between Market and California Streets that creates the crest of the downtown "mound." Along the waterfront, the Ferry Building contrasts against the office towers in the background. The Embarcadero Center, the Bank of America Building at 550 California Street and the Transamerica Pyramid at Montgomery and Clay Streets rise above the cluster of buildings and frame panoramic views at the northern edge of the downtown.

Views from the upper deck of the Bay Bridge are similar, though these images are viewed in a dynamic entry sequence as part of a westbound approach into the City. When viewed from the Bay Bridge, the downtown "mound" of high-density office towers creates a visual gateway of the City when arriving from the East Bay: a collection of mid-rise buildings is visible in the foreground, of which the project area is a part. In these views, the Plan area's lack of prominent large-scale structures reduce its visual importance, especially in relation to the distinctive built form of the downtown skyline as well as natural features, such as the landform of Twin Peaks in the distance. This aspect of Rincon Hill as an element in the cityscape has begun to change in recent years, however, with the construction of several relatively taller residential structures, including Avalon Towers and the Bridgeview, on either side of Harrison Street at Beale, and the recently completed Metropolitan towers at First and Folsom Streets. In many cases, the bulk of new residential towers have obscured views to and from downtown.

Rincon Hill is also visible from long-range public vantage points from within the City, such as from the Potrero Hill and the Randall Museum below Twin Peaks. From Potrero Hill, Interstate 280 dominates foreground views, along with new buildings under construction at the UCSF Mission Bay campus. The project area is located in the center of this image, with the Bank of America Clock Tower

situated between the cluster of high-rise office towers to the north and Avalon Towers and contemporary residential buildings in the adjacent South-Beach neighborhood, Pac Bell Park, and the Bay Bridge to the south.

From the Randall Museum, at an elevation of approximately 350 feet above sea level, sweeping views are available of small-scale private residences in the Corona Heights neighborhood in the foreground; high-rise office buildings in San Francisco's Civic Center, Mid-Market and Downtown areas dominate views in the mid-ground, and the East Bay Hills in the background provide a distant backdrop to the City's built environment. To the south, the Bay Bridge towers and the Bank of America Clock Tower in Rincon Hill provide orientation points within the project area.

From the Police Officers' Association building near Sixth and Bryant Streets in South of Market, Rincon Hill is visible in views to the east. From this location, similar to views from the I-80 eastbound approach to the Bay Bridge, the viewshed is characterized by an expanse of two-, three- and four-story rooftops in the foreground. In the mid-ground, building heights begin to rise around Fourth and Harrison Streets and become gradually taller toward the north. In the background, the Bay Bridge towers, the Bank of America Clock Tower and the Metropolitan residential towers in the Plan area are visible.

Existing views from the viewpoints described above are illustrated in the Impacts discussion as part of a series of photosimulations beginning on p. 92.

### ***LIGHT AND GLARE***

Sources of light and glare around the Rincon Hill neighborhood are generally limited to the interior and exterior lights of buildings and lighting visible through windows, parking lots, and city streets. These sources of light are typical of those in a developed urban area. In addition, cars and trucks traveling to, from and within Rincon Hill represent a source of glare.

## **IMPACTS**

### ***SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA***

A project would have a significant impact if it would:

- substantially degrade or obstruct publicly accessible scenic views;
- substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the area, or result in a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect; or
- generate obtrusive light or glare that would adversely affect views or substantially affect other properties.

The significance determination is based on consideration of the extent of change related to project visibility from key public vantage points, as well as the degree of visual contrast and compatibility in

scale and character between proposed project elements and the existing surroundings, and the sensitivity of the affected view.

The analysis of the Plan's effect on the Rincon Hill's visual character or quality focuses on how the existing aesthetic quality in the area could change based on design elements proposed in the Plan. The analysis considers the Plan's proposed neighborhood design guidelines, which would regulate building massing, articulation, height, and ground-floor treatment. The analysis also considers the Plan's proposed improvements to the public realm, including open space provisions and implementation of a coordinated streetscaping program. Because the proposed design guidelines would apply to all options included in this EIR, a single analysis of the Plan's impact on visual quality is presented.

The analysis of the Plan's effects on views considers the number of towers proposed under each option in relation to topography, siting and separation, and the Plan's proposed requirements concerning height, bulk, and sculpting. Concurrently, the discussion of views also includes an analysis of changes to San Francisco's urban form, specifically in the context of changes to the downtown skyline. Where environmental effects are common to all options, these effects are presented in a single analysis. Where visual and aesthetic changes would result in potential impacts specifically related to any one of the particular options, a discussion of these impacts is included specific to that option.

### ***VISUAL QUALITY***

The proposed Rincon Hill Plan could result in the removal of visual elements with neutral or low aesthetic value, including surface parking lots and, in some cases, deteriorated buildings, thereby potentially enhancing the visual quality of Rincon Hill. The overall character of the Rincon Hill area would continue to experience a change that has been under way for several years, from a mid-rise area with a mix of more industrial building types and parking lots, to a denser urban neighborhood of mid- to high-rise residential and mixed-use buildings, interspersed with designated areas of open space and enclaves of older housing and commercial buildings.

The Plan also could lead to the removal of visually important buildings, notably the Bank of America (former Union Oil Co.) Clock Tower at First and Harrison Streets, visible to those crossing the Bay Bridge into San Francisco.

The existing scale of the Plan area could change, as the Plan's proposed height limits could encourage the construction of tall, sculpted structures that could replace smaller-scale buildings. Mid- and high-rise construction within the district would be concentrated in the area fronting on Folsom Street, Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets, and on Harrison Street, between Fremont and Essex Streets.

Height limits would regulate both podium height and tower height. The Plan would reduce the podium height from 105 feet to 85 feet in most areas, except for certain areas in the Guy-Lansing enclave and the south side of Harrison Street where podium heights would be further reduced to 45 and 65 feet, respectively. The Plan calls for a minimum height of 50 feet, and requires upper levels to be set back

15 feet at a height of 65 feet. On alleyways and mid-block passageways, the 15-foot setback would be required above 45 feet.<sup>54</sup> Over time, these requirements could promote the development of uniform street walls, at heights related to existing street widths (generally 82.5 feet). Moreover, upper-level setbacks would reduce the apparent height of the podiums and would allow for semi-private open spaces atop the podium levels. Balconies and bay windows could create a regular rhythm of projections and recesses, increasing the visual interest of the street wall.

With respect to towers, height limits would be increased under the Preferred Option and 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option around the First/Harrison Streets intersection, where heights of as much as 550 feet would be permitted. This is generally consistent with objectives in the General Plan's Urban Design Element to accentuate the natural topography of the Hill, and to taper heights down to the water. Regardless of which Plan option, if any, is approved, a great degree of visual change would also occur along the Folsom Street corridor between Spear and Beale Street, where two already approved projects, each consisting of a pair of 350-foot and 400-foot tower above an 80-foot podium are expected to be built.

Although future buildings would generally be larger than existing buildings in Rincon Hill, increases in building height would not, in themselves, result in an adverse change in regard to visual quality. As discussed in the Land Use section, several recently constructed residential buildings in the area range in height from approximately 200 to 250 feet. Other recent rezoning and project approvals have increased permitted heights to 400 feet at select locations in the Plan area. The Plan's proposed bulk controls and other requirements related to towers, discussed below in greater detail under Views, would result in the development of taller, more slender, and more widely spaced buildings within Rincon Hill than currently exist. These buildings could provide orientation points and increase the area's physical distinction by introducing variety and contrast to large areas with similar streets and buildings, and would preserve more public views than continued development under existing controls, which have permitted reduced tower spacing through exceptions granted pursuant to Planning Code Section 271.

Aside from design considerations and physical impacts related to tower height (e.g., potential view obstruction and shading), the manner in which future buildings meet the street, the reduced podium heights and required setbacks above 65 feet, and the more slender towers would define the aesthetic character of the pedestrian realm. The Plan's guidelines for massing and articulation call for future building designs to clearly define a base, mid-section and top. The Plan further recommends dividing building facades in vertical section and employing bay windows and balconies, using a "clean, simple palette of colors and materials" and avoiding unusual shapes. Such provisions would help to visually relate new development with existing, adjacent uses.

For residential uses, the Plan would require individual entries on the north-south streets within the area. Residential entries would be required at intervals of no more than 25 feet (or 50 feet at corners or where towers come directly to the street). Individual entries would be set back 5 to 10 feet from the sidewalk.

---

<sup>54</sup> Along Guy Place and Lansing Streets, setbacks of 20 feet would be required above a height of 45 feet.



These setbacks would allow for stoops and landscaped entryways. The visual pattern of individual entryways on the street would reinforce the residential use of the building, create an active rhythm at the building's edge, and also accommodate individual landscaped areas that could add green space along townhouse frontages. This pattern of entryways would aid in establishing visual transitions from public space (on the sidewalk) to private space (in the home).

The Plan would not only clearly delineate the private from the public realm; it also calls for substantial improvements to the public realm. The Plan proposes a "living streets" streetscaping treatment along Spear, Main and Beale Streets. Sidewalks on these streets would be widened on eastern block frontages to about 32 feet to allow for the creation of usable open space areas that could be programmed with a variety of open space uses not currently available in the area, particularly: plazas, café seating, lawns, dog runs, play areas, public art, etc. Public rights-of-ways would be landscaped with rows of street trees, which could add substantial amounts of greenery where there is currently little, as well as frame view corridors.

As noted, the area's greatest visual changes would occur along Folsom Street. The Plan calls for the transformation of Folsom Street into a boulevard with a mix of pedestrian-oriented retail along its ground floor, in addition to sidewalk widening and landscaping. For commercial uses, the Plan requires ground floor retail for no less than 60 percent of all frontages. Double-height storefronts would provide transparency and maximize sunlight access to interior spaces. Folsom Boulevard would actively promote place making, by creating an identifiable center for both the Rincon Hill area and adjacent Transbay neighborhood, which takes in the north side of Folsom Street.

Of the existing visually cohesive areas within the study area, the least change would come to the Guy-Lansing enclave, where building height limits would be reduced by 20 feet to 65 feet within the block's inner portions. Externally, development on surrounding blocks would, however, be expected to bring closer the backdrop of mid- to high-rise buildings that has until recently been limited to the north end of the district ([Viewpoint 7B](#), [Figure 24](#)).

While the proposed Plan would result in aesthetic changes within Rincon Hill, these changes are neither necessarily significant nor adverse. Future uses and building designs would be developed pursuant to the City's General Plan and a set of urban design controls and guidelines proposed by the Rincon Hill Plan as discussed in Chapter II, Project Description, and Chapter III.A, Land Use, Plans and Policies.

Development in Rincon Hill could result in noticeable changes in visual quality associated with the construction of new buildings, the continued adaptive reuse of historically significant buildings, and an overall intensification of urban uses. At the same time, the development of certain arguably unsightly vacant parcels and surface parking lots, the anticipated provision of open space(s) of meaningful size, and area-wide streetscaping improvements could enhance the visual quality of the area. Future buildings in the area could define, unify and contribute positively to Rincon Hill's visual context.

Although visual quality is subjective, it can reasonably be concluded that the proposed buildings themselves would not result in a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect on the existing visual character or quality of the area and its surroundings.

### ***VIEWS***

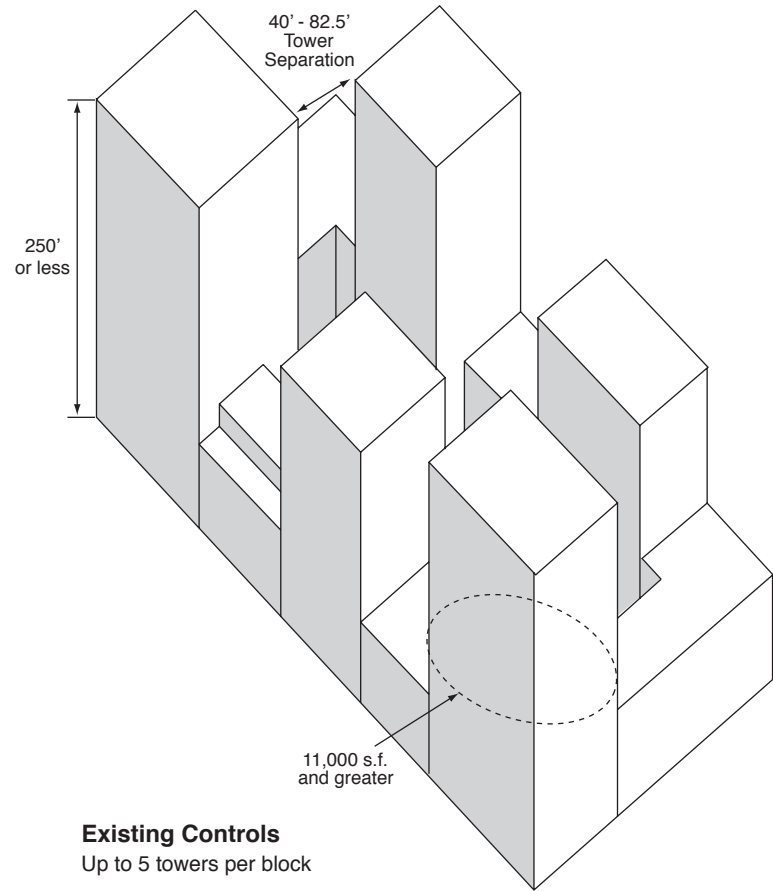
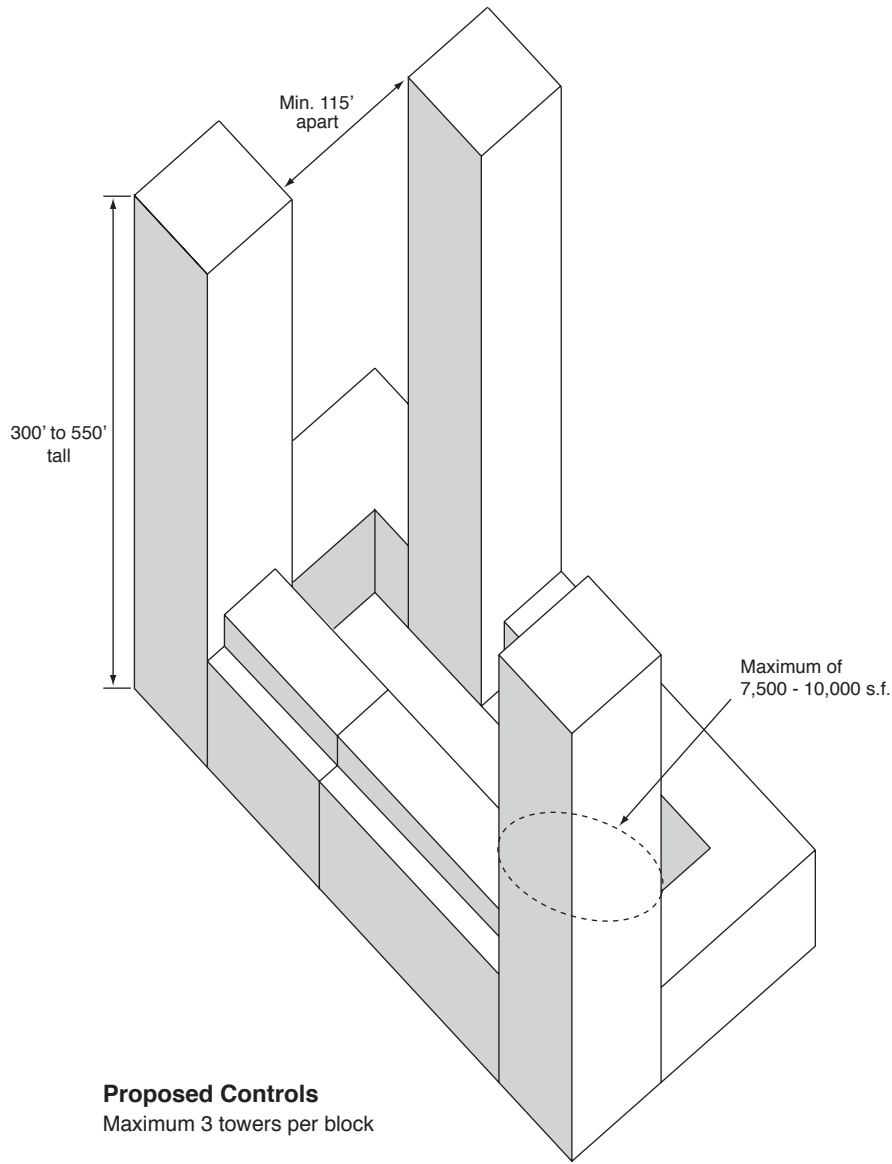
Existing views, both within and across the study area, would be altered with development that could occur under any of the options for the Rincon Hill Plan area. Depending on the option ultimately approved, the Rincon Hill Plan could result in the development of a combination of between eight and 12 high-rise residential towers, some of which are already approved and not yet constructed, along with other podium-level (85-foot) buildings. As discussed below, while the analysis concludes that each of the options included in the proposed Plan would result in less-than-significant effects to views, the magnitude of their effects would vary greatly. Figures 8 through 11 in the Project Description illustrate these scenarios.

The Preferred Option and the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option would both allow for the greatest heights compared to existing conditions, mainly at the top of Rincon Hill around Harrison Street and First Street near Fremont Street. The 150-foot (Existing Controls) Option would not include increased height limits, instead retaining existing height limits, with a maximum of 250 feet, except in the 400-foot height district created on Folsom Street between Beale and Spear Streets in February 2004. Including the five approved but unbuilt towers, the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option could result in 12 new towers in the Plan area, followed by 9 associated with the Preferred Option and 8 under Existing Controls.

Of the three options, the Preferred Option would have heights equal to the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option, with fewer towers and greater separation between them (115 feet versus 82.5 feet), though with a lesser tower separation than the Existing Controls Option (150 feet). Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Option would result in less clustering of towers given the Plan's limitation of three towers per block and greater tower separation. Figure 25 contrasts the proposed bulk controls of the Preferred Option to recent implementation of current controls with bulk exceptions granted pursuant to Planning Code Section 271, which have, in some instances, permitted minimal tower separation of as little as 50 feet.

The 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option would result in more clustering of towers at a lesser separation and with less visual permeability than the Preferred Option. Separation of towers in the Preferred Option would relate to the maximum plan length of towers allowable under that option; at 82.5 feet, separation of towers in the 82.5-foot Option would relate to the width of streets in the Plan area.

The 150-foot (Existing Controls) Option is based on tower spacing that matches existing controls of 150 feet (which also corresponds to about the diagonal dimension of towers), and assumes that the existing controls would be enforced, without an increase in height limits or exceptions granted pursuant to Planning Code Section 271 to permit more closely spaced towers. Indeed, while towers would be shorter and have the greatest separation under this option, they would also have comparatively larger floor plates and be bulkier relative to their maximum heights (250 feet), thereby resulting in squatter towers and



potentially a less graceful urban form, which would do little to accentuate the topography of Rincon Hill, or to differentiate Rincon Hill's skyline from that of the adjacent downtown. With this option, Rincon Hill would not become a discernable feature on the skyline; instead, the skyline would "flatten out" and blend into taller development of the Transbay Development Area and downtown.

As such, increased development under any option would result in the loss of some existing views, particularly in oblique (diagonal) views across the district as a whole, as opposed to views along its streets. Public view corridors would remain down existing streets; however, they would be increasingly constricted horizontally over time by increased podium heights and the construction of towers, particularly along east-west streets such Folsom Street (and to a lesser degree along Harrison Street), and on north-south streets, especially along Fremont and First Streets.

From Rincon Hill's eastern edge, views to the west along Folsom Street would include intensification of built elements along both sides of the street under all proposed options. Surface parking lots visible on the south side of the street at Main and Beale Streets would each be occupied by the already-approved 300 Spear and 201 Folsom Street projects that would develop building podiums to approximately 80 feet, above which 350- and 400-foot towers would sit. Similar to the proposed 82.5-foot Option, the towers' diagonal spacing, as approved, would be approximately 82.5 feet. Podiums would define the street edge and create a street wall consistent with the prevailing heights along Folsom Street. West of Beale Street, the general lack of available building sites and the presence of lower height limits in the Guy-Lansing enclave would preclude towers, other than the recently built Metropolitan towers at 333 First Street, under any of the Plan options.

Development pursuant to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan could horizontally constrain existing views. For example, in views to the east from locations in the western part of the Plan area, future buildings could obstruct existing views of more distant buildings along the street frontage (e.g., Hills Plaza), though views along Folsom Street of the Bay would continue to be available.

Along Harrison Street, views to the west of the existing Bank of America Clock Tower ([Viewpoint 2b, Figure 19](#)) could change with the construction of a residential building consisting of one or two towers ranging in height from 200 feet (for the single tower) to 450 to 550 feet. The 550-foot tower, if built, would be among the tallest buildings in San Francisco, and its position near the top of the 100-foot-tall summit of Rincon Hill would make this building appear even taller.

Views to the west of First Street could also include new residential uses, which in two of the options could include one or two 400-foot towers (Preferred Option and 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option, respectively).

Views along north-south streets would also change under all of the options due to height increases associated with the construction of townhouses in podiums. The greatest change in views would occur on Fremont Street looking south from Folsom Street: views of up to five towers, including the approved building at 325 Fremont Street, would be available from this location (82.5-foot Option). Similarly,

views to the south along First Street from Folsom Street also would include up to five towers (with some variation as to setback from the street), including the two recently completed towers of 333 First Street (82.5-foot Option). The least amount of change to existing views along Fremont Street would come under the Existing Controls, 150-foot Tower Separation Option, in which building heights on the east side of the street would increase to about 105 feet, the existing podium-level height limit (in addition to the approved but not yet constructed, 200-foot project at 325 Fremont Street) and one 250 foot tower would be visible along the east side of Fremont at Harrison.

In views to the north, towards downtown, new residential towers would appear to bring the backdrop of downtown closer to Rincon Hill, closing the gap between downtown high-rises and those in the Plan area, which would be compounded by the proposed new construction in the Transbay Redevelopment Plan Area and could further define individual downtown buildings in views to the north, as shown in Viewpoint 4b (Figure 21, p. 77).

The relationship between existing areas of low, mainly industrial buildings with large footprints, and areas of tall, larger-scale buildings would be made more gradual by incorporating podiums with heights of 45 to 85 feet. The proposed Plan could also increase public view corridors in the area as a result of the requirement for mid-block pedestrian passageways, which would provide new view corridors through building podiums and could reduce the perceived size of existing large South-of-Market block faces. By requiring new construction to incorporate clearly defined lower building sections, new buildings could create an orderly and regular street wall and a gradual transition in building height and mass that would often be imperceptible to pedestrians. Moreover, the 10 percent volume reduction that would be required for the upper towers for buildings 300 feet or taller would act to further minimize view blockage and create point towers along the skyline.

Even though it is likely that land uses would intensify, there would exist more space between towers with smaller tower floor plates and less bulky tower profiles in Rincon Hill than on the blocks north of Market Street, given the proposed requirements for separation between towers. The Preferred Option's required 115-foot separation of towers would provide a greater ratio of sky to building mass than in the downtown (with 30-foot tower spacing), despite increases in heights comparative to existing conditions. Thus, although height limits would be raised to heights similar to areas north of Market Street, development would not likely appear as dense given the tower separation and maximum number of towers per block within the substantially larger block size in South of Market/Rincon Hill.

In light of the above, while development pursuant to the Draft Plan would result in substantial intensification of both height and density in the Rincon Hill Plan area, and some new development would obstruct portions of certain longer-range views of and through the Plan area, the Plan would not be considered to result in a significant adverse impact with regard to views. Obstruction of long-range views, described below, would occur over a limited visual field in any given view, because short-range and mid-range views from within the Plan area and nearby locations would be preserved along streets in the Plan area, and because view corridors along existing streets within the Plan area would remain largely

unobstructed, especially in terms of longer-range views of the Bay or hills that now exist along these streets.

### ***CHANGES IN URBAN FORM***

As illustrated in Figures 26, 31, 36, 41, and 46 (setting photos in the sequence of visual simulations that follow), with increasing distance, Rincon Hill becomes a visually more indefinable and indiscernible element of the City's skyline and the viewer observes a more abstract collection of colors, patterns and shapes. As such, aside from distinctive elements (e.g., the Bay Bridge, Bank of America Clock Tower, and Bridgeview and Metropolitan towers), the area serves now as a generally neutral part of the visual context for major view elements.

The Rincon Hill area would become a more distinctive part of views from outside the study area as development over time generally becomes taller toward the top of Rincon Hill, as described above. It is also likely that over time, construction of high-rise structures would continue to migrate southward from north of Mission Street toward Rincon Hill. Generally, it can be expected that the Transbay and Rincon Hill areas would become more densely developed. A digital model has been included that simulates building heights and masses in the proposed Rincon Hill Plan area that could be built under the proposed zoning controls. Figures 26–30 depict simulated westward views from the upper deck of the Bay Bridge; Figures 31–35 provide simulated views from Treasure Island; Figures 36–40 present simulated views from Potrero Hill; Figures 41–45 present simulated views from the Randall Museum; and Figures 46–50 provide simulated views from atop the Police Officers' Association building near Sixth and Bryant Streets. These views contrast those of existing conditions (illustrated in Figures 26, 31, 36, 41, and 46) with approved projects (plus the Transbay Plan), with the Preferred Option, with the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option,<sup>55</sup> and with existing Rincon Hill Controls.

The overall effect of development under the Rincon Hill Plan would be to create an additional concentration of high-rise development distinct from downtown that would serve as a counterpoint to existing high-rise development north of Market Street. The increased height limits proposed as part of the Rincon Hill Plan would permit construction of substantially taller and less bulky buildings than are currently allowed in the Plan area, with the tallest buildings permitted atop Rincon Hill itself, consistent with the direction in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan and the General Plan Urban Design Element to allow increased heights on hilltops in order to emphasize the natural topography. Whereas existing permitted building heights range to a maximum of 250 feet, the Draft Plan, under the Preferred and 82.5-

---

<sup>55</sup> The 82.5-foot Option is illustrated by photosimulations of the "Extended Pipeline Option," described in Chapter II, Project Description, p. 39, as having been considered and withdrawn. This option is similar to the 82.5-foot Option, although with 15 towers (including approved buildings), compared to 12 towers under the 82.5-foot Option. The differences include: two towers on the east side of Fremont Street near Harrison Street under the Extended Pipeline Option, compared to one tower with the 82.5-foot Option; two towers on the north side of Harrison Street west of First Street under the Extended Pipeline Option, compared to one tower with the 82.5-foot Option; and the Extended Pipeline Option includes a short (150-foot) tower on Folsom Street between First and Essex Streets. The Extended Pipeline Option demonstrates the maximum potential visual change that could occur should the proposed new height limits be adopted and projects continue to be approved with minimal spacing between towers based on exceptions contained in the current Rincon Hill zoning.





SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 26**

Existing View from Bay Bridge



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 27**

Photosimulation from Bay Bridge  
of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan

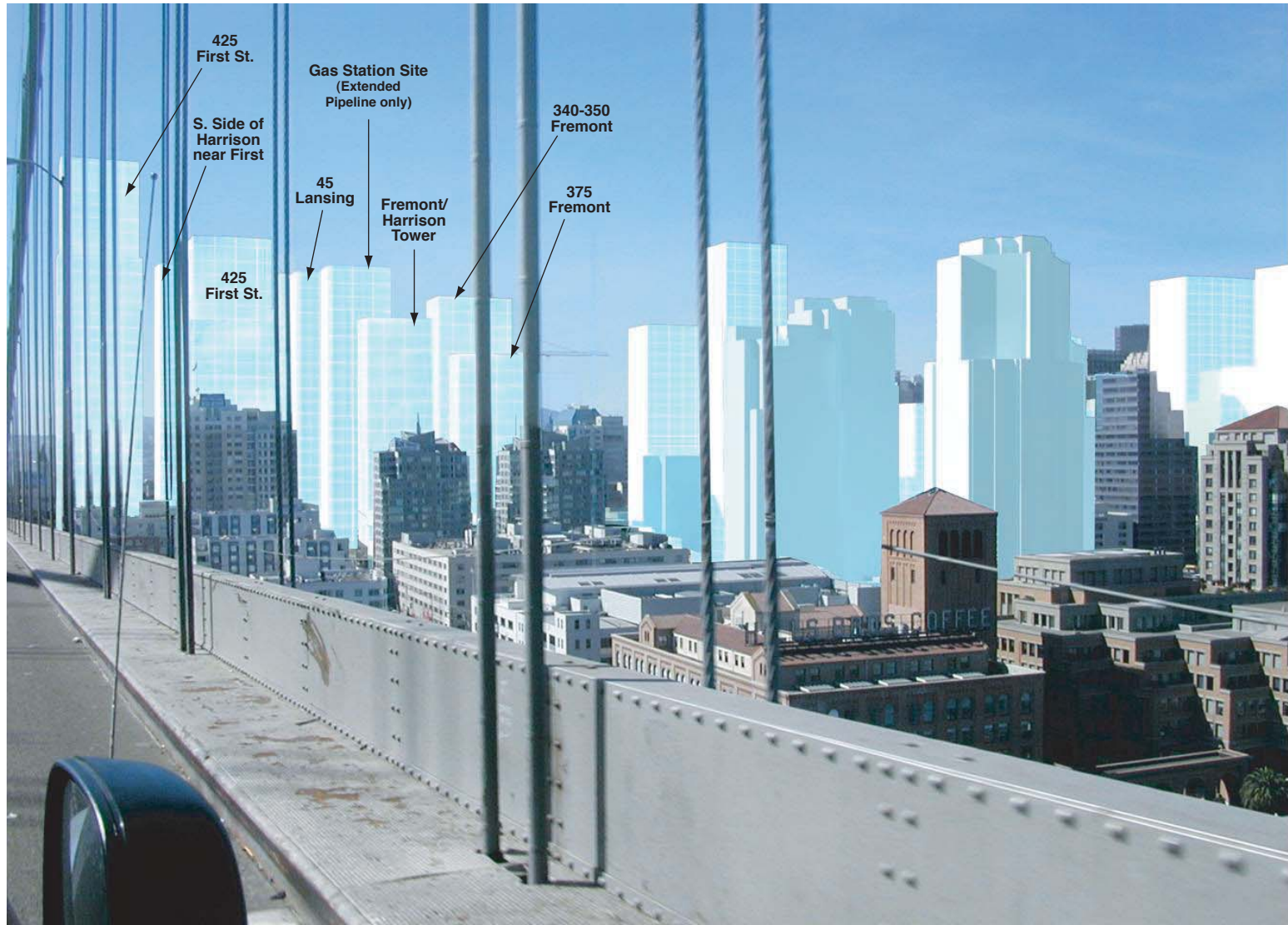




SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 28**  
Photosimulation from Bay Bridge  
of Preferred Option



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 29**

Photosimulation from Bay Bridge of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option





SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 30**

Photosimulation from Bay Bridge  
of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option

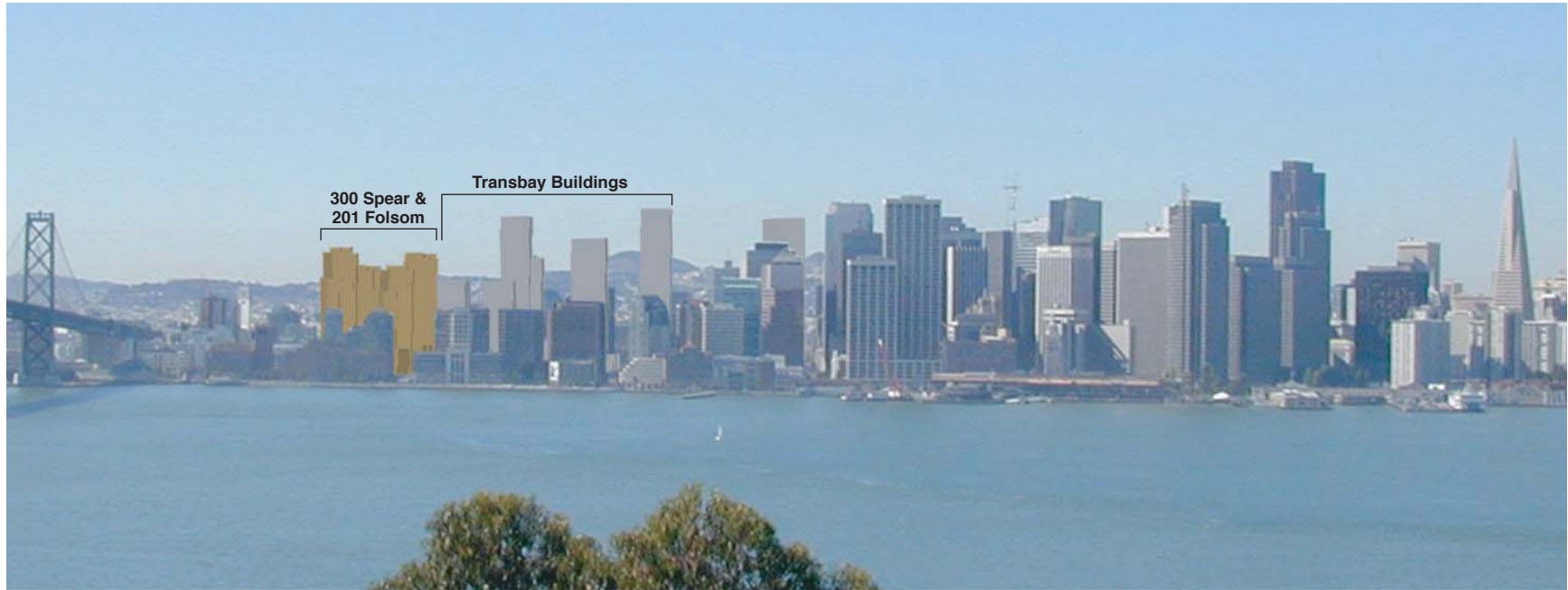


---

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 31**  
Existing View from Treasure Island



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 32**

Photosimulation from Treasure Island  
of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 33**

Photosimulation from Treasure Island  
of Preferred Option





SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 34**

Photosimulation from Treasure Island of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 35**

Photosimulation from Treasure Island of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option





SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 36**  
Existing View from Potrero Hill

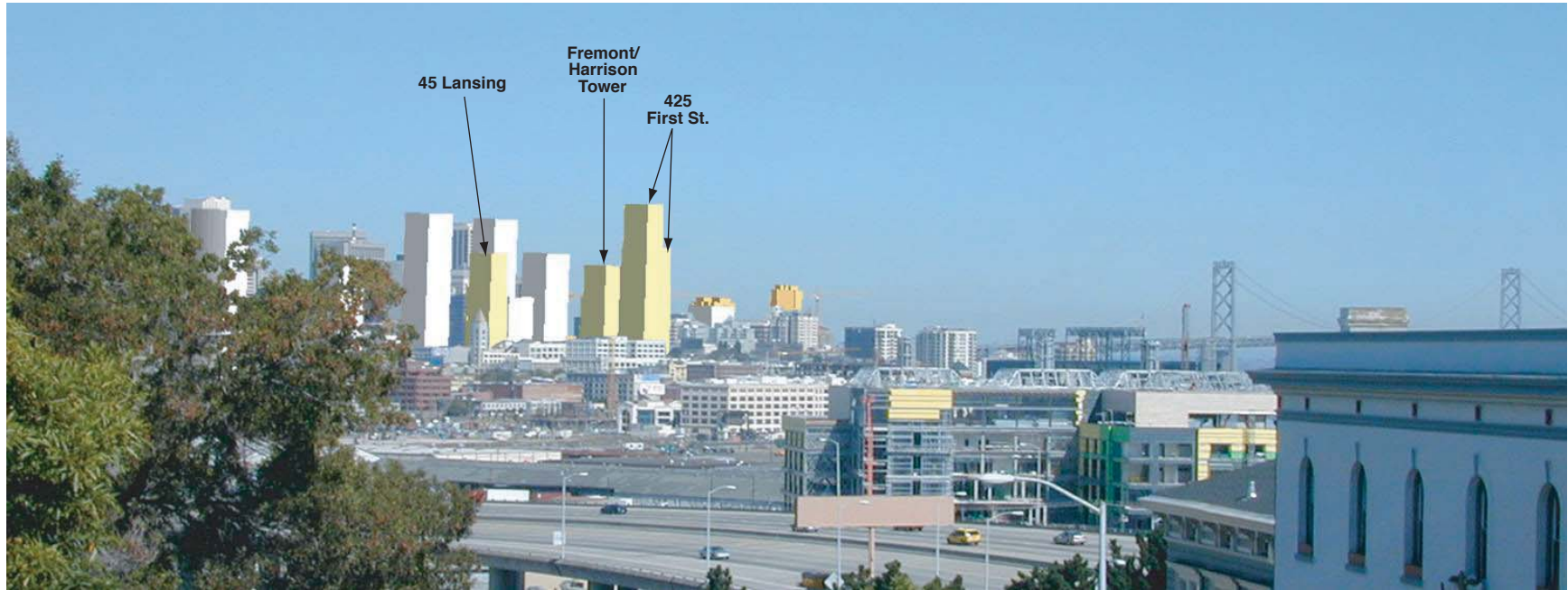


SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 37**

Photosimulation from Potrero Hill  
of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan

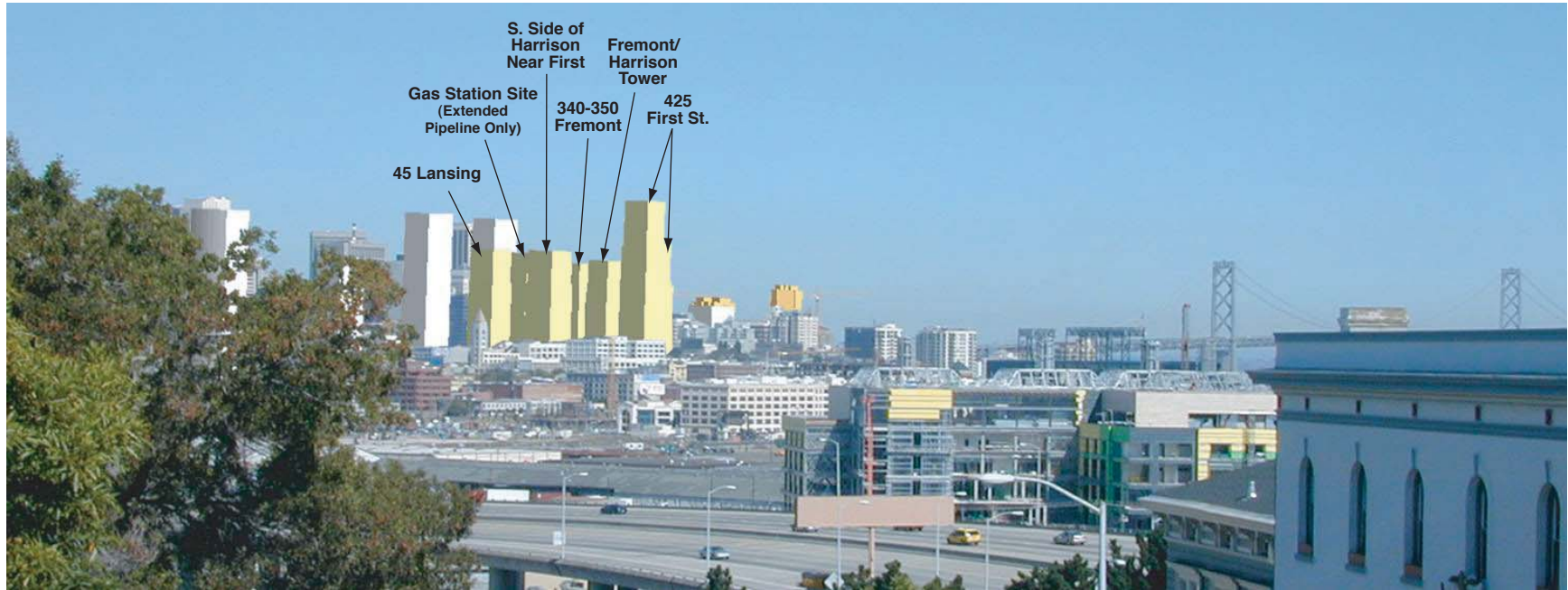


SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 38**  
Photosimulation from Potrero Hill  
of Preferred Option





SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 39**

Photosimulation from Potrero Hill  
of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 40**

Photosimulation from Potrero Hill  
of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 41**

Existing View from Randall Museum





SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 42**

Photosimulation from Randall Museum of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 43**  
Photosimulation from Randall Museum  
of Preferred Option





\* 82.5-foot Option includes either 375 Fremont or 399 Fremont but not both

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 44**  
Photosimulation from Randall Museum  
of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 45**

Photosimulation from Randall Museum of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option





SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 46**  
Existing View near Sixth and Bryant Streets



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 47**  
Photosimulation near Sixth and Bryant Streets  
of Approved Projects plus Transbay Plan

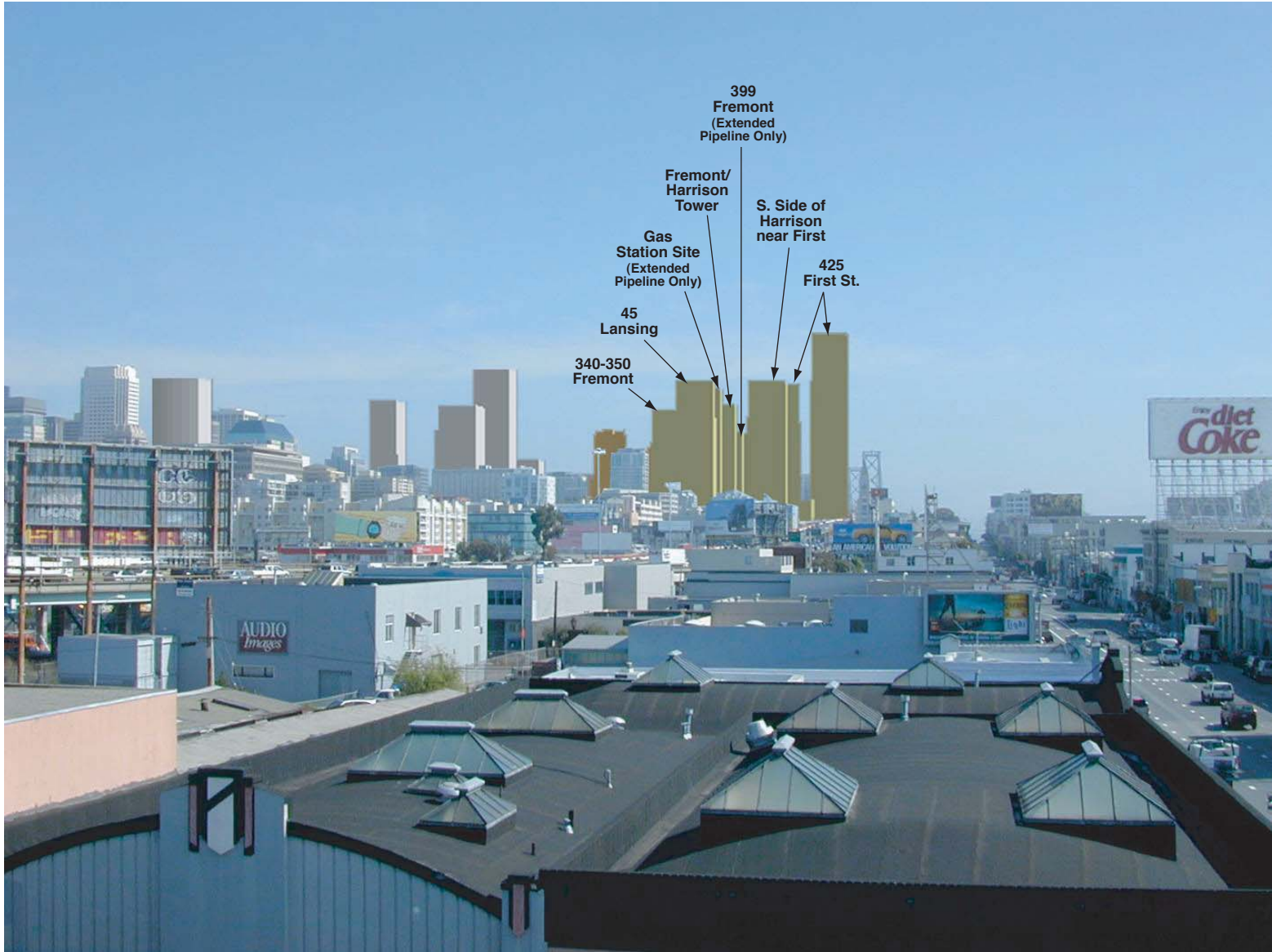


SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 48**  
Photosimulation near Sixth and Bryant Streets  
of Preferred Option





SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 49**  
Photosimulation near Sixth and Bryant Streets  
of 82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 50**  
Photosimulation near Sixth and Bryant Streets  
of 150-Foot (Existing Controls) Option



foot Tower Separation Options, calls for permitted heights of between 400 and 550 feet at the hilltop, in limited areas along Harrison Street between Essex and Fremont Street. (In addition, a 400-foot height limit was approved in early 2004 along the south side of Folsom Street between Beale and Spear Streets). As noted above, the 550-foot tower proposed as part of the 425 First Street project would, if built, be among the tallest buildings in San Francisco.

Thus, under any of the options, distant views of the City's skyline would change because new buildings could be constructed over time. As illustrated in Figure 27, the Rincon Hill Plan would be implemented in the context of an area already undergoing transition: existing views would be altered by towers in the Transbay Redevelopment Project Area and by the already approved, bulkier and taller (350- and 400-foot) 201 Folsom/300 Spear residential towers regardless of what option of the plan, if any, is ultimately approved. Three new point-towers (450-550 feet) within the Transbay Redevelopment Project Area would be visible between Mission and Howard Streets from this vantage point. As depicted in the simulations, the location of the towers coupled with their slender profiles would preserve intermittent views of the hills to the west in the distance. From the Bay Bridge, these buildings would increase the existing scale of development and bring the backdrop of tall buildings once located north of Mission Street further south, closer to the Bridge.

On the south side of Folsom Street, a greater degree of tower clustering compared to existing conditions would be prevalent associated with the approved (though not yet constructed) 201 Folsom/300 Spear projects. From Treasure Island, towers in the foreground (350 to 400 feet) would be set against taller towers (up to 550 feet) in the background. On the south side of Folsom, the approved 201 Folsom/300 Spear Street projects would appear as a dense cluster, with two towers each on their respective sites, separated by 82.5 feet. As shown in Figure 32, compared to development anticipated in the Transbay area immediately to the north, the 201 Folsom and 300 Spear Street buildings would allow for substantially less visual permeability through the towers, and would obstruct views of the hills in the distance. In contrast, as shown in Figure 33, although it would permit taller buildings, the Preferred Option would retain some view to the hills along Harrison Street.

Similarly, from the Bay Bridge views would be altered by approved development in the Transbay Redevelopment Plan Area and also by the 201 Folsom and 300 Spear Street buildings. Whereas Rincon Hill's lower profile buildings allowed for views of buildings in the downtown core, attention would be drawn to new projects that could be built in the Plan area, given increases in scale at locations closer to the Bridge. In addition, depending on the specific location on the Bridge, towers that could be developed under either the Preferred or 82.5-foot Separation Options could obstruct views of Twin Peaks in the distance (Figures 28 and 29); though this obstruction would be greater under the 82.5-foot Separation Option, because of less air space between the towers.

From the south along I-280 near Potrero Hill and from the residential neighborhoods on Potrero Hill, visual changes would also occur regardless of what plan option is approved. As illustrated in Figures 37 through 40, any of the Plan options would increase the scale of existing development and appear to draw

the dense line of towers further to the south; however, in these views from this vantage point, the new towers would not obstruct views of the Bay Bridge.

From the Randall Museum,<sup>56</sup> sweeping panoramic views would continue to be available under any of the plan options ultimately chosen. As shown in Figures 42 through 45, any of the plan's options would alter views of the Plan area from this location. The least amount of change would be attributable to the Existing Controls option (Figure 45), in which only a small amount of building mass from the 200-250 towers around First and Fremont Streets at Harrison Street would be visible. The 82.5-foot Separation Option (Figure 44) would result in the most change to views from this location. The seven towers clustered between roughly Essex and Fremont Streets along Harrison Street would appear as a dense mass of buildings. In contrast, the Preferred Option (Figure 43) would appear less dense and would allow for greater visual permeability through the towers at Harrison and First Streets because of a greater amount of air space between them. However in any case, some amount of the East Bay Hills in the background would be obstructed under any of the options, and the most obstruction would occur with the 82.5-foot Tower Separation option. In any of the views from this location, some of the Bay Bridge towers would remain visible.

From the roof of the Police Officers' Association building near Sixth and Bryant Streets, project views depicted here would be similar to views available to motorists on the Bay Bridge approach (I-80). As shown in the simulations (Figures 47 through 50), views of the Plan area would become intensified and Rincon Hill would stand out distinctly from the downtown "mound" to the north and the Transbay Project Area between Mission and Folsom Streets. Compared to the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option, the Preferred Option would allow for greater views along Harrison Street, as fewer towers would ultimately front on Harrison under this option. Nonetheless, all options, including foreseeable development under existing controls, could partially block views of the Bay Bridge towers, though view obstruction would be the greatest under the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option.

In conclusion, the increased density and height of development would result in a substantial change in the built form of development in the Plan area in long-range east-west views across the Plan area, such as from the Randall Museum, Dolores Park or Twin Peaks to the west, or from the Bay Bridge or Treasure Island to the east. From the south (e.g., Potrero Hill or Bernal Hill), the new buildings that are anticipated in the Plan would be less distinctive, and would somewhat merge into the background of existing high-rises in the downtown area. From the north, changes in urban form would be apparent primarily in views from upper stories of downtown high-rises, and from elevated viewpoints such as Telegraph Hill, and Russian Hill. Although some existing views would be diminished, implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan would provide an additional focal point in long-range views of and through the area, which could enhance the urban form of downtown San Francisco.

---

<sup>56</sup> This viewpoint was selected rather than Twin Peaks because the view angle is similar but the closer-in vantage point provides for more evidence of change.

Given what could be described as a dramatic change in density and, especially, height, despite the relative lack of interference with existing view corridors along streets in the Plan area, it is reasonable to conclude that, among some observers, changes in the overall urban form of the Rincon Hill Plan area due to development pursuant to the Draft Plan would appear to result in a substantial, perhaps negative, change in the appearance of the City's skyline.

However, as noted in the discussion of the San Francisco General Plan Urban Design Element in Section IV.A, p. 47, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would, in general, respond favorably to the objectives, policies, and principles in the Element. The Draft Plan—and particularly the more intense development of the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option—by altering views might be judged inconsistent with Urban Design Policy 1.1, “Recognize and protect major views in the city, with particular attention to those of open space and water.” The Draft Plan would nevertheless adhere to many of the Fundamental Principles For Major New Development listed under Urban Design Objective 3, “Moderation of major new development to complement the city pattern, the resources to be conserved, and the neighborhood environment,” including:

1. The relationship of a building's size and shape to its visibility in the cityscape, to important natural features and to existing development determines whether it will have a pleasing or a disruptive effect on the image and character of the city.
  - A. Tall, slender buildings near the crown on a hill emphasize the form of the hill and preserve views.
  - B. Extremely massive buildings on or near hills can overwhelm the natural land forms, block views, and generally disrupt the character of the city.
  - C. Low, smaller-scale buildings on the slopes of hills, at their base and in the valleys between complement topographic forms and permit uninterrupted views.
2. Building siting and massing with respect to street pattern influence the quality of views from street space.
  - A. Tall buildings on the tops of hills allow clear views down streets.
  - B. Tall buildings on slopes of hills severely restrict views from above.

The Draft Plan proposes the tallest buildings at and near the summit of Rincon Hill.

5. Taller or more visually prominent buildings can provide orientation points and increase the physical distinction, variety and contrast of large areas with similar streets and buildings, particularly areas of unrelieved monotony.
12. A long or wide building becomes excessively bulky in appearance when its height significantly exceeds that of buildings in the surrounding area.
13. A bulky building creates the most visual disruption when seen from a distance as the dominant silhouette against a background and/or foreground of much smaller structures.
14. Bulky buildings that intrude upon or block important views of the Bay, Ocean or other significant citywide focal points are particularly disruptive.

The Draft Plan proposes buildings that are relatively slender in contrast to their height, and that, therefore, would be considered neither “long or wide,” nor “bulky”.

The Draft Plan also would respond favorably to several Fundamental Principles for Neighborhood Environment listed under Urban Design Objective 4, “Improvement of the neighborhood environment to increase personal safety, comfort, pride and opportunity,” including:

4. Open space and landscaping can give neighborhoods an identity, a visual focus and a center for activity.
7. Interesting details in the design of street furniture, paving and other features in pedestrian area can increase the amenity and character of streets.
8. Wide streets can be narrowed at the intersections and landscaped to provide sitting areas and visual amenity.
10. Parking garages lack visual interest if they have extensive rows of doors, blank walls or exposed vehicles. Extensive curb cuts prevent planting and other enhancement of the street, eliminate curb-side parking and are potentially dangerous to pedestrians.
  - A. Arcades create some visual interest where long garage facades or multiple driveways cannot be avoided.
  - B. Restricting entry and exit points minimizes curb cuts.
  - D. The inclusion of stores at ground level maintains continuity of pedestrian activity on what would otherwise be a sterile street frontage of parking garages in a commercial area.
21. Pedestrian scale can be achieved at the base of large vertical building surfaces by the use of arcades, emphasis of horizontal divisions, texture and other architectural details.
31. Street rights-of-way carried through to the water allow views directly to the waterfront and provide a sense of contact with the water.

The Draft Plan’s provisions are consistent with these principles, which are designed to foster an attractive urban form. In particular, the Preferred Option, by reducing the overall density of tower development and establishing strict standards for tower bulk, accentuating the topography of Rincon Hill, and maximizing the retention of public views through the district, would not result adversely effect visual quality. In light of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan’s generally positive response to the objectives, policies, and guidelines in the Urban Design Element, regardless of option, it is the conclusion that the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse effect with regard to visual quality.

### ***LIGHT AND GLARE***

New construction in the Rincon Hill area would generate additional night lighting, but not in amounts unusual for a developed urban area. Design of exterior lighting could ensure that off-site glaze or lighting spillover would be minimized. New buildings and vehicles would also produce additional glare. As with light, this would not be expected to result in a substantial change unless buildings were constructed with reflective glass, which is not permitted, pursuant to Planning Commission Resolution 9212.

### ***CUMULATIVE EFFECTS***

The northern boundary of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would simultaneously act as the southern boundary of the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Plan Area. In addition to demolition of the existing terminal and construction of a modern multi-modal transit facility, the Transbay Redevelopment Plan would consist of the joint development of publicly owned parcels to fund the construction of a new Transbay Terminal. In order to facilitate this development, parcels that are currently zoned for public use, mainly along Folsom Street, would be rezoned for residential, office and institutional development.

Along Folsom Street, height limits would be increased to 400 to 550 feet along the north side of the street, consistent with the 400-foot height district proposed west of Beale Street along the southern side of Folsom Street in the Rincon Hill Plan. To protect existing Bay views along Folsom Street and provide for an enhanced pedestrian environment, a 15-foot mandated setback would also be required for all new construction on the northern side of Folsom Street. Buildings in the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Plan area would have similar bulk and podium height requirements, which, coupled with the development foreseen under the proposed Rincon Hill Plan controls, would introduce tall buildings with an orderly street wall along Folsom Street.

Also, depending on the outcome of the future of the Transbay Terminal proposed to be located north of Rincon Hill at First and Mission Streets, removal of some of the existing elevated ramps (specifically around Essex Street) could open up views from within the area now visually walled off by these elements, which could further improve views over those available under existing conditions in the Rincon Hill Plan area.

Implementation of both the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and the Transbay Redevelopment Plan would intensify land uses in the northeastern portion of the City. However, the proposed urban design controls included in the Rincon Hill Area Plan and development controls for the Transbay Redevelopment area would maximize retention of existing views and encourage slender towers by requiring minimum tower separation distances and square footage reductions in the towers' upper levels. The relationships of building forms to one another and to other elements of the city pattern would be moderated so that the effects related to implementing both the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and Transbay Redevelopment Plan would be complementary and harmonious. The general pattern of buildings would emphasize the topographic form of the city and the importance of centers of activity. Therefore, the cumulative visual effects, while showing an overall change to the area, would not result in a significant adverse effect.

## C. TRANSPORTATION, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

A transportation study was prepared for the EIR and this information is used and summarized in this section.<sup>57</sup>

### SETTING

#### **ROADWAY SYSTEM**

Within the project vicinity, Howard, Folsom, Harrison, Bryant, Brannan, First, Fremont, Beale and Main Streets, as well as The Embarcadero, are designated in the [Transportation Element](#) as [Major Arterials](#), which the General Plan defines as “cross-town thoroughfares whose primary function is to link districts within the City and to distribute traffic from and to the freeways.” The Embarcadero, which skirts the Plan area’s eastern boundary, is a Transit Important Street, where “balance between modes” is appropriate and the “emphasis should be on moving people and goods, rather than on moving vehicles.” Other nearby streets including Third, Fourth, and King Streets, as well as Harrison (west of Fourth) and Bryant (west of Third) are also Transit Important Streets. Market and Mission Streets and short segments of Main and Beale Streets (between Mission and Howard) are Transit-Oriented Streets, which emphasize “moving transit vehicles,” with impacts on automobile traffic a “secondary concern.” Second Street (between Folsom and Harrison) is identified as a “Secondary Transit Street.” The General Plan also classifies Second Street, as well as The Embarcadero, as [Neighborhood Commercial Streets; Third and Fourth, and Bryant and Harrison \(west of Fourth\) Streets are likewise designated, as are First and Fremont Street north of Folsom](#). Howard, Folsom, King, and Second Streets, as well as The Embarcadero, are designated as [Citywide Bicycle Routes](#) in the Transportation Element of the General Plan. In addition, The Embarcadero is part of the Bay, Ridge, and Coast Trail, which is a recreational pedestrian/bicycle path connecting several Bay Area cities.

Howard and Folsom Streets and Harrison and Bryant Streets form one-way couplets west of the Plan area, with Howard and Harrison running westbound, and Fremont and Bryant running eastbound. However, within the Plan area, Howard is a two-way street east of Fremont, Folsom is a two-way street east of Main, and Harrison is a two-way street throughout. South of the Plan area, Brannan is a two-way street. Among north-south streets, First, Beale,<sup>58</sup> and Spear are one-way southbound and Fremont and Main primarily serve as one-way northbound streets, except that Fremont also carries southbound traffic between Folsom and Harrison, and Main is a two-way street south of Folsom Street. West of the Plan area, Second Street is a two-way street, while to the east, [The Embarcadero](#) is a two-way roadway that, in general, has two travel lanes and a bicycle lane in each direction with a wide center median for the

<sup>57</sup> Wilbur Smith Associates, *Rincon Hill Mixed Use District Transportation Study*, December 2003; and “Supplemental Transportation Analysis for Rincon Hill Plan DEIR,” September 20, 2004. This report and the supplement are available for review by appointment at the San Francisco Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, Fifth Floor, as part of Project File No. 2000.1081E.

● <sup>58</sup> Beale Street passes under, rather than intersects, Harrison Street. After September 2001, Beale Street was closed beneath the Bay Bridge as a security measure. As a result, Beale Street is currently a two-way street south of Folsom.

N-Judah and F-Market transit lines, and parking on both sides of the street. All of the major intersections in the vicinity of the project site are traffic signal controlled. On-street parking is provided on both sides of most streets in the Plan area, but is prohibited on Howard Street during the p.m. peak hour.

First Street serves as an approach to the Bay Bridge; the on-ramp is at Harrison Street.<sup>59</sup> Two Bay Bridge off-ramps land on Fremont Street, at Harrison Street and between Folsom and Howard Streets, just north of the Plan area. Additional Bay Bridge access is provided from Bryant Street east of Second Street, just south of the Plan area; this Sterling Street on-ramp is limited to carpools in the p.m. peak period, as is westbound Bryant Street approaching the ramp.

### ***TRANSIT***

Transit service in the Plan area is more limited than in the financial district a few blocks north, due to historically lower levels of activity in the area. Additionally, the South of Market's large blocks tend to make walking to transit less appealing. Only two Municipal Railway lines provide direct service within the Plan area (including Folsom Street, which marks the northern boundary of the Rincon Hill area)—the 10-Townsend Street and 12-Folsom Street, and neither line has peak-hour headways of less than 10 minutes. (Midday service is at 15- to 20-minute headways.) Furthermore, service on the 10-Townsend line skirts the edge of the Plan area. Other Muni lines operate around the edge of the Plan area, including the 14-Mission Street, 15-Third Street, and the N-Judah Muni Metro line, all of which are accessible within about one-third of a mile of the corner of Fremont and Harrison Streets, where much of the new development in the Plan area is anticipated. Additionally, lines 5-Fulton, 6-Parnassus, and 38-Geary terminate at the Transbay Terminal, three (South of Market) blocks (about four-tenths of a mile) north at Mission and Fremont Streets. Regional transit service is provided in proximity to the Plan area; however, from the corner of Fremont and Harrison Streets, it is three blocks north to the Transbay Terminal (service by AC Transit, SamTrans, and Golden Gate Transit) on Mission Street and four blocks (about half a mile) north to BART (and Muni Metro) service on Market Street, while the Caltrain station is six blocks southwest. (Caltrain may be reached by Muni Metro service on The Embarcadero from the eastern portion of the Plan area.). Golden Gate Transit buses also operate on Folsom Street, as well as Fremont, Beale, Main, and Howard Streets. There is a pick-up point for "casual carpool" riders heading to the East Bay via the Bay Bridge, on the east side of Beale Street between Howard and Folsom Streets. Since the 2001 closure of Beale Street, however, carpool (casual or otherwise) and vanpool drivers no longer have direct access from Beale Street to westbound Bryant Street and the carpool on-ramp at Sterling Street; instead, they must detour via Folsom and Main Streets.

### ***PARKING***

Surveys of existing public off-street parking capacity and occupancy were taken in the area bounded by Howard Street to the north, The Embarcadero to the east, Second Street to the west, and Brannan Street to the south. There are approximately 3,100 off-street parking spaces available to the general public within the study area, with weekday midday occupancy levels at more than 90 percent. Most of the parking facilities serve employees in the greater downtown area, and thus generally close at the end of the workday. There are four 24-hour public parking facilities, with about 1,000 spaces, and weekday evening occupancy levels in those facilities averaged about 15 percent of capacity. On-street parking in the Plan area is available, although during the weekday midday period, the parking supply is generally completely occupied; during the evening, the occupancy is substantially lower due to the few night-time uses in the area.

---

<sup>59</sup> A second on-ramp is one short block west, at Harrison and Essex Streets.



### ***PEDESTRIANS/BICYCLES***

Within the Plan area, pedestrian volumes are relatively light (i.e., well less than sidewalk capacities) throughout the day. Sidewalks range from eight to 15 feet in width, except that sidewalks on Harrison Street are generally about 7 feet wide, particularly near the Bay Bridge on- and off-ramps at First and Fremont Streets. Based on field observations of overall [sidewalk and crosswalk conditions](#), both were observed to be operating at acceptable conditions, with pedestrians moving at normal walking speeds and with freedom to bypass other pedestrians. However, some vehicle/pedestrian conflicts occur at the intersections leading to the I-80/Bay Bridge on-ramps, particularly along First, Harrison, Bryant and Second Streets. Due to congestion at the on-ramps, queues sometimes block crosswalks, making it difficult for pedestrians to cross the streets. Turning vehicles also can conflict with both pedestrians and bicyclists at locations such as First and Harrison Streets, Fremont and Harrison Streets, and Essex and Folsom Streets. Furthermore, at freeway entrances and exits, not all crosswalks are accessible.

In the vicinity of the Plan area, Second, Folsom and Howard Streets and The Embarcadero are designated Citywide Bicycle Routes. Route Number 11 runs along Second Street, Route Number 30 runs eastbound along Folsom Street and westbound along Howard Street, Route Number 5 runs in both directions along The Embarcadero. Folsom Street and The Embarcadero have painted bicycle lanes. Some bicyclists were observed riding near the Plan area, primarily along The Embarcadero and Folsom Street, and in general, bicycle conditions were observed to be operating acceptably during both the weekday midday and evening periods, with only minor conflicts between bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicles. Due to congestion on Essex Street heading to the Bay Bridge, vehicles turning right from Folsom Street to Essex Street often use the bicycle lane as a second right-turn lane, which can affect bicycle circulation.

## **IMPACTS**

### ***SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA***

The operational impact on signalized intersections is considered significant when project-related traffic causes the intersection level of service to deteriorate from LOS D or better to LOS E or F, or from LOS E to LOS F.<sup>60</sup> The project may result in significant adverse impacts at intersections that operate at LOS E or F under existing conditions depending upon the magnitude of the project's contribution to the worsening of the average delay per vehicle. In addition, the project would have a significant adverse impact if it would cause major traffic hazards or contribute considerably to cumulative traffic increases that would cause deterioration in levels of service to unacceptable levels.

San Francisco does not consider parking supply as part of the permanent physical environment. Parking conditions are not static, as parking supply and demand varies from day to day, from day to night, from

---

<sup>60</sup> The LOS analysis provides a standardized means of rating an intersection's operating characteristics on the basis of traffic volumes, intersection capacity, and delays. LOS A represents free-flow conditions, with little or no delay, while LOS F represents congested conditions, with extremely long delays; LOS D (moderately high delays) is considered the lowest acceptable level in San Francisco.

month to month, etc. Hence, the availability of parking spaces (or lack thereof) is not a permanent physical condition, but changes over time as people change their modes and patterns of travel.

Parking deficits are considered to be social effects, rather than impacts on the physical environment as defined by CEQA. Under CEQA, a project's social impacts need not be treated as significant impacts on the environment. Environmental documents should, however, address the secondary physical impacts that could be triggered by a social impact. (CEQA Guidelines § 15131(a).) The social inconvenience of parking deficits, such as having to hunt for scarce parking spaces, is not an environmental impact, but there may be secondary physical environmental impacts, such as increased traffic congestion at intersections, air quality impacts, safety impacts, or noise impacts caused by congestion. In the experience of San Francisco transportation planners, however, the absence of a ready supply of parking spaces, combined with available alternatives to auto travel (e.g., transit service, taxis, bicycles or travel by foot) and a relatively dense pattern of urban development, induces many drivers to seek and find alternative parking facilities, shift to other modes of travel, or change their overall travel habits. Any such resulting shifts to transit service in particular, would be in keeping with the City's "Transit First" policy. The City's Transit First Policy, established in the City's Charter Section 16.102 provides that "parking policies for areas well served by public transit shall be designed to encourage travel by public transportation and alternative transportation." As documented earlier, the Plan area is located near local and regional transit service and contains several bicycle routes.

The transportation analysis accounts for potential secondary effects, such as cars circling and looking for a parking space in areas of limited parking supply, by assuming that all drivers would attempt to find parking at or near the project site and then seek parking farther away if convenient parking is unavailable. Moreover, the secondary effects of drivers searching for parking is typically offset by a reduction in vehicle trips due to others who are aware of constrained parking conditions in a given area. Hence, any secondary environmental impacts which may result from a shortfall in parking in the vicinity of the proposed project would be minor, and the traffic assignments used in the transportation analysis, as well as in the associated air quality, noise and pedestrian safety analyses, reasonably addresses potential secondary effects.

The project would have a significant effect on the environment if it would cause a substantial increase in transit demand that could not be accommodated by adjacent transit capacity, resulting in unacceptable levels of transit service; or cause a substantial increase in delays or operating costs such that significant adverse impacts in transit service levels could result. With the MUNI and regional transit screenlines analyses, the project would have a significant effect on the transit provider if project-related transit trips would cause the capacity utilization standard to be exceeded during the p.m. peak hour.

The project would have a significant effect on the environment if it would result in substantial overcrowding on public sidewalks, create potentially hazardous conditions for pedestrians, or otherwise interfere with pedestrian accessibility to the site and adjoining areas.

The project would have a significant effect on the environment if it would create potentially hazardous conditions for bicyclists or otherwise substantially interfere with bicycle accessibility to the site and adjoining areas.

Loading impacts were assessed by comparing the proposed loading space supply to the Planning Code requirements and the estimated loading demand during the peak hour of loading activities.

Construction-related impacts on transportation systems generally would not be considered significant due to their temporary and limited duration.

### ***IMPACTS COMMON TO ALL OPTIONS***

#### **Travel Demand Analysis**

The San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) countywide travel demand forecasting model was used to develop the travel forecasts for development and growth through the year 2020 in the region, as well as to determine travel demand to and from the South of Market area (roughly bounded by The Embarcadero, Market Street, South Van Ness Avenue and King Street). This approach results in an impacts assessment for year 2020 conditions that takes into account both the future development expected in the South of Market area and the expected growth in housing and employment for the remainder of San Francisco and the nine-county Bay Area.

This analysis of travel demand is based on assumptions about future land uses (e.g., anticipated development) prepared in 2001 for the SFCTA model. Although the land use assumptions have been revised since that time and the horizon year for the current SFCTA model extended to 2025, the more recent assumptions forecast less total development within the three traffic analysis zones, or TAZs, that include the Rincon Hill Plan area than the 2001 assumptions. Therefore, for purposes of a conservative analysis, and to maintain consistency with the analysis recently published in the Final EIR/EIS for the Transbay Terminal and Redevelopment Plan, use of the assumptions of the 2001 SFCTA model has been maintained.

Travel demand was estimated for the following three land use scenarios:

- **2020 Baseline**—Assumes future development and growth consistent with the forecasts by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) for San Francisco and the Bay Area, and incorporates projects that have recently been approved or entitled in the South of Market area.
- **2020 Baseline plus Project**—Includes the additional development associated with the Proposed Project.
- **2020 Cumulative**—Incorporates other plans recently proposed in the South of Market area including the South of Market Redevelopment Area Plan, the Mid-Market Redevelopment Area Plan and the Transbay Terminal project. As a result, the year 2020 Cumulative conditions forecasts used in the analysis exceed the ABAG forecasts for San Francisco for employment by about 2.8 percent, and household population by about 1.4 percent.

The project options would generate up to about 2,810 net new person trips during the p.m. peak hour, of which about 1,107 would be person trips by automobile (equivalent to about 880 vehicle trips), 530 would be transit trips, and the remaining 1,173 trips would be walking trips or by other modes such as bicycle, motorcycle and taxi.<sup>61</sup>

### Traffic Impacts

As stated above, impacts associated with the proposed project were judged by comparing conditions in 2020 with the project against the 2020 Baseline conditions. The analysis evaluated weekday p.m. peak-hour levels of service at 17 study intersections in the vicinity of the Plan area.<sup>62</sup>

Since the analysis of the 2001 Project was completed, the State has required closure of Beale Street to vehicle traffic beneath the Bay Bridge, between Harrison and Bryant Streets, as a security measure. This has resulted in some redistribution of traffic that is reflected in existing intersection levels of service. It is unknown whether the Beale Street closure is permanent; however, because the closure results in less traffic capacity, it is assumed in the analysis of both existing and future traffic conditions, for purposes of a conservative analysis. Existing, future (with Plan-generated traffic) and cumulative intersection levels of service are shown in Table 5.

Currently 12 of the 17 intersections studied operate at acceptable (LOS D or better) service levels during the p.m. peak hour, while five intersections operate unacceptably (LOS E or F). The five intersections operating at LOS E/F (First and Folsom Streets, Essex and Harrison Streets, First and Harrison Streets, Main and Harrison Streets, and Second and Brannan Streets) are located on the main approaches to I-80 and the Bay Bridge, which typically carry high volumes of traffic during the p.m. peak period. In general, the anticipated growth in San Francisco and within the study area by 2020 (without the project) would cause operating conditions at all study intersections to worsen versus Existing conditions, and seven of the 17 study intersections would operate at unacceptable LOS E or F. The two intersections where conditions would degrade to worse than LOS D are The Embarcadero and Bryant Street and Fremont and Harrison Streets.

The addition of traffic from the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and the proposed changes in street configurations under the Plan, including the introduction of “living streets” treatments described in Chapter II, Project Description, which would convert Main, Beale, and Spear Streets from one-way streets

---

<sup>61</sup> The estimated increase in weekday p.m. peak-hour person trips and vehicle trips assumes 4,600 new residential units, 340,000 additional square feet of office space and 300,000 additional square feet of retail space, based on an earlier version of the Rincon Hill Plan developed in 2001. The traffic analysis for the 2001 Project can be considered to capture the outer bound of potential impacts for each of the current Plan options because each of the current options would generate less traffic than would the 2001 Project due to the elimination of most non-residential uses. Even though the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option, with 6 percent more new residential units than the 4,600 units analyzed in the 2001 Project, the nearly 90 percent reduction in non-residential space would result in fewer trips overall.

<sup>62</sup> Although a scoping comment suggested analysis of traffic conditions at times other than the typical afternoon peak hour, observation in the Plan area indicates that traffic volumes are substantially heavier during the p.m. peak hour than at other times during the day. This is particularly true on and near streets that feed the Bay Bridge on-ramp at First and Harrison Streets, which effectively serves as a meter for traffic entering the bridge.

**TABLE 5  
INTERSECTION LEVELS OF SERVICE**

| Intersection         | Existing |               | 2020 Baseline |               | 2020 + Project |               | Cumulative |               |
|----------------------|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
|                      | LOS      | Delay         | LOS           | Delay         | LOS            | Delay         | LOS        | Delay         |
| First/Market         | D        | 25.9          | D             | 34.9          | <b>E</b>       | <b>42.3</b>   | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |
| First/Folsom         | <b>F</b> | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>      | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>       | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |
| Fremont/Folsom       | B        | 7.7           | C             | 25.7          | D              | 26.7          | D          | 32.1          |
| Beale/Folsom         | B        | 9.9           | B             | 10.4          | <b>E</b>       | <b>54.3</b>   | <b>E</b>   | <b>56.9</b>   |
| Main/Folsom          | B        | 10.0          | D             | 27.9          | <b>F</b>       | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |
| Spear/Folsom         | B        | 11.6          | C             | 20.3          | <b>E</b>       | <b>57.4</b>   | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |
| Embarcadero/Folsom   | C        | 18.2          | D             | 26.5          | <b>E</b>       | <b>45.2</b>   | <b>E</b>   | <b>47.5</b>   |
| Essex/Harrison       | <b>F</b> | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>      | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>       | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |
| First/Harrison       | <b>F</b> | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>      | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>       | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |
| Fremont/Harrison     | D        | 36.2          | <b>E</b>      | <b>49.5</b>   | <b>F</b>       | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |
| Main/Harrison        | <b>E</b> | <b>44.3</b>   | <b>F</b>      | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>       | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |
| Spear/Harrison       | C        | 15.4          | D             | 37.8          | D              | 38.1          | D          | 37.2          |
| Embarcadero/Harrison | C        | 15.1          | C             | 22.2          | D              | 25.9          | D          | 28.0          |
| Beale/Bryant         | B        | 11.8          | B             | 12.1          | B              | 12.1          | B          | 12.1          |
| Main/Bryant          | B        | 6.0           | C             | 21.8          | C              | 21.8          | C          | 20.6          |
| Embarcadero/Bryant   | D        | 29.8          | <b>F</b>      | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>       | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |
| Second/Brannan       | <b>E</b> | <b>50.0</b>   | <b>F</b>      | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>       | <b>&gt;60</b> | <b>F</b>   | <b>&gt;60</b> |

<sup>a</sup> Estimated 2020 LOS for current Plan options.

**Bold-face** indicates intersection at unsatisfactory level of service.

Levels of service based on 1994 Highway Capacity Manual methodology.

All analysis of 2020 conditions assumes the closure of Beale Street.

Boxed **LOS** indicates significant impact.

SOURCE: Wilbur Smith Associates, December 2003; September 2004

to two-way operation, as well as narrow certain streets,<sup>63</sup> would result in a **significant** impact at six of the study intersections (Fremont/Harrison, which would degrade from LOS E to LOS F; and First/Market, Beale/Folsom, Main/Folsom, Spear/Folsom, and Embarcadero/Folsom, which would degrade from LOS D or better to LOS E or F). Conditions at the six study intersections that would operate at LOS F under 2020 Baseline conditions would worsen, but with relatively minor changes to the volume-to-capacity ratios that would not trigger a significant impact. The service levels would remain acceptable at the other five study intersections.

Because intersection operations on certain streets are dictated largely by the operations of downstream intersections and the I-80/U.S. 101 on-ramps, localized improvements at these adversely affected intersections would not necessarily improve overall traffic conditions. These intersections include First/Market, Fremont/Harrison, and Embarcadero/Folsom; impacts at those intersections would be significant and unmitigable. However, mitigation measures are identified in Chapter IV, p. 223, that

<sup>63</sup> The traffic analysis assumed the inclusion of southbound right-turn pockets at the intersections of Main/Harrison and Spear/Harrison to channel Bay-Bridge-bound traffic away from local through and left-turn movements.

could improve LOS to acceptable levels at the three other adversely affected intersections (Beale/Folsom, Main/Folsom, and Spear/Folsom). Because mitigation measures to ensure an acceptable LOS at Beale/Folsom and Main/Folsom would necessitate maintaining four eastbound lanes on Folsom Street the intersection approaches, these measures, if adopted, would preclude the Draft Plan's proposed extension of the existing westbound lane on Folsom Street from Main Street westward to Fremont Street. The impact would be significant and unavoidable if four eastbound lanes were not maintained on Folsom Street. Among the effects of deteriorated traffic flow would be to impede carpools and vanpools traveling to the Bay Bridge from the City's designated gathering point for casual carpools on Beale Street between Howard and Folsom Streets.

It should be noted that certain streets in Rincon Hill that serve freeway on-ramps—notably, First Street approaching Harrison Street and Harrison Street westbound approaching First Street—include lanes reserved for non-freeway traffic: the right and left lanes of First Street allow local traffic to turn right and left, respectively, at Harrison, while the two center lanes serve the Bay Bridge on-ramp; similarly, the right lane of Harrison Street allows local traffic to continue westbound beyond First Street, while the two left-hand westbound lanes serve the Bay Bridge on-ramp. As noted in the project description in Chapter II, the Draft Plan proposes improvements to physically separate these local-serving traffic lanes from Bay Bridge traffic, allowing non-Bridge traffic to proceed with less delay than affects Bridge traffic.

Under 2020 Cumulative conditions, ten study intersections would operate at LOS F, two intersections would operate at LOS E, and the remaining five study intersections would operate at LOS D or better. In general, the poor operating conditions would occur along the primary access routes to the Bay Bridge, including Second, First and Harrison Streets. To assess the effect of project-generated vehicle trips on 2020 Cumulative LOS F conditions, the contribution of the proposed project was determined in the following two ways: as a percent of *total* 2020 Cumulative traffic volumes (would range from 2.8 percent to 22.5 percent), and as a percent of the *increase* in traffic volumes between Existing and 2020 Cumulative conditions (would range from 28 percent to 88 percent, with the highest contributions at the intersections adjacent to the Plan area, such as along Harrison Street at Fremont, First, Main, and Essex Streets, as well as at Fremont and Folsom and Beale and Folsom Streets).

As with 2020-plus-Project conditions, mitigation could achieve acceptable intersection levels of service at the Beale/Folsom, Main/Folsom, and Spear/Folsom intersections, but not at other intersections analyzed where LOS would be E or F; that impact would be significant and unmitigable. The project would be considered to contribute substantially to cumulative degraded LOS at First/Market and First/Folsom; the impact at those intersections would be significant and unmitigable. Plan-generated traffic would add substantial numbers of vehicles to some movement that determine overall LOS performance. Therefore, the vehicles added by Plan traffic to these movements would represent a considerable contribution to the cumulative conditions and the project would have a significant cumulative impact on these intersections.

As such, the project **would** result in significant effects to intersection levels of service.

## Transit

Analysis of transit impacts focuses on the increase in **outbound** transit patronage during the p.m. peak hour at four Muni screenlines in San Francisco, with sub-corridors within each screenline, and at three

regional screenlines (San Francisco Bay, including the Bay Bridge, for East Bay transit travel; the Golden Gate Bridge for the North Bay; and the San Francisco-San Mateo County line for trips to the Peninsula). Future 2020 transit ridership forecasts were developed for weekday p.m. peak-hour conditions. For Muni impacts, the SFCTA model was used to estimate the increase in weekday p.m. peak-hour transit ridership. For regional transit providers, 2020 ridership forecasts at the three regional screenlines were based on information received from the individual service providers (Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans, Caltrain, BART and AC Transit).

The project would generate up to approximately 530 net new p.m. peak-hour transit trips that would be dispersed over nearby Muni lines and regional transit lines, and could include transfers to other Muni bus and light rail lines, or other regional transit providers. In the immediate vicinity of the Plan area, the transit lines generally have available capacity during the weekday p.m. peak hour, which would accommodate the additional inbound and outbound transit trips generated by the project. In addition, it is anticipated that some people would walk to and from Market Street to access the bus lines or Muni Metro at the Embarcadero Station (instead of taking a bus and transferring).

Between Existing and 2020 Baseline conditions, ridership demand at the four Muni screenlines is projected to increase by about 16 percent, while capacity is projected to increase by about 14 percent. The projected ridership is expected to approach capacity at several of the individual corridors, but each screenline would continue to operate at less than capacity. With the proposed project, the corridors and screenlines would continue to operate at less than capacity, with only minor changes in the capacity utilization at each screenline. Capacity utilization for all screenlines would remain similar to those under 2020 Baseline conditions, and all screenlines and sub-corridors would continue to operate below the Muni capacity utilization standard. Thus, the project would not result in a significant transit impact.

Between Existing and 2020 Cumulative conditions, ridership demand at the three regional screenlines is projected to increase by about 86 percent, which is an average of an increase by about 53 percent to the East Bay, 42 percent to the North Bay, and 234 percent (as a result of the BART extension to the San Francisco Airport and Millbrae)<sup>64</sup> to the South Bay. Capacity is projected to increase by about 28 percent, which is an average of an increase by about 41 percent to the East Bay, 4 percent to the North Bay, and 22 percent to the South Bay. The projected ridership is expected to approach capacity for several of the individual operators, with only BART to the South Bay anticipated to operate above its load factor standard.<sup>65</sup> Because the 2020 scenarios are consistent with ABAG forecasts for San Francisco on which these ridership increases are based, the proposed project would not generate additional regional transit trips, but would simply replace growth in other parts of the City.

Under 2020 Cumulative conditions, the overall capacity utilization at the four Muni screenlines would increase to 88 percent. The proposed project would account for about 24 percent of the growth between

---

<sup>64</sup> The analysis was prepared prior to the opening of the BART San Francisco Airport line.

<sup>65</sup> BART staff has indicated that the length of trains serving the South Bay could be increased, if necessary, to accommodate demand. For example, if each train were lengthened to 10 cars each during the weekday evening commute period, then the capacity utilization under cumulative (2020) conditions would be about 128 percent (i.e., below the peak-hour standard).



2020 Baseline and 2020 Cumulative ridership demand. As stated above, the project would not generate additional regional transit trips, but would replace growth in other parts of the City. As a result, the project would not substantially affect the capacity utilization of the regional transit screenlines. Thus, the project would not result in a significant impact associated with cumulative transit conditions.

Inbound Transit Conditions. A qualitative analysis was performed for transit trips inbound to the downtown area. Because the predominant flow of travel in the weekday p.m. peak hour is away from downtown San Francisco, the Muni and regional transit lines that travel into downtown San Francisco from other parts of the City and the region have relatively low ridership. In addition, there will be capacity increases on Muni Metro and nearby Muni bus routes in the near future, as part of the Third Street Light Rail project and the extension of light rail and bus service into Mission Bay. Based on those factors, the addition of the project-generated transit trips in the inbound direction would not substantially affect transit conditions.

Increased congestion on streets within the Plan area, particularly those streets that lead to Bay Bridge on-ramps, could adversely affect the ability of transit operators—particularly Muni—to keep to schedules. In recent years, Muni has altered certain routes to avoid some of the most congested streets. Along with the Department of Parking and Traffic, Muni also has undertaken a program to provide bus-only lanes on heavily trafficked streets, such as First Street. While these improvements may avoid further substantial deterioration in scheduled Muni service, they could be an impediment to increased transit service within the Plan area. For example, one of the changes Muni made in the last few years removed the 42-

- Downtown Loop (now 10-Townsend) from Harrison Street and from First and Fremont Streets south of Folsom Street to avoid congestion. In particular, Muni’s 12-Folsom line passes through all four intersections on Folsom Street that would be adversely affected by the project, while several Golden Gate Transit lines pass through Beale/Folsom, Main/Folsom, and Spear/Folsom, as well as First/Market, which is also used by numerous Muni lines. Finally, Muni’s 10 line operates through the sixth affected intersection, Fremont/Harrison. (The 80-X and 82-X express buses from the Caltrain depot also pass through Spear/Folsom, in the morning commute period, while the 82-X also operates southbound on Beale to Folsom and eastbound on Folsom to the Embarcadero in the afternoon commute period, passing through all four intersections on Folsom Street that would be adversely affected by the project.)

## **Parking**

The analysis of parking impacts are specific to individual development projects, and includes a dual comparison of proposed parking space supply versus Planning Code requirements and the estimated parking demand. As such, separate parking impact analyses would need to be conducted for future development projects in the study area. For the purpose of this analysis, however, parking impacts associated with the proposed Plan were assessed by comparing the anticipated parking supply which would be required (based on the proposed rezoning) to the anticipated parking demand.

In conjunction with the proposed rezoning of the Plan area, the following parking requirements would be implemented: for residential units, no minimum required parking, and a maximum of one parking space per unit, of which only half could be independently accessible; for office space, no minimum and a maximum of 7 percent of gross floor area devoted to parking; and for retail space, no minimum, and a maximum of one parking space per 1,500 occupied square feet in excess of 5,000 square feet. As a result, no parking would be required, and the maximum that could be provided would range from about 1,630 spaces to about 2,845 spaces for residential units, along with fewer than 50 retail parking spaces and a negligible amount of office parking spaces.

Parking demand consists of both long-term demand (residents and employees) and short-term demand (visitors and patrons). The project-generated parking demand was determined for both the weekday midday (1:00 to 3:00 p.m.) and evening (7:00 to 9:00 p.m.) conditions. Residential development pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan would result in an increase, depending on the option pursued, in midday parking demand of between about 1,700 and 2,950 spaces, and between about 2,100 and 3,700 spaces during the evening period, assuming parking generation based on standard rates in the Planning Department's *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines*. In conjunction with already approved projects in the Plan area, the additional demand would be between about 3,800 and 5,100 spaces in the daytime and between about 4,750 spaces and 6,300 spaces in the evening, depending on the option selected.

Assuming parking were provided at a ratio of one space per dwelling unit, the result would be a residential parking shortfall of between about 150 and 200 spaces during the weekday midday period and between about 1,100 and 1,500 spaces during the weekday evening period. On the other hand, if no parking were provided for the new residential units (and one space per unit provided for approved projects), the residential shortfall would be between about 700 and 1,700 weekdays and between about 1,450 to 2,700 at night. Because a major goal of the Draft Rincon Hill Plan is to enhance pedestrian circulation and reduce the necessity for driving trips by residents in the Plan area, it is conceivable that the above numbers overstate the potential impact.

In terms of commercial parking, the Plan anticipates a relatively small amount of retail and office space under all Plan options analyzed: about 65,000 square feet of retail space and, potentially, a small amount of office space. Based on standard parking demand calculations, these uses could generate demand for more than 400 parking spaces, while providing fewer than 50 spaces of supply, based on the Draft Plan's proposed controls. Again, however, assuming implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan as intended, many of the trips to the retail stores, in particular, would be expected to be made on foot by residents of the neighborhood, which would be expected to reduce retail parking demand, compared to the figures presented above.

The current number of available public off-street parking spaces in the study area is about 250 in the midday period (i.e., about 92 percent of the 4,100 spaces are occupied) and about 850 in the evening period (i.e., 15 percent of the 1,000 spaces are occupied). These parking spaces would be available to retail visitors, as well as to residential visitors, but would not generally be available on a long-term (i.e., all day) basis for employees.

### **Loading**

In general, the analysis of loading impacts are specific to individual development projects, and includes a comparison of proposed loading space supply to the Planning Code requirements and the estimated loading demand during the peak hour of loading activities. As such, loading impacts have not been assessed for the proposed Rincon Hill Plan. The Plan proposed changes to Planning Code standards such that provision of off-street loading spaces would not longer be required. To the extent that loading demand is not accommodated on-site, double-parking, illegal use of sidewalks and other public space is

- likely to occur with associated disruptions and impacts to traffic and transit operations as well as to
- bicyclists and pedestrians. Lack of off-street loading bays or docks could also preclude easy access to trash and recycling from the street, potentially leading to trash and recycling containers being left on the sidewalk for some period of time, as occurs in some higher-density neighborhoods.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Conditions**

In general, the analysis of pedestrian and bicycle impacts are specific to individual development projects, and would include a discussion of the anticipated number of pedestrian and bicycle trips that would be generated during the weekday p.m. peak hour, the existing and proposed width of the adjacent sidewalks, the existing and planned bicycle routes/lanes in the area, a comparison of proposed bicycle parking spaces to the Planning Code requirements, and an assessment of potential safety concerns and conflict locations. As such, separate pedestrian and bicycle impact analyses would need to be conducted for future development projects in the Plan area.

Pedestrian trips generated by the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would include walk trips to and from the residential and retail uses, to and from the local and regional transit operators and to and from nearby parking facilities. It is estimated that the project would result in more than 1,500 new pedestrian trips on the surrounding network of sidewalks and crosswalks during the weekday p.m. peak hour, which would be dispersed throughout the study area, depending upon the origin/destination of each trip. It is anticipated that a majority of the new peak-hour pedestrian trips would be to and from Market Street, the Transbay Terminal area and The Embarcadero. The Rincon Hill Plan anticipates, under all options analyzed, an enhanced network of widened sidewalks, including tree plantings, street furniture and the creation of new public spaces along streets throughout the district, intended to create a more inviting pedestrian experience to encourage walking trips and limit driving trips. If successful, the Plan could boost pedestrian travel beyond the numbers indicated here, but the currently vastly underused sidewalks would be able to accommodate the increase, particularly with implementation of planned sidewalk widenings. However, given existing light pedestrian volumes, the anticipated increase in pedestrian traffic could be accommodated without the Plan's proposed street and sidewalk improvements.

The Plan area is within convenient bicycling distance of downtown San Francisco and the Financial District, as well as the major transit hubs (Ferry Building, Transbay Terminal and Caltrain). In addition, there are several bicycle routes in the vicinity of the Plan area, including along Second Street, Howard Street, Folsom Street and The Embarcadero. As such, a portion of the "other" trips generated by the project would be bicycle trips. It should be noted that the San Francisco Planning Code requires the provision of bicycle parking spaces for all new parking garages, and the provision of shower and locker facilities for new primarily commercial buildings. The Draft Plan calls for one bicycle parking space for every two residential units. It is anticipated that new development projects associated with the proposed project would meet these requirements. As a result, there would be a substantial increase in the bicycle amenities in the Plan area.

### **Construction Impacts**

In general, the analysis of construction impacts are specific to individual development projects, and include a discussion of temporary roadway and sidewalk closures, relocation of bus stops, effects on roadway circulation due to construction trucks, and the increase in vehicle trips, transit trips and parking demand associated with construction workers. As such, construction impacts have not been assessed for the proposed Plan. It should be noted that potential impacts associated with individual projects are not generally considered significant because they are temporary and of short-term duration.

In general, construction-related activities typically occur Monday through Friday, between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., with limited construction activities on weekends (on an as-needed basis). Construction staging typically occurs within project sites and from the adjacent sidewalks. These sidewalks along the site frontages are usually closed throughout the construction duration, with temporary pedestrian walkways constructed in the adjacent parking lanes as needed. Temporary traffic lane closures are required to be coordinated with the City in order to minimize the impacts on local traffic.

During a project's construction period, temporary and intermittent traffic and transit impacts may result from truck movements to and from project sites. Truck movements during periods of peak traffic flow would have greater potential to create conflicts than truck movements during non-peak hours because of the greater number of vehicles on the streets during the peak hour that would have to maneuver around queued trucks. The sponsors of individual projects would have to meet with Muni, the Department of Parking and Traffic, Interdepartmental Staff Committee on Traffic and Transportation (ISCOTT), and other responsible City agencies to coordinate construction activities so as to minimize construction impacts on vehicular, transit and pedestrian traffic.

Temporary parking demand from construction workers' vehicles and impacts on local intersections from construction worker traffic would occur in proportion to the number of construction workers who would use automobiles. Parking of construction workers' vehicles would temporarily increase occupancy levels in off-street parking lots, either by those vehicles or by vehicles currently parking in on-street spaces that would be displaced by construction workers' vehicles.

It is possible that construction activity associated with one or more development projects would overlap with that of other nearby projects. In particular, ongoing construction over the next decade affecting the Bay Bridge ramps and Interstate 80 freeway in the project area, as well as the potential demolition and new construction associated with the extension of Caltrain and a new Transbay Terminal, would be expected to add to construction-related congestion in the Rincon Hill Plan area and vicinity. As a condition of street closure, use of parking lanes for construction and other permits, the City could require that construction contractors for multiple projects meet to determine ways to minimize traffic and transit disruption due to construction activities.

In summary, the project would result in a significant adverse impact on traffic and circulation, but would not result in a significant impact on transit, parking and loading, or pedestrian and bicycle conditions.

## D. POPULATION AND HOUSING

### SETTING

#### *POPULATION*

In 2000, according to U.S. Census data,<sup>66</sup> the Rincon Hill Plan area had about 1,470 residents in 1,025 households,<sup>67</sup> and a total population of approximately 1,585.<sup>68</sup> The average household size of 1.4 persons per household was considerably smaller than the citywide average of 2.3 persons per household. In part, this is attributable to the lack of children in Rincon Hill: the Census reported just 29 households (2.8%) with children, with a total of 34 persons under the age of 18. In all of Census Tract 179.01, which is bounded by Howard, Third, and Townsend Streets and San Francisco Bay (including the residential area of South Beach), the Census reported only 4.5 percent of households had children, and there were 178 children under 18 years of age, out of a population of 5,400.

According to an informal telephone survey conducted in December 2003 by Planning Department staff with leasing agents, real estate brokers, and property managers in Rincon Hill, new residents in the Plan area are predominantly professional couples in their early 30s without children, as well as a significant number of “empty nesters” and retirees. A substantial number of the dwelling units in the area are purchased as second homes,<sup>69</sup> or by parents as housing for their children while attending college/graduate school. There are few families with young children in the area; most move away once their children reach school age.

At least 50 percent of new residents are first-time homebuyers, most of whom were renting in San Francisco prior to purchase. Many buyers over the past two years had been renting at above-average rates generated by the dot-com boom; with rents in decline and very low mortgage rates available, they are apparently choosing to buy.

New residents choose the Rincon Hill area primarily because of its accessibility to the downtown. A large number value the access to the Bay Bridge and Highway 101 for auto commutes out of the city. Access to the waterfront, the Ballpark, the newly renovated Ferry Building, and emerging retail/nightlife in the South Beach, South Park and Yerba Buena Center areas are also major considerations. Most state a need for more convenient retail and public amenities close by—a grocery store, open space, a dog run, and safer streets for walking downtown and to adjacent neighborhoods.

---

<sup>66</sup> Census data are reported for Census Tract 179.01, Blocks 1007-1019, 4005, and 4006, which generally correspond to the Plan area.

<sup>67</sup> The Census reported a vacancy rate of just over 10 percent of the 1,140 housing units in the Plan area. This is twice the citywide rate, and may be due, in part, to the fact that so many units in the Plan area were constructed relatively recently.

<sup>68</sup> Includes 115 persons in group quarters.

<sup>69</sup> Data from the 2000 Census indicate that 5 percent of Rincon Hill housing units are second homes (“For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use,” according to Table H5, Vacancy Status), some five times the citywide rate.

## ***HOUSING***

Census data indicates that about 60 percent of housing units in the Plan area are owner-occupied and 40 percent are rented; the great majority are in larger buildings (50 or more units). Both of these facts contrast with citywide data: nearly two-thirds of San Francisco's 330,000 housing units are occupied by renters, only about 12.5 percent are in 50-unit or larger buildings, and nearly 30 percent of all housing units citywide are single-family dwellings.

According to the Planning Department survey of Rincon Hill, in the early 1990s, the trend was for smaller units: studios and one-bedroom units. With the decline in mortgage rates and the resulting increase in buying power, the market for two-bedroom and larger units had increased substantially at the time of the survey (although mortgage rates have since begun to increase again). Most units in the Plan area are one-bedroom units, but the recent change in the market is tipping the balance away from studios and toward two-bedroom and larger units. New projects are entirely for-sale condominium projects. Generally units are targeted for the high end of the for-sale market, with finishes and views that command top prices; however, all new projects have an affordable component. While sale prices continue to rise gradually, rental prices have dropped by as much as one-third since 2001, though prices were inflated at that time.

## ***HOUSING AFFORDABILITY***

According to a Planning Department report, approximately 12 percent of San Francisco households can afford to purchase housing in San Francisco.<sup>70</sup> Listing prices for basic market-rate units in the Rincon Hill area have averaged around \$625,000, which is 11 percent above the citywide median, according to the Planning Department report. With the recent completion of several taller developments and the general shift in the market toward larger units, average listing prices are on the rise. Because new developments in the area typically require a Conditional Use authorization, they are subject to the city's 12 percent on-site / 17 percent off-site inclusionary housing requirement. (If no Conditional Use authorization is required, the requirements are 10 percent and 15 percent, respectively.) This requirement limits sale prices to 50–120 percent of the area median income for these units, depending, in the case of ownership housing, on whether households can qualify for loans. Due to the relatively high costs of high-rise construction, the trend has been to provide 17 percent of the units as inclusionary "off-site" in other neighborhoods of the city where construction costs are lower.

Using the Mayor's Office of Housing and HUD's standard for housing affordability as a guideline, households should not spend more than or equal to 33 percent of their gross monthly income on ownership housing. To afford a basic unit in the Plan area, a single-person household would need an annual income of \$103,000 or an hourly wage of \$49 to afford a \$375,000 studio, an income of \$114,000,

---

<sup>70</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, "Residential Real Estate Trends and Housing Affordability in the Rincon Hill Area," March 2004. Accessed at: [http://www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/planning/citywide/pdf/RHP\\_REtrends\\_3.17.04.pdf](http://www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/planning/citywide/pdf/RHP_REtrends_3.17.04.pdf). At the time this report was prepared, the City's median housing sales price was given as \$562,000. According to DataQuick Information Systems, the median price of more than 800 homes sold in San Francisco in July 2004 was \$650,000, as reported in the San Francisco Chronicle on August 20, 2004, in "Bay Area Home Sales, Prices Decline in July"; Accessed at: (<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/2004/08/20/BUGEQ8AS7G43.DTL>).

or an hourly wage of \$54.50, to afford a \$425,000 one-bedroom unit, and \$150,000, or an hourly wage of \$72.40 to afford a \$595,000 two-bedroom unit.<sup>71</sup> A household would need an annual income of \$157,080, or a combined hourly wage of \$75.50 to afford the average basic unit sale price of \$625,000.

A limited number of occupations pay sufficient wages to meet these housing costs. These include select management occupations (chief executives, general and operation managers, computer and information systems managers, for example), which average about \$52 an hour, or specific legal occupations (lawyers, judges and magistrates), \$55 an hour. The majority of the San Francisco's population earns less and would have difficulty affording housing in the Rincon Hill area. The combined annual income of two experienced middle or secondary school teachers, for instance, is \$110,200 a year, which would be just below the above-noted requirement for a one-bedroom unit. These housing costs are particularly prohibitive for households with children for whom greater space needs and schooling costs add to household expenses. Furthermore, among the 15 job classifications reported by the state Employment Development Department to be the fastest growing categories of employment in San Francisco in the next several years, only the top-paying ("general managers and top executives") offers a wage or salary sufficient for two persons earning that amount to afford a one-bedroom unit, based on the \$114,000 figure noted above.<sup>72</sup>

## IMPACTS

### ***SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA***

The project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to population, housing, and socioeconomic factors if it would:

- Displace a large number of people (involving either housing or employment);
- Create a substantial demand for additional housing in San Francisco without including provisions to facilitate supply of such housing; or
- Substantially reduce the housing supply.

The fact that a project would induce substantial growth or concentration of population is not, in itself, cause for a determination that a project would result in a significant physical effect on the environment. Rather, this question appears in the Initial Study checklist as an indication that a substantial growth or concentration of population could result in adverse effects secondary to such growth or concentration; namely, increased traffic or transit loading, degraded air quality, generation of substantial noise levels, etc. These potential physical impacts are evaluated under the appropriate topics in this EIR.

---

<sup>71</sup> Assumes 10 percent down with a fixed 30-year mortgage interest rate of 6 percent and monthly condo fees of \$500.

<sup>72</sup> The top 15 job classifications in terms of growth in jobs, 1999-2006, as reported by EDD, are Waiter/Waitress; Food Preparation; Janitor; Security Guard; Cashier; Retail Sales; Cook; General Office Clerk; Receptionist/Information Clerk; Painter, Construction & Maintenance; Carpenter; Registered Nurse; Electrician; Systems Analysts, Electronic Data Processing; and General Managers & Top Executives.



## ***IMPACTS COMMON TO ALL OPTIONS***

### **Population**

Development pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan would increase the population of the Plan area to five or six times the current population. The increase (including approved projects) could range from between about 5,000 and about 6,700, depending on the Plan option implemented, assuming that household sizes remain constant in the Plan area. If household size increases (for example, if more families with children move to the area), the increase in population could be greater. Table 6 presents estimates of population growth in the Rincon Hill Plan area.

The population estimates in Table 6 assume that household size remains constant in the Plan area at 1.4 persons per household. It is possible, as more larger units are constructed and more neighborhood services, such as grocery stores and other retail shops, are developed on and near Rincon Hill, that more families would move into the neighborhood, which could increase household size. For example, in the more-established South Beach neighborhood, south of Rincon Hill, the average household size, according to 2000 Census data, is 1.6 persons per household, about 10 percent larger than in Rincon Hill. More significantly, nearly 6 percent of South Beach households have children, which is double the rate in Rincon Hill.

Based on the existing number of residents under the age of 18 in Census Tract 179.01, which includes the Plan area, the estimated number of new school-age children in the Plan area would range from about

- 50 students under the Existing Controls Option to about 90 students under the 82.5-foot Option.

Student enrollment in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) has been decreasing steadily over the past ten years. During the 2002-03 academic year, total enrollment was approximately 58,216, a decline of about 6.3 percent from enrollment for the 1992-93 academic year, which was about 61,882. Annually, student enrollment in the SFUSD has been declining by between 0.2 percent and 2.4 percent, despite minor increases of 0.9 percent and 0.1 percent during the 1995-96 and 1998-99 academic years (California Department of Education, 2004a). Private school enrollment has also been decreasing, with student enrollment about eight percent less for the 2003-04 academic year than student enrollment for the 1999-2000 academic year (California Department of Education, 2004b).

The Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998, or Senate Bill 50 (SB 50), restricts the ability of local agencies, such as the City of San Francisco, to deny land use approvals on the basis that public school facilities are inadequate. The payment of development impact fees is intended to compensate for potential impacts to local school districts that may be attributed new developments. Development impact fees are based on the type of land use and its size, rather than the anticipated number of new students that may be generated. SB 50 establishes maximum allowable development fees at \$1.93 per square foot for residential development and \$0.31 per square foot for commercial land uses. The San Francisco Board of Education has not adjusted the fees in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) since 1994; current SFUSD fees are \$1.72 per square foot of residential development, \$0.24 per square foot of office,

**TABLE 6  
PLAN AREA POPULATION**

|   | Units        | Population   | Households with children | Children   |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 2000 (Census Data)                        | 1,140        | 1,470        | 29                       | 34         |
| Vacancy Adjustment <sup>a</sup>           | –            | 80           | 2                        | 2          |
| Approved Projects <sup>b</sup>            | <u>2,020</u> | <u>2,755</u> | <u>54</u>                | <u>64</u>  |
| Subtotal                                  | 3,160        | 4,305        | 85                       | 100        |
| <b>Plan Options</b>                       |              |              |                          |            |
| Preferred (115' tower separation)         | <u>2,200</u> | <u>3,000</u> | <u>60</u>                | <u>70</u>  |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>5,360</b> | <b>7,305</b> | <b>145</b>               | <b>170</b> |
| 82.5' tower separation                    | <u>2,845</u> | <u>3,875</u> | <u>75</u>                | <u>90</u>  |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>6,005</b> | <b>8,180</b> | <b>160</b>               | <b>190</b> |
| 150' tower separation (Existing Controls) | <u>1,630</u> | <u>2,220</u> | <u>45</u>                | <u>50</u>  |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>4,790</b> | <b>6,525</b> | <b>130</b>               | <b>150</b> |

<sup>a</sup> Adjustment made to existing housing units to reduce vacancy to 5 percent from current 10 percent to account for sales and occupancy of relatively recently constructed units. Five percent vacancy assumed for future units constructed in Rincon Hill.

<sup>b</sup> Approved projects include 300 Spear Street (820 units), 201 Folsom Street (725 units), 333 First Street (345 units; just completed), 40-50 Lansing Street (80 units; under construction), and 325 Fremont Street (51 units).

SOURCE: Census 2000; San Francisco Planning Department, 2004; Environmental Science Associates

and \$0.13 per square foot of retail/service. Fees of \$0.08, \$0.09, \$0.15, and \$0.22 per square foot of lodging, warehouse, heavy industrial and light industrial development, respectively are also charged by the SFUSD (Mariscal, 2004).

School development fees are considered under SB 50 to mitigate any potential effects associated with implementation of the Plan Options, and therefore, no further mitigation measures are proposed.

The projected growth in Rincon Hill under any of the Plan options would be within growth currently forecast for San Francisco by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), which is the regional planning agency responsible for developing growth estimates for Bay Area cities and counties (see Table 7). ABAG's projections are used by other regional agencies, including the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and Metropolitan Transportation Commission in developing forecasts and modeling future conditions for purposes of air quality and transportation planning. In addition, the State Housing and Community Development Department requires the ABAG projections be used for determining housing needs for the state.

**TABLE 7  
ABAG PROJECTIONS 2003 FOR SAN FRANCISCO**

|                         | 2000    | 2010    | Change,<br>2000-2010 | 2020    | Change,<br>2000-2020 | 2030    | Change,<br>2000-2030 |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|
| Population <sup>a</sup> | 776,733 | 812,900 | 36,167               | 848,100 | 71,367               | 935,100 | 158,367              |
| Household Population    | 756,976 | 792,000 | 35,024               | 826,800 | 69,824               | 913,800 | 156,824              |
| Households              | 329,700 | 344,350 | 14,650               | 363,470 | 33,770               | 402,570 | 72,870               |
| Persons / Household     | 2.30    | 2.30    | –                    | 2.27    | –                    | 2.27    | –                    |

<sup>a</sup> Includes non-household population, which is primarily persons living in group quarters, including institutions, board-and-care home and the like.

SOURCE: Association of Bay Area Governments

ABAG has historically prepared updated projections every two years for a 20- to 25-year planning horizon. The projections are based on city and county general plans and other planning documents, as well as demographic assumptions, including fertility, births, deaths, migration, household sizes, and labor force participation rates, and economic assumptions including exports, the rate of growth in gross domestic product, energy prices, productivity and interest rates. In a departure with past practice, ABAG recently prepared a new *Projections 2003* just one year after releasing *Projections 2002*. With *Projections 2003*, ABAG, for the first time, incorporated proactive economic assumptions and land use policies to forecast future growth in the Bay Area based on “smart growth” principles intended to revitalize central cities and older suburbs, support and enhance public transit, and preserve open space and agricultural lands. Compared to previous ABAG forecasts, *Projections 2003* forecasts more growth along transportation corridors and in urbanized areas. One of the results is that long-term growth in San Francisco is forecast to be greater than in *Projections 2002*. *Projections 2003* also anticipates more long-term growth than did *Projections 2002* in heavily urbanized Santa Clara and Alameda counties, while forecasting less long-term growth in the Bay Area’s more rural outlying counties—Sonoma, Napa, Solano, and Marin.

On a percentage basis, *Projections 2003* forecasts the most dramatic change in San Francisco, with three-and-a-half times the growth between 2000 and 2030 as forecast in *Projections 2002*. Forecasts from ABAG’s *Projections 2002* and *Projections 2003* are presented in Table 8. As is apparent in Table 8, most of the difference is projected to occur after 2010, when anticipated changes in planning policy presumably could begin to influence regional development patterns. Thus, by 2030, *Projections 2003* forecasts that San Francisco’s population would be nearly 120,000 more than under *Projections 2002*, and nearly 160,000 greater than the 2000 population.

**TABLE 8  
COMPARISON OF ABAG PROJECTIONS 2002 AND PROJECTIONS 2003  
FOR SAN FRANCISCO**

|                       | 2000    | 2010<br>(P-2002) <sup>a</sup> | 2010<br>(P-2003) <sup>a</sup> | 2020<br>(P-2002) <sup>a</sup> | 2020<br>(P-2003) <sup>a</sup> | 2030<br>(P-2002) <sup>a</sup> | 2030<br>(P-2003) <sup>a</sup> |
|-----------------------|---------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Population            | 776,733 | 809,200                       | 812,900                       | 811,100                       | 848,100                       | 817,700 <sup>b</sup>          | 935,100                       |
| Household Population  | 756,976 | 788,300                       | 792,000                       | 789,800                       | 826,800                       | 796,200 <sup>b</sup>          | 913,800                       |
| Households            | 329,700 | 342,730                       | 344,350                       | 347,180                       | 363,470                       | 350,740                       | 402,570                       |
| Persons per Household | 2.30    | 2.30                          | 2.30                          | 2.27                          | 2.27                          | 2.27 <sup>c</sup>             | 2.27                          |

<sup>a</sup> P-2002 = *Projections 2002*; P-2003 = *Projections 2003*.

<sup>b</sup> Estimated from *Projections 2003*, Table 1.

<sup>c</sup> Assumed based on *Projections 2002* data for 2025.

SOURCE: Association of Bay Area Governments

## Housing

As shown in Table 6, the Preferred Rincon Hill Plan Option would, by itself, result in construction of nearly twice as many units in the Plan area as currently exist; combined with already approved projects, the overall number of housing units in Rincon Hill would increase nearly five-fold. Implementation of other Plan options, along with already approved projects, would similarly increase the total number of housing units in the Plan area by four to 5.5 times the existing number of housing units. As with population growth, this increase in housing units would be within the forecast growth in households<sup>73</sup> projected by ABAG (see Table 7).

No existing housing units would be directly displaced by development pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan. Furthermore, sites anticipated to be developed are occupied by non-residential uses. The only area of existing lower-density residential development within the Plan area is the enclave around Guy Place and Lansing Street. One residential project has recently been approved there, at 40-50 Lansing Street (with frontage on Guy Place as well); this project is under construction and will replace a former commercial building. The preferred Rincon Hill Plan option proposes a maximum height limit of 65 feet (set back from a 45-foot podium) in most of the Guy-Lansing enclave, except the area near the corner of First and Harrison Street, on the south side of Lansing Street. This height limit would reduce the potential for replacement of existing small-scale residential units on Guy Place, because the permitted height and development density for new construction would not be great enough to provide an incentive to most developers to remove the existing buildings. Therefore, implementation of the Plan would not be anticipated to result in any loss of existing housing.

<sup>73</sup> In general, the number of households is equal to the number of housing units less the housing unit vacancy rate.

The Plan's anticipated increase in housing units, even combined with housing production elsewhere in San Francisco, would not achieve the number of units shown in *Projections 2003* for 2030. Even to achieve the lesser increases in population and households anticipated in ABAG's *Projections 2002*, the City would have to increase the historic rate at which new housing units have been added. *Projections 2002* forecast an increase of 14,650 households in San Francisco between 2000 and 2010, or a need for about 1,465 new housing units per year. By contrast, in the period from 1995-2000, the number of housing units increased by a net total of about 920 housing units per year (factoring both new construction and demolition); from 1990 through 2000, the rate of increase was about 1,120 units per year.<sup>74</sup> To achieve the "smart growth"-based increase in households foreseen in *Projections 2003*, the increase in housing production would have to be dramatic, in that *Projections 2003* would necessitate net production of more than 1,675 units per year between 2000 and 2020, and nearly 4,000 units per year between 2020 and 2030. According to the draft General Plan Housing Element (May 2004), in the shorter term, San Francisco needs to add some 2,850 housing units per year between January 1999 and June 2006 to accommodate ABAG's state-mandated estimate of the City's share of regional housing need, a figure that is based on accommodating household growth, housing 50 percent of the City's new workers, and provision of a five percent vacancy rate to ensure reasonable availability of housing.<sup>75</sup>

San Francisco's draft Housing Element estimates that more than 29,000 housing units could be added as infill development within the constraints of existing zoning and planning controls.<sup>76</sup> To help meet the future demand for housing in San Francisco, the Planning Department has embarked upon a number of initiatives, one of which is the proposed new Rincon Hill Plan. The Rincon Hill Plan is part of an areawide program called the Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative that foresees the potential for more than 40,000 new housing units in the greater Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, including Mission Bay, the South of Market and Showplace Square districts, the Mid-Market area, Market/Octavia "Better Neighborhoods" planning effort, Van Ness Corridor, Downtown, Transbay Terminal Area, Yerba Buena Center, South Beach, and Rincon Hill. Additional housing is projected in other areas of San Francisco as part of the Department's Citywide Action Plan, which encompasses the proposed Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning,<sup>77</sup> Balboa Park and Central Waterfront "Better Neighborhoods," the former Hunters Point Shipyard, certain Port of San Francisco lands, and some transit corridors, in addition to the Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative. According to the draft Housing Element, a minimum of 10,000 additional units could be added in these areas.<sup>78</sup> Even this ambitious housing production program, however, would not keep pace with ABAG's forecast of an increase of nearly 73,000 new households in San Francisco between 2000 and 2030 in *Projections 2003*, although the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, along with other residential initiatives, would easily eclipse the much lower forecast of 21,000 new households in the same period that was contained in *Projections 2002*.

<sup>74</sup> San Francisco General Plan, Draft Housing Element—Proposal for Adoption, May 2004; p. 37.

<sup>75</sup> San Francisco General Plan, Draft Housing Element—Proposal for Adoption, May 2004; p. 65.

<sup>76</sup> San Francisco General Plan, Draft Housing Element—Proposal for Adoption, May 2004; p. 84.

<sup>77</sup> The Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning proposal includes the South of Market (east) and Showplace Square areas that are also included in the Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative, as well as the Mission and Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood; the latter is also currently the subject of a proposed Redevelopment Plan.

<sup>78</sup> San Francisco General Plan, Draft Housing Element—Proposal for Adoption, May 2004; p. 100.

In 2002, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (PUC) adopted Resolution 02-0084, which stated that the PUC's Urban Water Management Plan update 2000 was based on ABAG's *Projections 2000*, which included "all known or expected development projects in San Francisco through 2020," and that the 2000 Urban Water Management Plan therefore may serve as the water supply assessment required under CEQA and State Water Code Sections 10620-10631 and Sections 10855-10912 for "proposed projects covered by the ABAG Year 2000 Projections." *Projections 2000* forecast less growth between 2000 and 2010 (an increase of about 20,000 population) than either *Projections 2002* or *Projections 2003*, and forecast a population decline of about 10,000 between 2010 and 2020. Nevertheless, the net population gain between 2000 and 2020 was forecast to be about 10,000, which is in excess of the maximum potential growth in population under any of the three Rincon Hill Plan options. Furthermore, the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan, adopted in 1985, assumed an increase of up to 6,800 housing units in the Plan area, which is more development than would be permitted under the Draft Plan analyzed in this EIR. Therefore, the population growth anticipated in the proposed Rincon Hill Plan can be said to be encompassed within the PUC's water supply assessment. However, growth pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan together with other citywide growth,<sup>79</sup> including that anticipated to occur with the help of the initiative described above (Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative, Better Neighborhoods, Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning), would result in more population growth than is anticipated in the PUC's 2000 Urban Water Management Plan. The PUC will, in the next year, be updating its Urban Water Management Plan, which will be based on the growth forecasts in ABAG *Projections 2002*.

### **Housing Affordability**

As noted in the setting, most San Francisco residents do not earn enough to be able to afford the anticipated market-rate housing units that would be built in Rincon Hill pursuant to adoption of a revised Rincon Hill Plan, whether it be the Preferred Option that is approved or one of the other options. As described in Chapter II, Project Description, the proposed Plan would require that all projects of 10 units or more comply with the 12 percent/17 percent affordable housing requirement, regardless of whether Conditional Use authorization is required, and would require an additional percentage of residential units be affordable to households with up to 120 percent of area median income, in recognition of the value added to land in Rincon Hill as a result of the increased density to be allowed by the Plan. Finally, the Plan would promote family housing by requiring that 40 percent of residential units have two or more bedrooms, and by encouraging development of not only high-rise housing but also podium-level and townhouse units, which the Draft Plan projects would be less costly than tower units and would offer greater access to open space. In addition, the Draft Plan's proposed elimination of minimum parking requirements is intended to reduce the amount of parking provided, thereby "uncoupling" parking spaces from residential units and reducing

---

<sup>79</sup> In 2001 and 2001, the latest years for which the Planning Department has data, the City experienced a net gain of approximately 4,100 housing units. Based on the citywide average of 2.3 persons per household, this growth in housing stock would translate into almost 9,500 new residents, a total nearly equal to the 20-year growth forecast contained in the PUC's Urban Water Management Plan.

the average dwelling unit cost.<sup>80</sup> Through these components, the Plan would seek to offset, as much as possible within the Plan area, the relatively high cost of housing in San Francisco.

It is not possible to forecast accurately who would occupy the residential units that could be constructed pursuant to the Draft Plan. As noted in the setting, anecdotal evidence collected by the Planning Department suggests that some recently built dwelling units in the Plan area have been purchased or rented as second homes; to the extent that this continues, new construction would have little effect on alleviating the City's housing demand. On the other hand, the various options analyzed in this EIR, and particularly the densest 82.5-foot Option, which could result in development of more than 2,800 new housing units, would add substantially to the City's housing supply. Even the less dense Preferred Option, with 2,200 projected new housing units, would, by itself, result in the equivalent of two years' worth of citywide housing production in San Francisco during the years 1990-2000. Although the market-rate units that would be built in the Plan area would be too expensive for large numbers of City residents, the very increase in housing development by some meaningful amount, along with other housing initiatives in San Francisco, could possibly result in an incremental increase in citywide housing availability if this new housing production were to bring existing, older dwelling units onto the market.

## Conclusion

In summary, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would encourage the development of new housing in the Plan area to meet a portion of existing housing demand and to help achieve the need for future housing forecast by ABAG. The proposed Plan would not displace any existing housing. Although the housing market virtually ensures that there would be a mismatch between housing prices in the Plan area and the purchasing ability of many San Francisco residents, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan includes affordability components that are more rigorous than the existing citywide provisions in an effort to make new housing in the Plan area as affordable as deemed reasonably feasible. In conjunction with other proposed programs to encourage new housing in San Francisco, such as the remainder of the Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative, the proposed Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning, and the Better Neighborhoods Program, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan could contribute to a substantial increase in housing in the City. The Plan would not result in displacement of people or housing, nor would it create unmet housing demand; instead, it would provide some relief for housing demand created by other factors by facilitating an increase in the housing supply. In light of these considerations, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would not result in a significant adverse effect with regard to Population or Housing.

To the extent that the gain in housing were to result in physical impacts, those impacts are analyzed elsewhere in this EIR, in regard to transportation, air quality, shadow, wind, visual quality, and cultural resources.

---

<sup>80</sup> Analysis cited in the Draft Housing Element (Table I-61, p. 106) indicates that parking accounted for approximately 5.6% of the per-unit cost of multifamily dwellings in 2000.



## REFERENCES—Population and Housing

California Department of Education. Data Quest, <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>, Accessed July 12, 2004a.

California Department of Education. California Private Schools, 2003-2004 Data File Structure, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/si/ps/>, Accessed July 13, 2004b.

Mariscal, Christina, San Francisco Unified School District Property Management Department. Personal Communication, July 13, 2004.

---

## E. AIR QUALITY

### SETTING

#### *AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS*

Federal air quality standards have been established for the six criteria air pollutants, so-called because the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes criteria documents to justify the choice of standards. These pollutants are ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter (both less than 10 microns in diameter, known as PM-10, and less than 2.5 microns in diameter, known as PM-2.5), lead, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide. California had already established its own air quality standards when federal standards were established, and because of the unique meteorological conditions and associated air quality problems in the state, there is considerable diversity between state and federal standards currently in effect in California, as shown in Table 8.

The ambient air quality standards are intended to protect public health and welfare, and they incorporate an adequate margin of safety. They are designed to protect those segments of the public most susceptible to respiratory distress, known as sensitive receptors, such as asthmatics, the very young, the elderly, people weak from other illness or disease, or persons engaged in strenuous work or exercise. Healthy adults can tolerate occasional exposure to air pollution levels somewhat above the ambient air quality standards before adverse health effects are observed.

#### *AIR QUALITY PLANS*

Both the federal Clean Air Act, as amended, and the California Clean Air Act require designation of air basins (or portions thereof) as either “attainment” or “nonattainment” for each criteria air pollutant, based on whether or not the national or state standards had been achieved. Where a pollutant exceeds the standards, air quality management plans must be prepared to demonstrate how the standards will be achieved. The federal and state Clean Air Acts also provide the basis for the development of stationary source and mobile source performance standards. Federal air quality standards are promulgated by the U.S. EPA, while state standards are issued by the California Air Resources Board. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) is the agency empowered to regulate air pollutant emissions in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin. The BAAQMD is responsible for implementing emissions standards and other requirements of federal and state laws; it controls stationary-source emissions by issuing air quality permits that require the implementation of Best Available Control Technology, if specified trigger levels are exceeded.

In April 2004, the U.S. EPA issued the first phase of its rules for implementation of a new eight-hour ozone standard, effective June 15, 2004. EPA had issued an eight-hour ozone standard in July 1997, based on information demonstrating that the existing one-hour standard was inadequate for protecting public health. The eight-hour standard was challenged in court and upheld, albeit with some court-

required adjustments to its implementation. The eight-hour standard will replace the existing one-hour standard,<sup>81</sup> and also issued a list of areas designated nonattainment for the new standard (U.S. EPA, 2004). (As shown in Table 9, the eight-hour ozone standard is 0.08 parts per million (ppm), averaged over eight hours. The one-hour standard is 0.12 ppm, measured in hourly readings.)

The San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin is designated as a nonattainment area for ozone under the new federal eight-hour standard (U.S. EPA, 2004). Although the EPA, also in April 2004, made a finding that the Bay Area has attained the national one-hour ozone standard, under the newly promulgated rules, the region must now develop a plan showing how attainment of the eight-hour standard can be reached by June 2007. The Bay Area is designated either as an attainment area or is unclassified (meaning it cannot be classified on the basis of available information) for all other criteria pollutants under federal standards (BAAQMD, 2004).

In terms of state standards for criteria air pollutants, which are more stringent than federal standards, the Bay Area is a nonattainment area for ozone and particulate matter (both PM-10 and PM-2.5), and is an attainment area for other pollutants (BAAQMD, 2003).

As noted, the BAAQMD is responsible for preparation of an attainment plan for achieving the federal ozone standard. Separately, as required by the California Clean Air Act, the BAAQMD has periodically publishes a Clean Air Plan for achieving state air quality standards. The current version, the *Bay Area 2000 Clean Air Plan*, was adopted by the BAAQMD in December 2000. The *2000 Clean Air Plan* is the third triennial update of the District's original 1991 Clean Air Plan; it includes a control strategy review to ensure that the plan continues to include "all feasible measures" to reduce ozone, an update of the District's emission inventory, estimates of emission reductions achieved by the plan, and an assessment of air quality trends. The goal of the *2000 Clean Air Plan* is to improve air quality through tighter industry controls, cleaner cars and trucks, cleaner fuels, and increased commute alternatives. The plan encourages cities and counties to adopt measures in support of this goal. Identified measures include developing rules to reduce vehicle trips to and from major residential developments, shopping centers, and other indirect sources; encouraging cities and counties to plan for high-density development; and clustering development with mixed uses in the vicinity of mass transit stations.

**LOCAL PLANS**

The San Francisco General plan includes an Air Quality Element, adopted in 1997. The Air Quality Element includes a number of objectives and policies relevant to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan:

Objective 2: Reduce mobile sources of air pollution through implementation of the transportation element of the general plan<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> The one-hour standard will be revoked within one year of the June 15, 2004, effective date of the new regulations.

<sup>82</sup> A number of Transportation Element policies and objectives are referenced in the Air Quality Element.

**TABLE 9  
STATE AND FEDERAL CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANT  
STANDARDS, EFFECTS, AND SOURCES**

| <b>Pollutant</b>                             | <b>Averaging Time</b>                        | <b>State Standard</b>                        | <b>Federal Standard</b>                       | <b>Pollutant Health and Atmospheric Effects</b>   | <b>Major Pollutant Sources</b>  |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Ozone</b>                                 | 1 hour<br>8 hours                            | 0.09 ppm<br>---                              | 0.12 ppm<br>0.08 ppm                          | High concentrations can directly affect lungs, causing irritation. Long-term exposure may cause damage to lung tissue.  | Formed when reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NO <sub>x</sub> ) react in the presence of sunlight. Major sources include on-road motor vehicles, solvent evaporation, and commercial / industrial mobile equipment. |
| <b>Carbon Monoxide</b>                       | 1 hour<br>8 hours                            | 20 ppm<br>9 ppm                              | 35 ppm<br>9 ppm                               | Classified as a chemical asphyxiant, carbon monoxide interferes with the transfer of fresh oxygen to the blood and deprives sensitive tissues of oxygen.                      | Internal combustion engines, primarily gasoline-powered motor vehicles.   |
| <b>Nitrogen Dioxide</b>                      | 1 hour<br>Annual Avg.                        | 0.25 ppm<br>---                              | ---<br>0.053 ppm                              | Irritating to eyes and respiratory tract. Colors atmosphere reddish-brown.  | Motor vehicles, petroleum refining operations, industrial sources, aircraft, ships, and railroads.  |
| <b>Sulfur Dioxide</b>                        | 1 hour<br>3 hours<br>24 hours<br>Annual Avg. | 0.25 ppm<br>---<br>0.04 ppm<br>---           | ---<br>0.5 ppm<br>0.14 ppm<br>0.03 ppm        | Irritates upper respiratory tract; injurious to lung tissue. Can yellow the leaves of plants, destructive to marble, iron, and steel. Limits visibility and reduces sunlight. | Fuel combustion, chemical plants, sulfur recovery plants, and metal processing.   |
| <b>Respirable Particulate Matter (PM-10)</b> | 24 hours<br>Annual Avg.                      | 50 ug/m <sup>3</sup><br>20 ug/m <sup>3</sup> | 150 ug/m <sup>3</sup><br>50 ug/m <sup>3</sup> | May irritate eyes and respiratory tract, decreases in lung capacity, cancer and increased mortality. Produces haze and limits visibility.                                     | Dust and fume-producing industrial and agricultural operations, combustion, atmospheric photochemical reactions, and natural activities (e.g. wind-raised dust and ocean sprays).   |
| <b>Fine Particulate Matter (PM-2.5)</b>      | 24 hours<br>Annual Avg.                      | ---<br>12 ug/ m <sup>3</sup>                 | 65 ug/m <sup>3</sup><br>15 ug/m <sup>3</sup>  | Increases respiratory disease, lung damage, cancer, and premature death. Reduces visibility and results in surface soiling.   | Fuel combustion in motor vehicles, equipment, and industrial sources; residential and agricultural burning; Also, formed from photochemical reactions of other pollutants, including NO <sub>x</sub> , sulfur oxides, and organics. |
| <b>Lead</b>                                  | Monthly<br>Quarterly                         | 1.5 ug/m <sup>3</sup><br>---                 | ---<br>1.5 ug/m <sup>3</sup>                  | Disturbs gastrointestinal system, and causes anemia, kidney disease, and neuromuscular and neurologic dysfunction.  | Present source: lead smelters, battery manufacturing & recycling facilities. Past source: combustion of leaded gasoline.  |

NOTE: ppm = parts per million; ug/m<sup>3</sup> = micrograms per cubic meter.

SOURCES: California Air Resources Board, 2003. <http://www.arb.ca.gov/aqs/aaqs2.pdf>

- Objective 3: Decrease the air quality impacts of development by coordination of land use and transportation decisions.
- Policy 3.1: Take advantage of the high density development in San Francisco to improve the transit infrastructure and also encourage high density and compact development where an extensive transportation infrastructure exists.
- Policy 3.2: Encourage mixed land use development near transit lines and provide retail and other types of service oriented uses within walking distance to minimize automobile dependent development.
- Policy 3.4: Continue past efforts and existing policies to promote new residential development in and close to the downtown area and other centers of employment, to reduce the number of auto commute trips to the city and to improve the housing/job balance within the city.
- 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.
- Policy 3.6: Link land use decision making policies to the availability of transit and consider the impacts of these policies on the local and regional transportation system.
- Policy 3.7: Exercise air quality modeling in building design for sensitive land uses such as residential developments that are located near the sources of pollution such as freeways and industries.
- Policy 3.9: Encourage and require planting of trees in conjunction with new development to enhance pedestrian environment and select species of trees that optimize achievement of air quality goals.
- Objective 5: Minimize particulate matter emissions from road and construction sites.
- Policy 5.1: Continue policies to minimize particulate matter emissions during road and building construction and demolition.

By encouraging high-density residential development in close proximity to downtown, by coordinating with planning efforts for the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Area (including a potential new Transbay Terminal), and by encouraging ground-floor retail uses, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would generally be consistent with the above policies and objectives.

### ***AMBIENT AIR QUALITY***

The BAAQMD operates a regional monitoring network that measures the ambient concentrations of the six criteria air pollutants. Existing and probable future levels of air quality in San Francisco can be generally inferred from ambient air quality measurements conducted by the BAAQMD at its two San Francisco monitoring stations. The Potrero Hill station at 16th and Arkansas Streets measures all criteria pollutants, including regional pollution levels (ozone), as well as primary vehicular emission levels near busy roadways (CO). The station at 939 Ellis Street (between Van Ness and Franklin) at BAAQMD headquarters measures only carbon monoxide. Table 10 summarizes five years of published data (1999 to 2003) from the Arkansas Street monitoring station. During this five-year period, there were no violations of the one-hour or eight-hour CO standards at the Arkansas Street monitoring station. The

**TABLE 10  
SAN FRANCISCO CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANT CONCENTRATIONS, 1997-2001**

| Pollutant  | Standard <sup>b</sup> | Monitoring Data by Year <sup>a</sup> |             |             |             |             |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|  |                       | 1999                                 | 2000        | 2001        | 2002        | 2003        |
| <b>Ozone:</b>  |                       |                                      |             |             |             |             |
| Highest 1 Hour Average (ppm)                             |                       | 0.08                                 | 0.06        | 0.08        | 0.05        | 0.09        |
| Hours over State Standard                                | 0.09                  | 0                                    | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           |
| Hours over Federal Standard                              | 0.12                  | 0                                    | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           |
| Highest 8 Hour Average (ppm)                             | 0.08                  | 0.06                                 | 0.04        | 0.05        | 0.05        | 0.06        |
| Days over Federal Standard                               |                       | 0                                    | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           |
| <b>Carbon Monoxide:</b>                                  |                       |                                      |             |             |             |             |
| Highest 8 Hour Average (ppm)                             |                       | 3.7                                  | 3.2         | 3.3         | 2.6         | 2.8         |
| Days over State/Federal Standard                         | 9.0                   | 0                                    | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           |
| <b>Respirable Particulate Matter (PM-10):</b>            |                       |                                      |             |             |             |             |
| Annual Average ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) <sup>c</sup> |                       | <i>27.1</i>                          | <i>25.1</i> | <i>25.9</i> | <i>24.7</i> | <i>22.7</i> |
| State Standard   | 20                    |                                      |             |             |             |             |
| Federal Standard   | 50                    |                                      |             |             |             |             |
| 24 Hour ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )—State <sup>d</sup>  |                       | <b>81.6</b>                          | <b>66.6</b> | <b>69.8</b> | <b>78.6</b> | <b>51.7</b> |
| Days over State Standard <sup>e</sup>                    | 50                    | 37                                   | 12          | ND          | ND          | 6           |
| 24 Hour ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )—Federal             |                       | 77.9                                 | 63.2        | 67.4        | 74.1        | 25.3        |
| Days over Federal Standard <sup>e</sup>                  | 150                   | 0                                    | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           |
| <b>Fine Particulate Matter (PM-2.5):</b>                 |                       |                                      |             |             |             |             |
| Annual Average ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )              |                       | ND                                   | ND          | 11.5        | <b>13.1</b> | ND          |
| State Standard   | 12                    |                                      |             |             |             |             |
| Federal Standard   | 15                    |                                      |             |             |             |             |
| 24 Hour ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )—Federal             |                       | <b>71.2</b>                          | 47.9        | <b>76.6</b> | <b>70.2</b> | 41.6        |
| Days over Federal Standard <sup>f</sup>                  | 65                    | 1                                    | 0           | 2           | 4           | 0           |

- a Data for all pollutants are from the Arkansas Street air quality monitoring station in San Francisco, which is located approximately 2 miles southwest of the project site.
- b Generally, state standards are not to be exceeded and federal standards are not to be exceeded more than once per year.
- c State annual average, where available, in italics. State average is slightly higher than federal average due to differences in methods.
- d State statistics differ from federal statistics due to differences in methods.
- e PM-10 is usually measured every sixth day (rather than continuously like the other pollutants). For PM-10, days over standard indicates the number of days that would have exceeded the applicable standard had measuring been conducted daily.
- f There is no separate state 24-hour standard for PM-2.5.

NOTE: ppm = parts per million;  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  = micrograms per cubic meter.  
 ND = No data or insufficient data available. Values shown in **bold** type exceed the applicable standard.

SOURCE: California Air Resources Board, *Air Quality Data Statistics*, 1999-2003; [www.arb.ca.gov/adam/welcome.html](http://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/welcome.html)

state PM-10 standard was violated from 1 to 6 days out of 60 or 61 measurement days between 1997 and 2001. Ozone and nitrogen dioxide measurements were within allowable maximum concentrations.

Comparison of these data with those from other BAAQMD monitoring stations indicates that San Francisco's air quality is among the least degraded of all developed portions of the Bay Area. Three of San Francisco's four prevailing wind directions, west, northwest, and west-northwest, blow from the Pacific Ocean, reducing the potential for San Francisco to receive air pollutants from elsewhere in the region.

Local exceedences of state PM-10 standards in San Francisco have been largely due to emissions from within the City. The primary sources of PM-10 in the city are construction and demolition activities, combustion of fuels for heating, and vehicle travel over paved roads (CARB, 2000). Airborne dust levels measured in San Francisco show occasional violations of the state PM-10 (breathable-sized particles) standards, and maximum PM-10 levels have declined over the five-year period shown in Table 10. In general, particulate levels are relatively low near the coast, increase with distance from the coast, and peak in dry, sheltered valleys. One federal standard violation occurred in 1990; federal guidelines allow for no more than one violation per year averaged over a three-year period in defining a "non-attainment" area. This designation, "non-attainment" refers to whether or not an airshed is meeting (termed "attainment") or not meeting (termed "non-attainment") state or federal ambient air quality standards.

On September 16, 1997, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) made final the revised standards for eight-hour ozone and PM-2.5 (particulate matter 2.5 microns). The BAAQMD has recently initiated a three-year program to obtain sufficient ambient air monitoring data to support this new standard for ozone and initiated a similar three-year data collection program for PM-2.5. Until this data gathering is complete, no determination will be made about local air quality with respect to these two specific standards.

## IMPACTS

### *SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA*

Generally, a project would have a significant effect on the environment with respect to air quality if it would:

- violate any ambient air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation;
- expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, or
- permeate its vicinity with objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

The proposed project does not involve development of land uses generally associated with potential odor impacts; hence, the following discussion focuses on the other two criteria.



BAAQMD has published a set of recommendations that provide specific guidance on evaluating projects under CEQA relative to the above general criteria (BAAQMD, 1999). The *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines* (BAAQMD, 1999) distinguish between individual development projects and planning documents, such as city and county general plans, specific area plans and redevelopment plans. Because the project analyzed in this EIR is not a single development, but rather development over the entire Rincon Hill area pursuant to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, the analysis for the proposed project has been conducted at a plan level based on the totality of development and activity that is assumed to occur within the Plan area. However, individual projects that may be proposed in the future under the Rincon Hill Plan would undergo further environmental review to determine whether they could generate further air quality impacts specific to their site, time and project description.

The BAAQMD states that the “evaluation of a plan’s air quality impacts should focus on the analysis of the plan’s consistency with the most recently adopted regional air quality plan” (BAAQMD, 1999; p. 51). In accordance with the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, this EIR judges the significance of the Rincon Hill Plan’s operational emissions of criteria air pollutants based on the consistency of the Rincon Hill Plan with the *Bay Area 2000 Clean Air Plan* (BAAQMD, 2000), which is the most recently adopted regional air quality plan. (As noted, future development projects undertaken pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan would be subject to a significance determination based on the BAAQMD’s project-specific quantitative thresholds of 80 pounds per day of NO<sub>x</sub>, ROG, and PM-10, and 500 pounds per day of CO.)

According to the BAAQMD (1999; p. 51), a planning document’s consistency with the *Clean Air Plan* is established through a comparison of the plan’s projections of population and vehicle use (vehicle-miles traveled) with those upon which the *Clean Air Plan* is based; the extent to which the plan implements transportation control measures identified in the *Clean Air Plan*; and whether the plan provides buffer zones around sources of odors and toxics.

As noted above, the Rincon Hill Plan does not involve development of land uses generally associated with potential odor impacts, nor would Plan result in development of uses that would generate substantial quantities of toxic air contaminants; hence, the provision of buffer zones around sources of odors and toxics is not relevant to the analysis.

BAAQMD does not require a detailed quantification of construction emissions. Instead, construction emissions are typically considered less than significant if the appropriate level of BAAQMD-recommended mitigation is employed to minimize dust emissions.

### ***IMPACT ASSESSMENT—ALL OPTIONS***

Implementation of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan with any of the options analyzed in this EIR would affect air quality through construction-related emissions, transportation-related vehicular exhaust emissions, and stationary source emissions. Construction-related emissions would be short-term on a project-by-project basis and would vary as each specific development project occurs under the Rincon Hill Plan.

Transportation-related vehicular exhaust emissions from operation of projects developed pursuant to the

Plan would be long-term and would result from traffic increases associated with new development. The Plan does not propose any new industrial areas. Emissions from smaller sources such as boilers, furnaces, backup generators, etc., would depend on the specific needs and types of future development.

### **Construction Emissions**

Construction activities would occur intermittently at different sites in the Plan area as the development occurs. Although the related impacts at any one location would be temporary, construction of individual projects under the proposed project could cause adverse effects on the local air quality within the planning area. Construction activities would generate substantial amounts of dust (including PM-10 and PM-2.5) primarily from “fugitive” sources (i.e., emissions released through means other than through a stack or tailpipe) and lesser amounts of other criteria air pollutants primarily from operation of heavy equipment construction machinery (primarily diesel operated) and construction worker automobile trips (primarily gasoline operated).

Fugitive dust emissions would vary from day to day, depending on the level and type of activity, silt content of the soil, and the prevailing weather. Sources of fugitive dust during construction would include vehicle movement over paved and unpaved surfaces, demolition, excavation, earth movement, grading, and wind erosion from exposed surfaces. Without mitigation, construction activities could result in significant quantities of dust, and as a result, local visibility and particulate concentrations may be adversely affected on a temporary and intermittent basis during the construction period. In addition, the fugitive dust generated by construction would include not only PM-10, but also larger particles, which would fall out of the atmosphere within several hundred feet of the site and could result in nuisance-type impacts. Demolition of buildings constructed prior to 1980 often involves hazardous materials such as asbestos used in insulation, fire retardants, or building materials (floor tile, roofing, etc.) and lead-based paint. These issues are discussed in Section III.H, Hazardous Materials.

The BAAQMD’s approach to analyses of construction impacts is to emphasize implementation of effective and comprehensive control measures rather than detailed quantification of emissions. The BAAQMD considers any project’s construction-related impacts to be less than significant if the required dust-control measures are implemented. (See Chapter IV, p. 224, for the dust control measures.)

Construction activities would also result in the emission of other criteria pollutants from equipment exhaust, construction-related vehicular activity and construction worker automobile trips. Emission levels for construction activities would vary depending on the number and type of equipment, duration of use, operation schedules, and the number of construction workers. Criteria pollutant emissions of ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> from these emission sources would incrementally add to the regional atmospheric loading of ozone precursors during project construction. *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines* recognize that construction equipment emit ozone precursors, but indicate that such emissions are included in the emission inventory that is the basis for regional air quality plans. Therefore construction emissions are not expected to impede attainment or maintenance of ozone standards in the Bay Area (BAAQMD, 1999). The impact would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure E.1 on p. 224.

In light of the foregoing, air quality impacts related to construction would be less-than-significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure E.1, p. 224.

## Operational Emissions

### *Consistency with Clean Air Plan Population and VMT Assumptions*

Development under the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would result in increases in population and, to a lesser degree, employment and a concomitant increase in traffic and air pollutant emissions. With respect to the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines* for evaluating the Plan's air quality impacts, the impact analysis must determine consistency of a proposed plan with the population and vehicle-miles traveled assumptions in the applicable regional air quality plan, in this case, the *2000 Bay Area Clean Air Plan*. In forecasting future stationary and mobile source emissions and preparing the regional air quality plan, the BAAQMD uses growth projections prepared by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). The resultant emissions forecasts are then used to develop strategies and control measures necessary to achieve regional ozone attainment within a designated timeframe. In developing its projections, ABAG uses information from local government general plans, current zoning and other local development policies, in conjunction with economic and demographic factors. Consistent with this process, the ABAG estimates for San Francisco use the development anticipated under the San Francisco General Plan, zoning and existing policies at the time of preparation of the projections, as estimated by ABAG and the City of San Francisco.

The *2000 Bay Area Clean Air Plan* is based on population assumptions in ABAG's *Projections 98*. *Projections 98* forecast population growth of 20,300 in San Francisco between 2000 and 2010, which is substantially more population growth than is anticipated under any of the options for the Rincon Hill Plan evaluated in this EIR. The total estimated 2010 population of 806,200 in San Francisco was then forecast to decline to 793,400 by 2020. However, even with this decline, the increase of 7,500 between 2000 and 2020 would accommodate growth that could occur under each of the development options for the Rincon Hill Plan. Therefore, development pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan would not exceed the population projections in the *2000 Clean Air Plan*.<sup>83</sup>

Because the Rincon Hill Plan anticipates development of high-density housing in close proximity to the concentration of jobs in downtown San Francisco, the assumptions underlying the traffic analysis for this EIR forecast an increased proportion of residents in the Plan area traveling by transit than is the case in the Plan area at present. As a result, the growth in vehicle-miles traveled would be less than the rate of population growth in the Plan area.

---

<sup>83</sup> ABAG's more recent *Projections 2002* and *Projections 2003* both predict greater population increases in San Francisco between 2000 and 2010 (about 32,500 and 36,000, respectively), although based on a lower total population for 2000, from the 2000 U.S. Census, that was not available at the time *Projections 98* was issued. Still, both *Projections 2002* and *Projections 2003* anticipate greater total population in San Francisco in both 2010 and 2020 than did *Projections 98*. *Projections 2003* will form the basis for the next update of the *Clean Air Plan*. This planning effort is under way as of mid-2004.

Many of the objectives and policies in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan promote the use of alternative transportation modes. The Draft Plan calls for strengthening the area plan emphasis on non-auto travel. Continued implementation and enhancement of policies aimed at reducing and/or limiting vehicle travel would reduce regional and local air quality impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project. In addition, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and rezoning would limit the number of parking spaces associated with new residential and commercial development, thereby potentially further reducing vehicle use.

***Consistency with Clean Air Plan Transportation Control Measures (TCMs)***

The 1988 California Clean Air Act, Section 40919(d) requires regions to implement “transportation control measures to substantially reduce the rate of increase in passenger vehicle trips and miles traveled.” Consistent with this requirement, a primary goal of the *Bay Area 2000 Clean Air Plan* is to reduce the number of trips and vehicle miles Bay Area residents travel in single-occupant vehicles through the implementation of nineteen TCMs.<sup>84</sup> Consistency with the Clean Air Plan’s Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) is found if the jurisdiction adopting the plan evidences “reasonable efforts” to implement applicable TCMs. TCMs identified in the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines* as applicable to cities and counties (the jurisdictions generally involved in adoption of planning documents) include the following:

TCM 1—Support Voluntary Employer-Based Trip Reduction Programs

TCM 9—Improve Bicycle Access and Facilities

TCM 12—Improve Arterial Traffic Management

TCM 15—Local Clean Air Plans, Policies and Programs (focus on site design to reduced single-occupant trips)

TCM 17—Conduct Demonstration Projects (to reduce emissions, such as implementation of clean fuel vehicle fleets)

TCM 19—Pedestrian Travel (promote development patterns to encourage walk trips; include pedestrian improvements in capital projects)

TCM 20—Promote Traffic Calming Measures

The proposed Rincon Hill Plan would directly respond to TCMs 15 and 19, in that by encouraging development of high-density residential units in close proximity to an employment center, and by also encouraging along neighborhood-serving retail uses in the Plan area, the Plan seeks to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips and facilitate pedestrian travel, both to and from work and to and from shopping. Furthermore, Objectives 18, 20, and 21 in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan encourage increases in pedestrian trips at major transportation nodes and pedestrian oriented or pedestrian-friendly development, and development of pedestrian paths or amenities where transportation infrastructure and capacity is underutilized. Development under any of the options for the proposed Plan would be subject to these policies thereby ensuring the project’s compliance with this measure. The Plan also seeks to improve

---

<sup>84</sup> Transportation Control Measures are strategies and methods to reduce vehicular travel.

traffic management in the Plan area, particularly Bay Bridge traffic, which would respond to TCMs 9 and 20. The City of San Francisco currently implements a number of other TCMs through Planning Code requirements to provide bicycle parking and implementation of the Bicycle Program within the Department of Parking and Traffic, which is currently overseeing an update of the City's Bicycle Plan (TCM 9); implementation of an alternative fuel program for City vehicles; and the Downtown Transportation Management and Transportation Brokerage Programs (TCM 1; less applicable to residential development).

Other TCMs are applicable to employers, including:

TCM 13—Transit Use Incentives (such as provision of Commuter Checks to employees)

TCM 14—Improve Rideshare / Vanpool Services and Incentives

TCM 16—Intermittent Control Measure / Public Education (participation in the BAAQMD's "Spare the Air" campaign to reduce driving on smoggy days)

TCM 18—Transportation Pricing Reform (including providing a cash payment in lieu of parking to employees who do not drive to work)

Although the City encourages employers to implement the above TCMs, they are less applicable than those listed above to an areawide planning effort such as the proposed Rincon Hill Plan.

Based on the above, the proposed Plan would implement applicable transportation control measures from the *2000 Clean Air Plan*.

Because the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would be consistent with population and vehicle use projections in the current *Clean Air Plan*, would implement applicable transportation control measures identified in the *Clean Air Plan*, and because odor/toxics buffer zones are not applicable, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would not result in a significant impact with regard to operational air quality.

### ***Cumulative Impacts***

As described in Section III.D, Population and Housing, as many as 50,000 new housing units could be developed in San Francisco through a combination of infill development, neighborhood planning efforts, and targeted rezoning. This could accommodate a population of up to 115,000, based on the current citywide average of 2.3 persons per unit, although the total likely would be smaller because many new units will be developed in multi-family dwellings, including the several towers anticipated in Rincon Hill, where densities are lower. This cumulative increase in population, while foreseen by ABAG's *Projections 2003*—which projects an increase of nearly 160,000 people in San Francisco between 2000 and 2030—would substantially exceed the population projections of *Projections 98*, on which the current *2000 Bay Area Clean Air Plan* is based, and, therefore, could be found, on first examination, to significantly affect air quality on a cumulative basis. It should be noted, however, that to the extent that growth in San Francisco were to occur in lieu of growth elsewhere in the Bay Area, particularly in outlying regions with less transit accessibility and less potential for use of travel modes other than the

automobile, relatively more growth in San Francisco would be consistent with the goals of the *Clean Air Plan* by promoting and furthering the same Transportation Control Measures identified above. Therefore, consistent with the “smart growth” forecasts associated with ABAG’s *Projections 2003*, it does not appear that shifting a relatively greater percentage of Bay Area growth to central cities such as San Francisco would result in significant adverse effects on regional air quality; in fact, the reverse might well be true. At any rate, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, itself, would indirectly result in less than 2.5 percent of the Citywide growth of 160,000, and would not contribute considerably to this cumulative growth. Therefore, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would not necessarily result in a significant cumulative effect with regard to air quality. Nevertheless, Mitigation Measure E.2, p. 225, includes a menu of potential mitigation measures that the City implement, or could require project sponsors to implement, to reduce the proposed Plan’s contribution to regional air quality impacts. With implementation of this measure, the plan’s contribution to cumulative air quality impacts would be considered less than significant.

### ***Localized Carbon Monoxide Concentrations***

A microscale impact analysis was conducted to evaluate the localized air quality impact at three intersections in the project area most affected by the increased traffic due to the implementation of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan. Traffic generated by development pursuant to the Plan would have the potential to affect carbon monoxide concentrations along surface streets and near stagnation points such as freeway on-ramps, and heavily traveled, congested roadways. The Plan-generated increase in traffic would not only add more vehicles on the road but the increased congestion would cause existing non-project traffic to travel at slower, more polluting speeds. The U.S. EPA-approved CALINE4 line dispersion model was used to estimate the impact of project traffic on existing and future carbon monoxide concentrations at the following intersections:

- First Street / Market Street;
- First Street / Folsom Street; and
- First Street / Harrison Street

Results of the modeling effort are summarized in Table 11. As shown in the table, the model indicated no violations of the ambient carbon monoxide standards at any of the three intersections under all scenarios analyzed. Worst-case carbon monoxide concentrations at these intersections would be well below the state and federal ambient air quality standards. Background carbon monoxide levels are projected to be significantly lower in 2020 due to improvements in the automobile fleet, attrition of older, high-polluting vehicles, and improved fuel mixtures. Despite the addition of project and cumulative traffic, carbon monoxide concentrations at the intersections would decrease from existing (2002) to existing plus project conditions (2020). This would be due to the beneficial effects of ongoing state and federal vehicle emissions reductions programs, which are expected to continue to generate reductions in average vehicle emissions of carbon monoxide per vehicle-mile-traveled for the foreseeable future. Therefore, the long-term increase in traffic due to the project would not violate any air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation in the project vicinity, and no mitigation for that effect is required.

**TABLE 11  
ESTIMATED CARBON MONOXIDE CONCENTRATIONS AT SELECTED INTERSECTIONS**

| Intersection                                 | Averaging Time (hrs.) | Standard (ppm) | CONCENTRATIONS (PPM) <sup>a</sup> |               |                |                 |
|--|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
|  |                       |                | Existing                          | 2020 Baseline | 2020 plus Plan | 2020 Cumulative |
| First Street / Market Street<br>PM Peak Hour | 1                     | 20             | 7.3                               | 5.5           | 5.7            | 5.7             |
|  | 8                     | 9              | 4.9                               | 3.7           | 3.8            | 3.8             |
| First Street / Folsom Street<br>PM Peak Hour | 1                     | 20             | 7.3                               | 5.6           | 5.9            | 5.9             |
|  | 8                     | 9              | 4.9                               | 3.7           | 3.9            | 3.9             |
| First Street / Harrison St.<br>PM Peak Hour  | 1                     | 20             | 7.7                               | 5.8           | 6.1            | 6.1             |
|  | 8                     | 9              | 5.1                               | 3.8           | 4.0            | 4.0             |

<sup>a</sup> Concentrations relate to a location 25 feet from the edge of the roadways that form the intersection. The carbon monoxide analysis focuses on the weekday afternoon (p.m.) peak-hour because the project's effects on traffic congestion and related carbon monoxide concentrations are greatest during those periods. The CALINE4 line source dispersion model was used to develop these estimates based on peak-hour traffic volumes prepared for this report. One-hour-average concentrations include background values of 6.1 parts per million (ppm) in 2004 and 4.9 ppm in 2020, and eight-hour average concentrations include background values of 4.1 ppm in 2004 and 3.2 ppm in 2020.

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates, 2004.

**REFERENCES—Air Quality**

Bay Area Air Quality Management District, “2003-2004 Ozone Planning,” viewed July 18, 2004, on the internet at [http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/plans/ozone/2003\\_04.asp](http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/plans/ozone/2003_04.asp). 2004.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District, “Ambient Air Quality Standards & Bay Area Attainment Status as of January 2003,” viewed July 18, 2004, on the internet at [http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/air\\_quality/ambient\\_air\\_quality.asp](http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/air_quality/ambient_air_quality.asp). January 2003.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District, *Bay Area 2000 Clean Air*, December 20, 2000.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District, *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines, Assessing the Air Quality Impacts of Projects and Plan*, December 1999.

California Air Resources Board, *The 1999 California Almanac of Emissions & Air Quality*, 2000.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), “8-Hour Ground-level Ozone Designations: Fact Sheet,” viewed July 18, 2004, on the internet at <http://www.epa.gov/ozonedesignations/finrulefs.htm>. April 15, 2004.



## F. SHADOW

### SETTING

#### *PLANNING CODE SECTION 295*

Section 295 of the Planning Code, the Sunlight Ordinance, was adopted through voter approval of Proposition K in November 1994 to protect certain public open spaces from shadowing by new structures. Section 295 prohibits the issuance of building permits for structures or additions to structures greater than 40 feet in height that would shade property under the jurisdiction of or designated to be acquired by the Recreation and Park Commission, during the period from one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset, unless the Planning Commission, in consultation with the and Recreation and Park Commission, determines that such shade would not significantly affect the use of such property.

There are no open spaces subject to Section 295 within the Rincon Hill Plan area. However, tall buildings can cast shadow for several blocks, and therefore could affect Section 295 open spaces outside the Plan area. The nearest Section 295 open spaces are Justin Herman Plaza, at the foot of Market Street, and South Park, between Bryant and Brannan Streets and between Second and Third Streets. Both are located outside of the boundaries of the Rincon Hill Plan. Other Section 295 open spaces in the greater vicinity of the Plan area include Union Square and St. Mary's Square, on the block bounded by California, Kearny, and Pine Streets and Grant Avenue. Individual developments in the project area would be subject to the requirements of Section 295, which would remain applicable to the Plan area, in order to determine whether shadow from such development could reach one or more Section 295 open spaces, and, if so, whether the development would cause new shadow on the protected space.

#### *OTHER OPEN SPACES*

There are several publicly and privately owned open spaces within and adjacent to the Plan area that, while not subject to Section 295, are publicly accessible and used by the public. The largest of these is the recently developed Rincon Park along The Embarcadero between Howard and Harrison Streets, just east of the Plan area. Rincon Park is under the jurisdiction of the Port of San Francisco and the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. Within the Plan area, the mixed-use Hills Plaza, between Spear and Steuart Streets and between Folsom and Harrison Streets, includes an arcaded plaza in a combination of hardscape and landscaping, running through the block on a podium level a few steps above the sidewalk. Just north of the Plan area, the Gap building at 2 Folsom Street has a landscaped plaza on its north side. The 221 Main Street building contains publicly accessible open space in the form of widened portions of sidewalk along Main Street with plantings and seating, and a pedestrian walkway connecting Main and Spear Streets. Just west of the Plan area, the slope above Essex Street is an informal open space, used by dog owners and others.

There are also other kinds of public open space and recreational amenities in the immediate vicinity of Rincon Hill. Most of these are waterfront parks, open spaces, and boating facilities provided and maintained by the Port of San Francisco and its tenants. Located along the waterfront in The Embarcadero area from China Basin to Justin Herman Plaza, these include the Ferry Plaza, and the South Beach Park and Yacht Harbor. Herb Caen Way, a linear pedestrian promenade, extends along The Embarcadero from Fisherman's Wharf southward to China Basin and provides open space along the waterfront. Figure 51 shows publicly accessible open spaces in the Plan area vicinity.

## IMPACTS

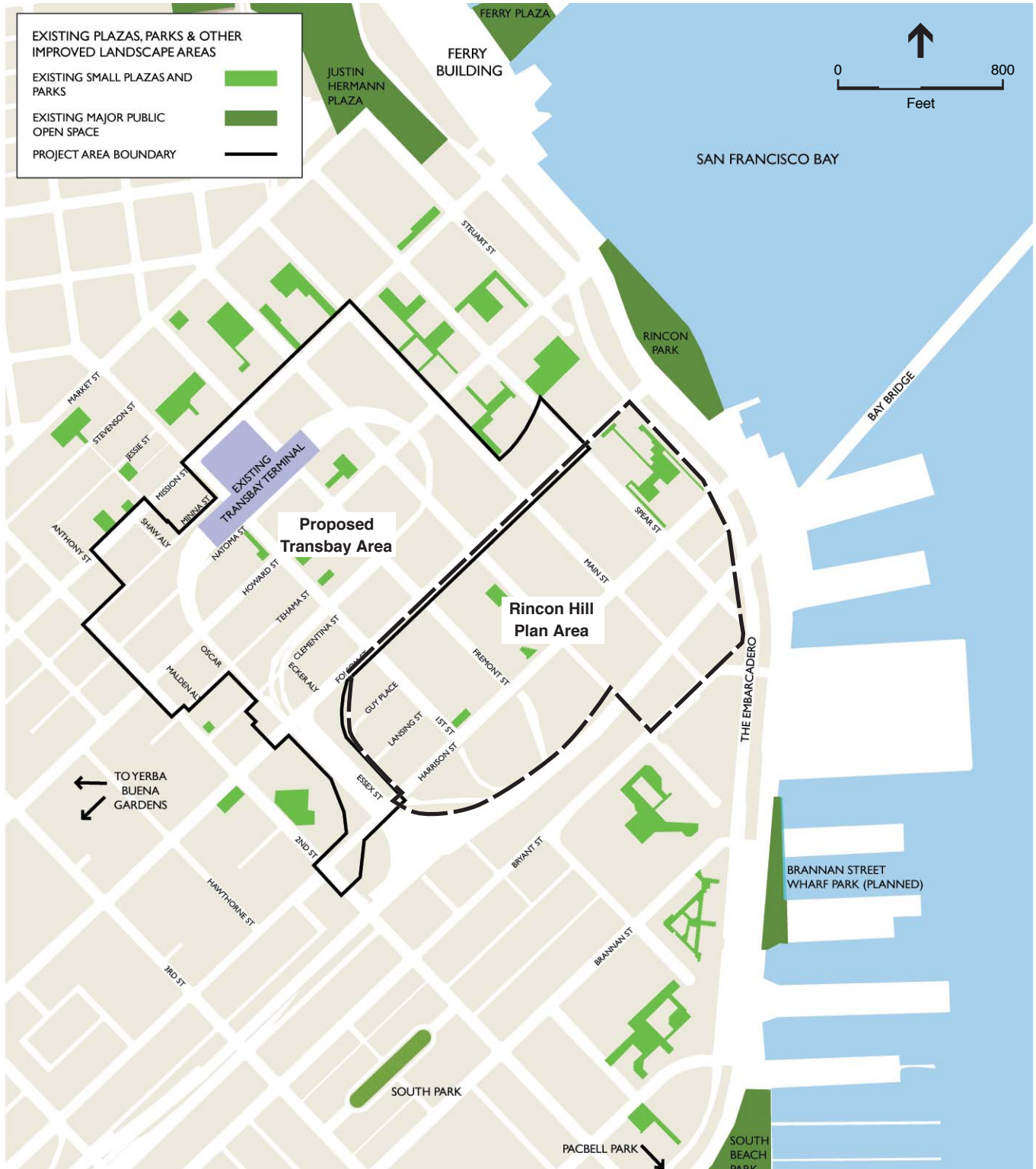
### *SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA*

Planning Code Section 295 generally prohibits new buildings that would cause new shadow on open space that is under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset, at any time of the year, unless that shadow would not result in a significant adverse effect on the use of the open space. This section also describes the project's shadow effects on nearby publicly owned or controlled open space areas ("public open space") that are not subject to Planning Code Section 295; on publicly accessible open space areas associated with development on privately-owned land ("publicly accessible open space"); and on sidewalks. Shadow effects would be significant if they would result in a significant adverse effect on the use of any open space subject to Section 295, and could also be determined to be significant if they would significantly detract from the usability of other existing public open space created in response to specific policy directives, or would alter wind, moisture or temperature (including sun shading effects) so as to substantially affect public areas, or change the climate either in the community or region.

### IMPACTS COMMON TO ALL OPTIONS

Existing height limits in the Rincon Hill SUD range from 84 feet along the eastern, southern, and western portions of the district (including the residential enclave around Guy Place and Lansing Street) to between 105 and 250 feet along Harrison and Fremont Streets, to up to 400 feet along Folsom Street between Beale and Spear Streets, where two mixed-use projects that include four residential towers were approved, along with an increase in the previous 200-foot height limit, in February 2004.

Under two of the three Plan options, height limits would be increased in all but the eastern and southern portions of the Plan area to allow the construction of taller buildings than are permitted under existing controls. More important to the location of towers than height limits would be the bulk limits, including the requirement for separation of towers. This requirement would mean that towers would be precluded at some locations where the height limit would otherwise permit them, thereby limiting to some extent shading from new buildings.



SOURCE: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, *Transbay Design for Development*

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 51**  
Publicly Accessible Open Space  
in Plan Area Vicinity

Shadows are longest just after sunrise and just before sunset, when the sun is lowest on the horizon. At the first Section 295 minute, one minute past one hour after sunrise, these shadows fall northwest of a building on the winter solstice (December 21) and west-southwest of a building on the summer solstice (June 21), and they fall in between those directions during other times of the year. At the last Section 295 minute, one minute prior to one hour before sunset, these longest shadows fall northeast of a building in December, east-southeast of a building in June, and between those directions during other times of the year. On any given day, shadows shorten between the first Section 295 minute and 12:00 noon as the sun climbs higher in the sky, and then lengthen between noon and the last Section 295 minute as the sun gets lower. Shadows are always to the north of a building, except for early morning and late afternoon near the summer solstice, because, except at these times, the sun appears to be south of locations in the northern hemisphere, such as San Francisco.

Given the proposed height limits and bulk controls, all of the options would conform to Section 295, in that none would result in new buildings that would cast new shadow on any open space under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission within or outside of the study area between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset. The closest Section 295 open spaces to the Plan area, Justin Herman Plaza and South Park, are north and south, respectively, of the area along Harrison Street between First and Essex Streets and along Fremont between Folsom and Harrison where most of the new towers in the Plan area are anticipated. Because of the location of these two parks vis-à-vis the expected development concentration, none of the likely new towers would shade either of these parks.

The longest relevant shadows cast by new towers built pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan would be early morning shadows. (Late afternoon shadows from the tallest buildings would extend onto San Francisco Bay.) However, even shadow from a 550-foot building at First and Harrison Streets, where the greatest heights would be permitted, under the Preferred Option and 82.5-foot Option, would not reach either Union Square or St. Mary's Square, the two Section 295 open spaces closest to the Plan area's northwest edge. Therefore, the project would not result in any significant effects with regard to shadow on open spaces subject to Section 295, and this discussion will focus on the potential localized shadow effects attributable to the project on the blocks within and surrounding the proposed Rincon Hill Plan.

Figures 52 through 60 depict anticipated future shadow conditions in the Rincon Hill Plan area and on surrounding blocks for the winter solstice (December 21, when shadows are longest), the summer solstice (June 21, when shadows are shortest), and the spring equinox (March 21, when shadow lengths are midway between those of summer and winter). Shadows on the fall equinox (September 21) are the same as those on March 21, except that they occur one hour later due to Daylight Savings Time.<sup>85</sup> Each figure shows shadow at 9:00 a.m., 12:00 noon, and 3:00 p.m. for the Preferred Option, the 150-foot (Existing Controls) Option, and the "Extended Pipeline Option"; the Extended Pipeline, described in Chapter II,

---

<sup>85</sup> For example, shadow that would occur at 9:00 a.m. Pacific Standard Time in March would occur at 10:00 a.m. Pacific Daylight Time in September.



Preferred Option

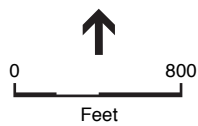


82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option

Towers 7, 8 and 9 appear only in Extended Pipeline Option



150-Foot Option



- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- A 300 Spear
- B 201 Folsom
- C 325 Fremont
- 1 425 First
- 2 45 Lansing
- 3 Fremont/Harrison Tower
- 4 340-350 Fremont
- 5 375 Fremont
- 6 S. Side of Harrison near First
- 7 Gas Station Site
- 8 399 Fremont
- 9 Folsom w/ First

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516)

**Figure 52**  
Shadow Patterns: Spring, 9am





Preferred Option

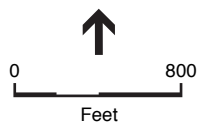


82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option

Towers 7, 8 and 9 appear only in Extended Pipeline Option



150-Foot Option



- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- A 300 Spear
- B 201 Folsom
- C 325 Fremont
- 1 425 First
- 2 45 Lansing
- 3 Fremont/Harrison Tower
- 4 340-350 Fremont
- 5 375 Fremont
- 6 S. Side of Harrison near First
- 7 Gas Station Site
- 8 399 Fremont
- 9 Folsom w/ First

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516)

**Figure 53**  
Shadow Patterns: Spring, 12 Noon

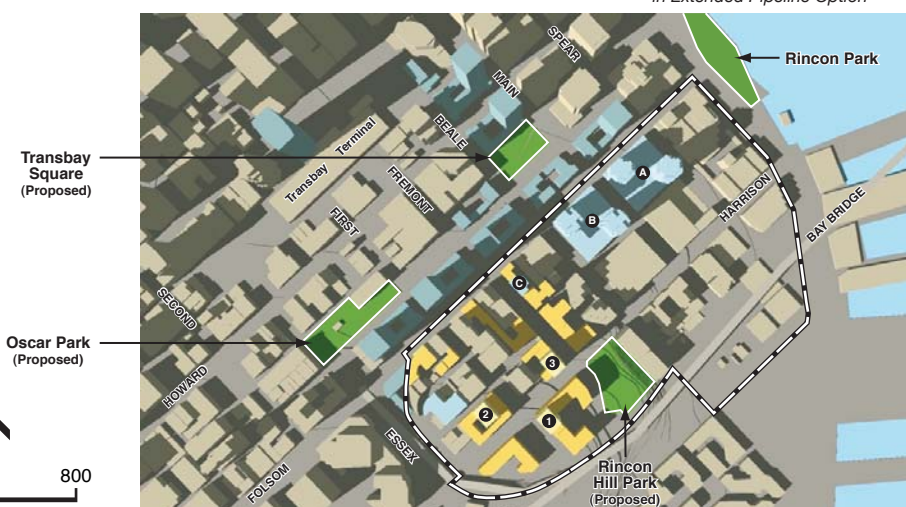


Preferred Option



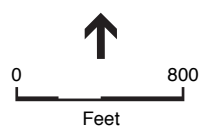
82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option

Towers 7, 8 and 9 appear only in Extended Pipeline Option



150-Foot Option

- Proposed Rincón Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- A 300 Spear
- B 201 Folsom
- C 325 Fremont
- 1 425 First
- 2 45 Lansing
- 3 Fremont/Harrison Tower
- 4 340-350 Fremont
- 5 375 Fremont
- 6 S. Side of Harrison near First
- 7 Gas Station Site
- 8 399 Fremont
- 9 Folsom w/ First



SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincón Hill Plan EIR (203516)

**Figure 54**  
Shadow Patterns: Spring, 3pm





Preferred Option



82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option

Towers 7, 8 and 9 appear only in Extended Pipeline Option



150-Foot Option

- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- A 300 Spear
- B 201 Folsom
- C 325 Fremont
- 1 425 First
- 2 45 Lansing
- 3 Fremont/Harrison Tower
- 4 340-350 Fremont
- 5 375 Fremont
- 6 S. Side of Harrison near First
- 7 Gas Station Site
- 8 399 Fremont
- 9 Folsom w/ First

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516)

**Figure 55**  
Shadow Patterns: Summer, 9am



Preferred Option



82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option

Towers 7, 8 and 9 appear only in Extended Pipeline Option



150-Foot Option

- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- A 300 Spear
- B 201 Folsom
- C 325 Fremont
- 1 425 First
- 2 45 Lansing
- 3 Fremont/Harrison Tower
- 4 340-350 Fremont
- 5 375 Fremont
- 6 S. Side of Harrison near First
- 7 Gas Station Site
- 8 399 Fremont
- 9 Folsom w/ First

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516)

**Figure 56**  
Shadow Patterns: Summer, 12 Noon





Preferred Option

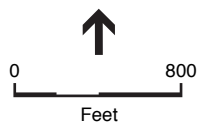


82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option

Towers 7, 8 and 9 appear only in Extended Pipeline Option



150-Foot Option



- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- A 300 Spear
- B 201 Folsom
- C 325 Fremont
- 1 425 First
- 2 45 Lansing
- 3 Fremont/Harrison Tower
- 4 340-350 Fremont
- 5 375 Fremont
- 6 S. Side of Harrison near First
- 7 Gas Station Site
- 8 399 Fremont
- 9 Folsom w/ First

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516)

**Figure 57**  
Shadow Patterns: Summer, 3pm



Preferred Option

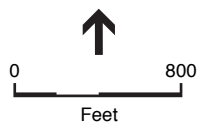


82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option

Towers 7, 8 and 9 appear only in Extended Pipeline Option



150-Foot Option



- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- A 300 Spear
- B 201 Folsom
- C 325 Fremont
- 1 425 First
- 2 45 Lansing
- 3 Fremont/Harrison Tower
- 4 340-350 Fremont
- 5 375 Fremont
- 6 S. Side of Harrison near First
- 7 Gas Station Site
- 8 399 Fremont
- 9 Folsom w/ First

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

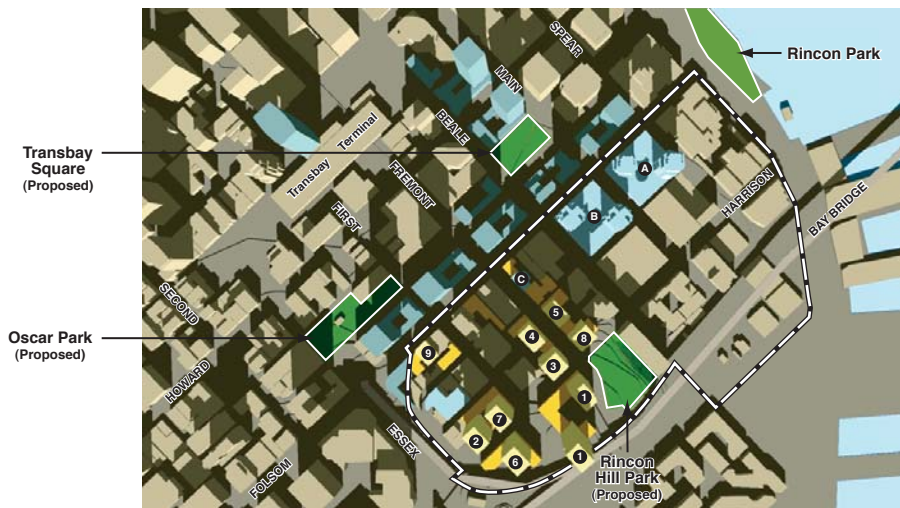
Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 58**  
Shadow Patterns: Winter, 9am





Preferred Option

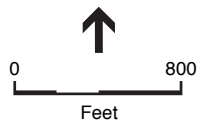


82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option

Towers 7, 8 and 9 appear only in Extended Pipeline Option



150-Foot Option



- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- A 300 Spear
- B 201 Folsom
- C 325 Fremont
- 1 425 First
- 2 45 Lansing
- 3 Fremont/Harrison Tower
- 4 340-350 Fremont
- 5 375 Fremont
- 6 S. Side of Harrison near First
- 7 Gas Station Site
- 8 399 Fremont
- 9 Folsom w/ First

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516)

**Figure 59**  
Shadow Patterns: Winter, 12 Noon



Preferred Option

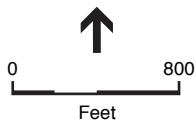


82.5-Foot/Extended Pipeline Option

Towers 7, 8 and 9 appear only in Extended Pipeline Option



150-Foot Option



- Proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use District
- A 300 Spear
- B 201 Folsom
- C 325 Fremont
- 1 425 First
- 2 45 Lansing
- 3 Fremont/Harrison Tower
- 4 340-350 Fremont
- 5 375 Fremont
- 6 S. Side of Harrison near First
- 7 Gas Station Site
- 8 399 Fremont
- 9 Folsom w/ First

SOURCE: Peter Bosselmann, UC Berkeley Environmental Simulation Laboratory

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 60**  
Shadow Patterns: Winter, 3pm



Project Description, p. 38, as having been considered and withdrawn, is similar to the 82.5-foot Option, with 15 towers (including approved buildings), compared to 12 towers under the 82.5-foot Option. The differences include: two towers on the east side of Fremont Street near Harrison Street under the Extended Pipeline Option, compared to one tower with the 82.5-foot Option; two towers on the north side of Harrison Street west of First Street under the Extended Pipeline Option, compared to one tower with the 82.5-foot Option; and the Extended Pipeline Option includes a short (150-foot) tower on Folsom Street between First and Essex Streets. In Figures 52 through 60, buildings that would have been part of the Extended Pipeline Option are so indicated to allow the reader to see the shadow that would not occur with the 82.5-foot Option. The Extended Pipeline Option, however, shows the maximum potential shadow effect that could occur should the proposed new height limits be adopted and projects continue to be approved with minimal spacing between towers based on exceptions provided in Planning Code Section 271. Each of the shadow diagrams in Figures 52 through 60 also includes buildings anticipated to be constructed within the Transbay Redevelopment Area, including several residential towers on the north side of Folsom Street.

Shadow from towers constructed pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan could reach non-Proposition K open spaces, including Yerba Buena Gardens (only in the very early morning, up to the first few “Section 295” minutes; that is, the first minutes following one hour after sunrise, when the gardens are likely shaded by existing buildings, including the W Hotel at Third and Howard Streets and an existing office building across Howard Street). (This would occur before 9:00 a.m. and is therefore not depicted in Figures 52 through 60.) Likewise, shadow from new towers in the Plan area would reach Rincon Park, on The Embarcadero (only in the late afternoon, when Rincon Park is already largely shaded by existing buildings, including the Gap headquarters and Hills Plaza, and would be further shaded by already approved buildings within the Plan area at 300 Spear Street and 201 Folsom Street). Figure 60 shows shadow from the approved 300 Spear Street project reaching Rincon Park at 3:00 p.m. on December 21.

- (Shadow from the tallest building to be constructed in the Plan area, the 550-foot tower at 425 First Street, would reach Rincon Park a few minutes earlier on the same date.)

Proposed and anticipated new towers within the Rincon Hill Plan area that are not already approved would add new shadow to the proposed new public open spaces at Fremont and Harrison Streets and on Essex Street between Harrison and Folsom Streets. In particular, the proposed project at 425 First Street would shade the Fremont/Harrison open space during the midday hours, with the time varying by season. This effect would be the same for the Preferred Option and the 82.5-foot Option, but would be substantially less under the 150-foot (Existing Controls) Option, which would include only a single, shorter tower, rather than two taller towers, at the 425 First Street site. Additionally, the single tower would be on First Street, rather than Harrison Street, set back from the proposed park. Because this park does not exist at present, however, but would be created as part of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, and because this park would receive substantial sunlight during the morning hours and would not be completely shaded during the afternoon, the impact would not be considered significant under any of the Plan options.



The Essex Street open space, along the western base of one of the remaining undeveloped slopes on Rincon Hill, would be less substantially affected by new development, as it would be shaded by the hillside during much of the early morning hours when new towers might otherwise add new shadow.

New development within the Rincon Hill Plan area also would add new shadow to proposed sidewalk open space, including the boulevard planned along Folsom Street in conjunction with planning for the adjacent Transbay area and the proposed “living streets” along Main, Beale, and Spear Streets, as well as potentially to mid-block pedestrian walkways in the Plan area. However, as described in Chapter II, Project Description, the Plan proposes that new towers be required to preserve a specified “sun access plane” from the top of podiums to the opposite side of the street along the south side of Folsom Street and the west side of north-south streets for no less than 58 percent of each block face to ensure maximum potential sunlight on sidewalks within the context of a high-density development plan. Additionally, podiums would be required to have 15-foot setbacks at the 65-foot level, further enhancing potential sunlight.

In general, the options for the Rincon Hill Plan that propose a greater number of towers would have greater localized shadow impacts than those Plan options that would permit fewer towers. Thus, the 82.5-foot Option would cast more new shadow than would the Preferred Option, which, in turn, would cast more new shadow than would the 150-foot (Existing Controls) Option. The 150-foot Option, the only option among the three that would not result in increased height limits, would cast substantially less new shadow than the other two options.

However, because many of the new towers would be concentrated in a relatively small area near the top of Rincon Hill—Harrison Street between First and Essex and Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison—at certain times of the day and year, there would be a good deal of overlapping shadow, such that shadow from a particular building would only marginally increase overall new shadow in conjunction with a second particular building. For example, under the Preferred Option, towers on the west side of Fremont Street both north and south Harrison Street would cast overlapping shadows when the angle of the sun is parallel to Fremont Street, as on the winter solstice at 9:00 a.m. (see Figure 58). There also would be times when shadow from one building would fall parallel and adjacent or nearly adjacent to shadow from another building. In the example above, the two buildings on Fremont Street north and south of Harrison Street would cast additive shadow when the angle of the sun is parallel to Harrison Street, as on the winter solstice and spring equinox at approximately 3:00 p.m. (see Figures 54 and 60).

Furthermore, the concentration of new development near the top of Rincon Hill would limit the new shadow on the proposed “living streets” along Main, Beale, and Spear Streets, because the distance from Fremont Street, and the even greater distance from Harrison Street, to Main, Beale, and Spear Streets means that when shadows from anticipated new towers is long enough to reach the “living streets,” shadows from existing buildings that are shorter but also closer to Main, Beale, and Spear Streets would already be encroaching upon those three streets (see, for example, Figures 54 and 57). The approved but unbuilt buildings at 300 Spear Street and 201 Folsom Street would also cast shadow on these three “living streets,” as those two projects are much closer, although also more northerly (see Figures 54 and 60).

New towers developed in the Rincon Hill Plan area also would cast shadow on planned open spaces in the Transbay Redevelopment Area to the north; the Transbay Design for Development calls for two “major public open spaces” between Tehama and Clementina Streets (south of Howard and north of Folsom), one extending west of First Street to Oscar Alley (“Oscar Park”) and the other, between Main and Beale Streets (“Transbay Square”). The greatest extent of shadow from Rincon Hill buildings on these open spaces would be from the approved but unbuilt towers at 300 Spear Street and 201 Folsom Street, which are farther north than would be other new towers built pursuant to the Plan. However, new shadow would also be cast on planned Transbay area open spaces by buildings proposed as part of the Transbay Redevelopment Plan itself, on the north side of Folsom Street.

While development pursuant to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would add new shadows to the Plan area and beyond, the new shading caused by the project would not affect open spaces protected by Section 295 of the Planning Code, such as Justin Herman Plaza, South Park, or Union Square. As is the case with all high-rise development in San Francisco, individual projects, when proposed within the Plan area, would continue to be evaluated under Section 295 by the Planning Department on a case-by-case basis with respect to their potential to cause adverse shading effects mainly on publicly accessible open space. This evaluation would allow for refinements to specific design proposals that could reduce the shading effects caused by future development. Although there would be no impact to open spaces protected under Proposition K, some existing publicly accessible, privately owned open spaces and sidewalks would be see a diminution in sunlight during certain periods of the day and the year, and some open spaces planned pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan and the Transbay Design for Development would be shaded by development anticipated in the Plan area (as well as by development within the Transbay area). However, this new shadow would not be in excess of that which would be normal and expected in a highly urban area. Therefore, given the lack of effect on Proposition K spaces, and given that planned open spaces would still receive substantial sunlight and would, therefore, not be substantially affected by shading in an adverse manner so as to render the open spaces uninviting or unusable, shadow impacts associated with the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would be considered less than significant.

## G. WIND

### SETTING

Wind conditions are a factor in pedestrian comfort and safety on sidewalks and in other public areas. A building that is much taller than many of the surrounding buildings can intercept and redirect winds that might otherwise flow overhead, can divert them down to ground level, and can create strong and turbulent ground-level winds. Winds up to 4 miles per hour (mph) have no noticeable effect on pedestrian comfort. With velocity from 4 to 8 mph, wind is felt on the face. Winds from 8 to 13 mph will disturb hair, cause clothing to flap, and extend a light flag mounted on a pole, while winds from 13 to 19 mph will raise loose paper, dust and dry soil, and will disarrange hair. For wind velocities from 19 to 26 mph, the force of the wind will be felt on the body. At 26 to 34 mph, umbrellas are used with difficulty; hair is blown straight; there is difficulty in walking steadily; and wind noise is unpleasant. Winds over 34 mph increase difficulty with balance and gusts can blow people over.

In addition to building height, factors that affect ground-level winds near a tall building are the orientation of the building's major facades to a given wind direction, the degree of architectural articulation on the building's facades, and the interactions with other nearby buildings. Because redirected winds can be relatively strong and also relatively turbulent, they can be incompatible with the intended uses of the ground-level spaces around buildings, and in extreme cases the winds can be hazardous to pedestrians.

In intercepting and redirecting wind, a tall building also slows passing winds. The presence of many tall buildings, as in San Francisco's Downtown core, ultimately tends to slow winds near ground level at locations well downwind of the core, although strong winds can still be created near the bases of tall buildings.

### ***REGULATORY FRAMEWORK***

Because large buildings can redirect wind flows around and down to street level, resulting in increased wind speed and turbulence at street level, the City has established specific comfort criteria to be used in the evaluation of proposed buildings, in order to provide a comfortable wind environment for people in San Francisco. The Planning Code specifically outlines wind criteria for the Rincon Hill Area in Section 249.1(b)(3), which is based on Planning Code Section 148, Reduction of Ground-Level Wind Currents in C-3 (Downtown Commercial) Districts.

Planning Code Section 148 establishes two comfort criteria, and a hazard criterion used in analysis of wind impacts in San Francisco. The comfort criteria are based on pedestrian-level wind speeds that include the effects of turbulence; these are referred to as "equivalent wind speeds." For example, Section 148 of the Planning Code establishes an equivalent wind speed (as defined in the Code) of 7 mph and 11 mph as comfort criteria for seating areas and areas of substantial pedestrian use, respectively, in the Downtown commercial district. In this area, new buildings and additions to buildings may not cause ground-level winds to exceed these levels more than 10 percent of the time year round between 7:00 a.m.

and 6:00 p.m.<sup>86</sup> If existing wind speeds exceed the comfort level, new buildings and additions in this area must be designed to reduce ambient wind speeds to meet the requirements. Section 148 also establishes a hazard criterion, which is an equivalent wind speed of 26 mph for a full hour, or approximately 0.0114 percent of the time, not to be exceeded more than once during the year. Downtown buildings (and those in other applicable areas, such as Rincon Hill, the Van Ness Avenue Plan area, and the South of Market) may not cause winds that meet or exceed this criterion.<sup>87</sup> The wind ordinance is defined in terms of equivalent wind speed, an average wind speed (mean velocity) adjusted to include the level of gustiness and turbulence.<sup>88</sup> The hazard criterion is stated in terms of a full-hour average speed, for which sufficient relevant data are not available. However, the wind speeds reported directly from available meteorological data have much shorter averaging periods, of about one minute, so the speed must be adjusted to correct for the difference between the one-hour and the one-minute averaging time. Although in practice, neither of the comfort criteria speeds are adjusted, it is necessary to restate the hazard speed. This makes it possible to deal with all three criteria (7 mph seating comfort criterion, 11 mph standing/walking comfort criterion, and 26 mph hazard criterion) on the same basis. When so adjusted, the hazard criterion wind speed becomes 36 mph.<sup>89</sup>

As noted in Chapter II, Project Description, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would carry forward the existing wind controls in Section 249.1(b)(3), except that existing Zoning Administrator-granted exceptions permitting wind currents to exceed seating-area or pedestrian-area comfort levels would be limited to a doubling of the otherwise permitted wind speed, rather than “the least practical amount” of an increase.

### ***EXISTING WIND CONDITIONS***

Average wind speeds in San Francisco are highest during summer and lowest during winter months. Strongest peak winds, however, occur in winter, when speeds of more than 50 miles per hour have been recorded. Except during storms, the highest wind speeds typically occur in the mid-afternoon and the lowest speeds occur in the early morning. Prevailing winds in San Francisco are generally from the northwest, west-northwest, west and southwest—these directions account for most of the stronger winds, or over 90 percent of all winds with speeds of 13 mph or more.

<sup>86</sup> The Planning Code specifies the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In contrast, the available weather data, as aggregated, cover the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Thus, observations from two additional evening hours and one additional morning hour are included in the wind speed distribution data.

<sup>87</sup> Because the hazard criterion is stated in terms of 1 hour of exceedance, it is most appropriate to report exceedances of this criterion in terms of the number of hours per year that the excess occurs, rather than the accompanying wind speeds. Thus, for each wind analysis, the number of locations and the total sum of the durations of exceedances of the hazard criterion are important measures of effect. This differs from reporting of both comfort criteria, for which wind speeds exceeded 10% of the time are examined and presented, but statistics other than the number of locations are not detailed.

<sup>88</sup> Equivalent mean wind speed incorporates the effects of gustiness or turbulence on pedestrians and is defined as the mean wind speed multiplied by the quantity (one plus three times the turbulence intensity) divided by 1.45.

<sup>89</sup> This adjustment is explained in a technical paper, Arens, E., et. al., “Developing the San Francisco Wind Ordinance and Its Guidelines for Compliance,” *Building and Environment* 24:4, 297-303; 1989.

For northwest winds and to a lesser extent for west-northwest winds, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan area is downwind of, and therefore partly sheltered by, high-rise development in the Downtown core. The Plan area would be fully exposed to winds from the southwest, and to a lesser extent, winds from the west.

Based on recent wind-tunnel testing performed for the proposed 425 First Street (“One Rincon Hill”) project (Case No. 2003.0029; two residential towers, 450 feet and 550 feet tall) and for the approved 201 Folsom Street (Case No. 2000.1073) and 300 Spear Street (Case No. 2000.1090) projects, existing wind conditions in the area are moderate to windy, with an average wind speed<sup>90</sup> at 27 test points west of Beale Street of 11.2 mph, and an average wind speed at 44 test points east of Beale Street of 9.2 mph. Exceedances of the 11-mph pedestrian comfort criterion are most common on the summit of Rincon Hill, around the intersection of First and Harrison Streets and on First Street north of Harrison. Exceedances of the comfort criterion were also recorded at Folsom and Fremont Streets, Folsom and Beale Streets, Harrison and Beale Streets, Harrison and Main Streets, and midblock on Spear Street between Folsom and Harrison. Only one exceedance of the 36-mph wind hazard criterion was noted under existing conditions: at the southwest corner of Harrison and Beale Streets (note that the two streets do not actually intersect; rather, Harrison crosses over Beale by means of a bridge).

## IMPACTS

### ***SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA***

A project would normally have a significant impact if it would cause the wind hazard criterion established by Planning Code Section 148 to be exceeded for more than one hour per year. A project that would cause exceedances of the comfort criteria, but not the wind hazard criterion, would not be considered to have a significant impact.

The Plan area is subject to Planning Code Section 249.1(a)(3), which contains standards based on Section 148. These controls would be maintained as part of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, including the new Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed Use (DTR) District. Therefore, no project can be approved that would violate the wind hazard criteria of Section 249.1(a)(3) or Section 148, and the Plan could not result in a significant impact. This impacts analysis is therefore provided for informational purposes to provide a description of potential wind hazards at the project site.

### IMPACTS COMMON TO ALL OPTIONS

Wind-tunnel testing recently performed for the proposed 425 First Street project included a series of cumulative (for the 425 First Street project) test scenarios based on some of the options for the Rincon

---

<sup>90</sup> The wind speeds referred to in this discussion are those that are exceeded 10 percent of the time, consistent with the Section 148 criteria.

Hill Plan analyzed in this EIR.<sup>91</sup> Because the new development anticipated under the Rincon Hill Plan would be concentrated in close proximity to the proposed 425 First Street project—that is, along Harrison Street between Fremont and Essex Streets and on Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets—these test scenarios, along with previously published wind tests for the 201 Folsom Street and 300 Spear Street projects, provide an adequate analysis of potential wind effects of implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan. These test scenarios are based on specific project designs where such information is available (e.g., 45 Lansing Street (Case No. 2004.0481), 400-foot residential tower; 340–350 Fremont Street (Case No. 2004.0552), a 350-foot residential tower; 375 Fremont Street (Case No. 2002.0449), a 300-foot residential tower; and 399 Fremont Street (Case No. 2003.0169), a 350-foot residential tower), and on massing models for other sites where no specific project has been proposed. The scenarios analyze the combined wind effects of several buildings, based on the Plan options, but do not present results on a building-by-building basis. Consistent with Planning Code requirements, project-specific wind-tunnel testing will continue to be required for specific projects as they are proposed.

In general, for test points in the western portion of the Plan area, where new development under the Plan would be concentrated, the test results were very similar for the scenarios evaluated. To the extent that there were differences in the results, the test scenarios with more towers generally performed better than scenarios with fewer towers, in terms of exceedances of the 36-mph hazard criterion. While on first glance this result may seem counter-intuitive, as noted in the setting, tall buildings not only intercept and redirect winds, but also slow passing winds. Many tall buildings placed in relatively close proximity tend to slow winds near ground level at downwind locations, although strong winds may still exist near building bases. The test result differences were relatively small, with scenarios resulting in between one and three hazard exceedances in the area between Essex and Beale Streets, and no scenario resulting in more than five total hours per year that exceeded the 36-mph hazard criterion, which is very limited. Hazard exceedances were recorded at First and Lansing Streets and in two locations at the intersection of Fremont and Harrison Streets. Given that the exceedances were noted in close proximity to the bases of particular buildings, it is possible that project-specific design adjustments would alleviate all potential exceedances of the hazard criterion, as would be required under the Planning Code for specific project approval.

In terms of average wind speeds, there was also little difference between test scenarios. In these results, options with a larger number of towers fared incrementally more poorly than options with fewer towers, with slightly higher average wind speeds (on the order of a few tenths of a mile per hour), ranging from about 11.9 to 12.3 mph, a difference that is unlikely to be perceptible; all options tested would increase average wind speeds by about 1 mph compared to existing conditions. The minor difference between options is likely due to the fact that fewer towers would result in fewer locations where winds could be altered compared to existing conditions, even though the presence of isolated towers can result in relatively greater impacts at a specific point at the bases of those towers. The number of exceedances of

---

<sup>91</sup> Environmental Science Associates, “Potential Wind Conditions, Proposed Rincon Hill Plan,” September 12, 2004. This report is included in Appendix B.

the 11-mph pedestrian comfort criterion would increase from 12 of 27 points under existing conditions to between 13 and 15 of 27 points under Plan conditions, depending on the option.

In the eastern portion of the Plan area, where the 201 Folsom Street and 300 Spear Street projects were approved in early 2004, average wind speeds were found to increase by more than 2 mph, but no exceedances of the hazard criterion were noted.

In summary, ground-level wind speeds would increase with all Plan options, and the differences between options would be small. A limited number of exceedances of the 36-mph hazard criterion, for a small number of hours, were found in testing of various options. These exceedances would have to be shown to be eliminated on a project-by-project basis in order for a project to receive approval under the Planning Code.

During the individual project-specific environmental review process that would precede the approval of any project proposed for the Rincon Hill Plan area, potential wind effects of those specific projects would be considered and, if necessary, wind tunnel testing would be performed in accordance with City Planning Code Section 148 and/or Section 249.1, as it is amended (or replaced) as part of the Rincon Hill DTR District implementation. Incorporation of such language in the new Rincon Hill DTR District is, therefore, identified as a mitigation measure in this EIR (see p. 227). If exceedances of the wind hazard criterion should occur for any individual project, design modifications or other mitigation measures would be required to mitigate or eliminate these exceedances to ensure that any proposed project would not constitute a significant environmental impact. Therefore, no significant effects due to wind would occur as a result of implementation of the proposed Rincon Hill Plan.



## H. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

### SETTING

#### *HISTORICAL USES*

Based on the 1852 U.S. Coast Survey, the original shoreline of the San Francisco Bay was approximately located along Fremont Street between Market and Folsom Street. The shoreline extended northeast along Folsom Street to Spear Street, curved around Rincon Point, and continued south along Spear Street before following a generally southwest trend along Harrison Street. The area north of Rincon Point, previously referred to as Yerba Buena Cove, was reclaimed by fill placement from the mid-1850s through the early 1900s as land use development along the waterfront grew and the Gold Rush established a need for manufactured goods. This area was San Francisco's earliest industrial neighborhood, including such uses as a coal gasification plant (giving the area its name, Tar Flat, for the coal tar wastes it discharged), along with foundries, machine shops, sheet metal works, and planning mills. Within the Plan area, south of Folsom Street, residential uses were more common: many of the industrial workers apparently lived south and southeast of Tar Flat, within the Plan area, and more specifically in the three blocks between First and Main Streets and between Folsom and Harrison Streets. Rincon Hill itself was the City's first wealthy residential neighborhood. (Further discussion of the history of the Plan area is found in Section III.I, Historical Resources.)

#### *SUBSURFACE CONDITIONS*

The type of soil or rock material underlying a site, the depth to groundwater, proximity to surface water, and variations in groundwater are important factors in determining the potential for any contamination to soil or groundwater. Earthquake fill is commonly found at depths ranging from 2 feet to 20 feet below ground surface (bgs), along the San Francisco waterfront and the south of Market Street areas. Other sites within the Plan areas are likely to encounter native sands and gravels beneath the fill to depths ranging up to 55 feet bgs (Treadwell & Rollo, 2000). Bedrock of the Franciscan Complex occurs at depths that can be very shallow along the historic shoreline to depths of approximately 100 feet bgs. Bedrock consists of shale, greywacke, chert, sandstone, and serpentinite; the last may contain naturally occurring asbestos (Treadwell & Rollo, 1999). Groundwater is estimated to occur at depths ranging from 5 feet to 30 feet bgs, as determined by topographical elevations across the project site, and the proximity of San Francisco Bay (PSC, 1997).

#### *SOIL AND GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION*

As a result of past uses, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) from coal tar and other petroleum compounds used in manufacturing and as fuel and solvents may be present in the soil, particularly where industrial concentrations were heavy. Following the 1906 earthquake and fire, large quantities of building debris were used as further fill. This fill material often contains lead from paint and various chemicals classified as hazardous. Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) may also be present from use in past and

modern electrical equipment and hydraulic systems. Creosote-treated lumber could be present in older structures along the historic shoreline. The results of numerous environmental assessments of sites in San Francisco that contain earthquake fill indicate that this fill commonly contains elevated concentrations of metals (usually total and soluble lead), oil and grease, and PAHs (Treadwell & Rollo, 1999).

### ***REGULATORY FRAMEWORK***

Hazardous materials are defined in a number of ways. Under California law, a hazardous material is defined as, "...any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released." Hazardous materials include, but are not limited to, "...hazardous substances, hazardous waste, and any material which a handler or the administering agency has a reasonable basis for believing that it would be injurious to the health and safety of persons or harmful to the environment if released into the workplace or environment" (Cal. Health & Safety Code §25501(o)).

Hazardous wastes are wastes that, because of their quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may either cause, or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness, or pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or otherwise managed (Cal. Health & Safety Code §25117).

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) is the lead agency responsible for enforcing federal regulations that affect public health or the environment. California hazardous materials laws incorporate federal standards, but are often stricter than federal laws. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) enforces hazardous materials and waste regulations in California, in conjunction with the U.S. EPA. The DTSC is responsible for regulating the management of hazardous substances including the remediation of sites contaminated by hazardous substances. The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) is authorized by the State Water Resources Control Board to enforce water quality regulations, and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District governs requirements on remediation and other activities to protect ambient air quality from dust or other airborne contaminants. Other state laws also regulate underground storage tanks containing hazardous substances; enforcement is by the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

Three local ordinances meet or exceed state and federal requirements for site investigations and the storage of hazardous substances. These include the 1986 "Maher Ordinance" (Article 20 of the Public Works Code and Article 22A of the Health Code), which requires a soil investigation in areas of historic landfill where more than 50 cubic yards of soil will be disturbed; the Hazardous Materials Ordinance (Article 21 of the Health Code), which regulates use of specified quantities of hazardous materials, requiring registration and preparation and implementation of certain plans and reporting procedures; and the Hazardous Waste Ordinance (Article 22 of the Health Code), which provides for safe handling of hazardous wastes in the City, incorporating relevant state requirements. In addition, Chapter 36 of the San Francisco Building Code regulates removal of exterior lead-based paint, mandating specific

notification procedures and work standards for pre-1979 buildings (which are assumed to have lead-based paint on their surfaces).

## IMPACTS

### *SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA*

Hazardous materials impacts would be considered significant for the purposes of CEQA environmental evaluation if they were to create a potential public health hazard or involve the use, production or disposal of materials that pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the affected area. Impacts would also be considered significant if the proposed project would interfere with emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans or create a substantial fire hazard.

### *IMPACT ANALYSIS*

In general, potential significant impacts related to hazardous materials are precluded by the stringent regulatory regime that exists with regard to hazardous materials and hazardous waste. For any subsequent development proposed pursuant to the Rincon Hill Plan and rezoning, one or more of the above-noted laws and regulations would normally intercede to ensure that no significant impact would result. For the most part, effects related to hazardous materials would stem from construction activities, in that construction workers could be exposed to soil and/or groundwater contamination, if present, during excavation. Contaminated groundwater could, if not properly treated prior to disposal, result in adverse downstream effects and impacts on the City's combined sewer-storm drain system. Finally, exposure to airborne contaminants such as lead paint dust or asbestos could affect nearby residents and workers.

### **Construction Impacts**

The proposed Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed-Use (DTR) District would require all parking to be located below street grade, in contrast to current zoning, which could result in greater disturbance of soils than under previous development patterns in Plan area. Furthermore, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and rezoning would allow and encourage mixed, high-density residential development in the majority of the Plan area, presumably leading to increased development activity compared to both the existing condition and to future conditions under existing zoning rules. Depending on the extent and nature of soil or groundwater contamination, if any, on a particular site, the increase in subgrade excavation could result in worker exposure to petroleum hydrocarbons, lead, polychlorinated biphenyls, creosote-treated lumber, and other contaminants.

There are three general types of construction activity that would involve the potential exposure of construction workers and the surrounding community to hazardous materials due to soil and groundwater disturbance. These activities include: 1) excavation and grading of soil, during which workers and the public would potentially be exposed to dust containing contaminants or to soil gases; 2) installation of building foundation piles for structural support, during which workers would be potentially be exposed to

soil and groundwater; and 3) identification and removal of underground storage tanks, during which workers and the public would potentially be exposed to contaminated material involving the tank, vapors, soil, or groundwater.

Based on historical and current land uses within the project area, there is the potential to encounter hazardous substances in subsurface materials during any excavation and grading activities. An owner or contractor who submits plans for any excavation of soil within the project site must meet the appropriate regulatory requirements for sampling and analysis of contaminated soil. For any soil excavation determined to be within the “Maher” area (generally, bayward of the historic shoreline), compliance with the Maher Ordinance would require additional testing of subsurface soil to determine the potential magnitude and extent of soil contamination. The San Francisco Department of Public Health implements the Maher Ordinance and would require full compliance prior to excavation or disturbance of 50 cubic yards of soil.

Soil or groundwater samples, or both, would be collected in such areas as directed by the site assessment consultant. Because the Maher Ordinance requires sampling of soil, but not groundwater, a mitigation measure is identified to ensure that any contaminated groundwater does not adversely affect water quality (see p. 227). Sampling would extend at least to depths proposed for excavation. The samples would be collected in accessible areas prior to any site development activities, and in areas that are not currently accessible during proposed demolition activities. The samples would be analyzed by a qualified individual to identify and quantify any contamination and prepare and implement a Site Mitigation Plan if warranted.

If the aforementioned sampling identifies surface and/or subsurface contamination in areas subject to ground disturbance, the area would have to be remediated in accordance with the standards, regulations, and determinations of local, state, and federal regulatory agencies. The owner or contractor would coordinate with the Department of Public Health and any other applicable regulatory agencies to adopt contaminant-specific remediation target levels; hazardous substances would be disposed of at an approved site; alternatively, soil may be treated and retained on-site, where applicable.

For sites outside the area covered by the Maher Ordinance, mitigation identified in this EIR (see p. 227) would require a comparable level of site investigation and, if necessary, remediation, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Prior to conducting any remediation activities, a Site Health and Safety Plan would be prepared pursuant to state and federal requirements and guidelines to ensure worker safety. This plan would require soil characterization, dust control during demolition, excavation, and construction; minimization of construction equipment exhaust, implementation of protocols for managing stockpiled and excavated soils, site security or prevent unauthorized entry, construction worker meetings to provide information about site security measures and reporting/contingency procedures, and, where groundwater contamination is identified, protocols for managing groundwater during construction to minimize worker

and public exposure. The Site Health and Safety Plan and all subsequent reports would be provided to the Department of Public Health and other relevant agencies.

Site characterization would involve investigation to identify old or abandoned underground tanks, buried debris, or unidentified contamination that may be present. In particular, physical investigations or comprehensive soil testing would be needed to determine the presence of underground tanks beneath previously extant buildings. If an unidentified tank containing hazardous materials or vapors or buried hazardous debris were uncovered or disturbed during excavation, construction workers, visitors, or occupants could experience adverse health effects. Therefore, wherever ground-disturbing activities are proposed in areas where there is a potential for the presence of underground storage tanks, ground-penetrating radar, magnetic surveys, or other appropriate methods would be employed to locate previously unknown tanks. If any tanks are identified, the site owner or contractor would coordinate with the Department of Public Health to determine whether the tank must be removed or may be closed in place. The Site Health and Safety Plan would include procedures for implementing a contingency plan in the event unanticipated subsurface hazards are discovered during construction.

Potential exposure to asbestos and resulting adverse health effects are possible if building demolition and renovation occurs within a subsequent development site. Sampling of suspected asbestos-containing material prior to demolition is standard practice; if asbestos is identified, it must be abated in accordance with applicable law prior to construction. State law requires that local agencies not issue demolition or alteration permits until an applicant has demonstrated compliance with notification requirements under applicable federal regulations regarding hazardous air pollutants, including asbestos. In the Bay Area, demolition, renovation and removal of asbestos-containing building materials is under the purview of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD Regulation 11, Rule 2), which regulates airborne pollutants, including asbestos, through both inspection and law enforcement. Asbestos abatement contractors must follow state regulations and be certified as such by the state Contractors Licensing Board. Both property owner and waste hauler are assigned responsibility for asbestos-containing material removed from a property and transported to a licensed landfill. Pursuant to state law, the Department of Building Inspection would not issue a building permit pending compliance with these regulations.

Lead-based paint and PCB-containing materials could also be encountered as a result of dust-generating activities that include removal of walls, sanding, welding, and material disposal during construction of subsequent development projects. These materials could expose workers and persons in close proximity, including off-site locations, which could result in adverse health effects. Precautions and work practices in compliance with Chapter 36 of the San Francisco Building Code would ensure no adverse affects due to work involving lead paint, while items containing PCBs are required be managed as hazardous waste and must be handled in accordance with OSHA worker protection requirements.

Project related construction and demolition activities may encounter wood pilings or railroad ties that are treated with creosote, which must be disposed of in an approved landfill. However, removal of timber piling is not expected to create hazards to worker health and safety, as creosote would not be handled in a

liquid form, and creosote concentrations in the pilings are likely to have decreased over time. Proper disposal of creosote treated lumber would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

Implementation of the measures described above, including compliance with the Maher Ordinance where necessary; compliance with applicable regulations and standards regarding underground storage tanks, buried debris, unidentified contamination; and compliance with asbestos abatement and PCB disposal regulations would reduce potential impacts associated with hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level.

### **Hazardous Materials Used in Operation**

Because development pursuant to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would be largely residential, the use of chemicals and other hazardous materials would be limited primarily to common household items. To the extent that commercial land uses were to employ hazardous materials, business users might be required to develop a Hazardous Materials Business Plan if applicable, in conformance with Article 21 of the Health Code. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations would reduce potential adverse environmental impacts associated with the transportation, storage, use and disposition with any hazardous materials used to a less-than-significant level.

### **Fire Hazards; Emergency Response or Evacuation Plans**

San Francisco ensures fire safety primarily through provisions of the Building Code and the Fire Code. Existing and new buildings are required to meet standards contained in these codes. In addition, the final building plans for any new residential project greater than two units are reviewed by the San Francisco Fire Department (as well as the Department of Building Inspection), in order to ensure conformance with these provisions. Subsequent development projects would be required conform to these standards, which (depending on the building type) may include development of an emergency procedure manual and an exit drill plan. In this way, potential fire hazards (including those associated with hydrant water pressure and emergency access) would be mitigated during the permit review process.

---

### **REFERENCES—Hazardous Materials**

Treadwell & Rollo, Inc. Geotechnical Investigation—300 Spear Street, San Francisco, California prepared for Union Property Capital, December 22, 2000.

Treadwell & Rollo, Inc. Environmental Site Assessment—Caltrans Site—Folsom, Main, and Harrison Streets, San Francisco, California prepared for Union Property Capital, December 9, 1999.

PSC Associates Inc. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment—Transbay Redevelopment Plan—San Francisco, California prepared for Environmental Science Associates, Inc., April 23, 1997.

U.S. Coast Survey, 1852–1853 City of San Francisco and Vicinity, California.  
<http://historicals.ned.noaa.gov/historicals/histmap.asp> Scale 1/10,000.

## I. HISTORICAL RESOURCES

### SETTING

#### *HISTORICAL CONTEXT*

It is known that humans have been present within the area of land comprising San Francisco today for at least 6,000 years. The earliest peoples currently known to have inhabited the San Francisco Bay Area were widespread but sparse populations of hunter-gathers whose subsistence was based on large game, seeds and nuts. These peoples lived in small nomadic bands that made less use of shoreline and wetlands resources than later prehistoric populations. Soon after 2000 B.C., bayshore- and marsh-adapted people who were Utian-language (Miwok-Costanoan language family)-speaking people began to migrate into the Bay Area from the Central Valley, displacing the earlier Hokan-language-speaking populations. The new inhabitants were different than the older resident populations in a number of respects, including language, larger and more sedentary settlements, a subsistence based on acorns, shellfish, small game, and other vegetal foods, mortuary practices, personal ornaments, and perhaps the fabrication of coiled as well as twined basketry. It is assumed that the Costanoan representatives of this Utian dispersal reached the northern end of the San Francisco peninsula no later than 500 B.C.

The Costanoan tribe that occupied the northern end of the San Francisco peninsula in the late 18th century is known under the general term *Yelamu*. The *Yelamu* were divided into three semi-sedentary village groups. The *Yelamu* were composed of at least five settlements (*Chutchi*, *Sitlintac*, *Amuctac*, *Tubsinte*, and *Petlenuc*) that were located within present day San Francisco. The *Yelamu* were allied by marriage to specific Costanoan groups on the east side of San Francisco Bay.

Prehistoric Costanoan and/or pre-Costanoan peoples may have maintained settlements or specialized activity sites (shell fish processing, hunting blind, ritual, burial sites) within the Plan area. There is no documentary evidence of human occupation of the Plan area during the Spanish-Mexican period (1775-1846) or Early American Period (1846-1848). During the former period, the foci of permanent European settlement was around Mission Dolores and the Presidio. The settlement of Yerba Buena was established in 1835 and reached a maximum pre-Gold Rush Period population of around 500. Yerba Buena was located entirely north of Market Street.

During the early Gold Rush Period, there was development in three parts of the Plan area: Rincon Point, the area south of Tar Flat, and the crown and northeastern slope of Rincon Hill. The first documented permanent occupation within the Plan area occurred along the northern shoreline and tip of Rincon Point, located approximately at the present-day intersection of Spear and Harrison Streets. As early as 1851 this area at the southern edge of Yerba Buena Cove was developed with a cluster of small houses, short wharves, warehouses, ship chandleries, and boatbuilding and boat repair businesses. By 1852, there was over 80 buildings/structures within this three-block area. These structures, some of which were substantial, were constructed despite the federal government's unsurveyed claim of Rincon Point as a government reserve.



In 1852 Charles Hare extended Rincon Point with a combination of landfill and wood platforms on piles for his shipwrecking yard. Until 1855 Hare was the principal local ship dismantler, which in San Francisco was a perfect business niche, in that hundreds of ships had been abandoned by gold-seeking owners, captains, and crews and there was an insatiable need for metal such as copper and iron, and for timber. In 1853, the federal government constructed the U.S. Marine Hospital at the end of Rincon Point within the land it had claimed as a reserve. The Marine Hospital occupied the southern half of the block between Harrison and Folsom Streets and Main and Spear Streets. By the mid to late 1850s, small structures began to appear in the area south of the U.S. Marine Hospital that includes the southern portion of the Beale/Main/Harrison/Folsom Streets block and the northern portion of the Beale/Main/Harrison/Bryant Streets block. These may have been mostly cottages for workers at the U.S. Marine Hospital or for maritime industry related workers.

In addition to Rincon Point, the area south of Tar Flat began to be first developed in the early 1850s. Tar Flat was an area of intense industrial development, principally foundries and ironworks related to mining technology, as well as a coal gasification plant whose waste, gave the neighborhood its name. The Tar Flat industries were in full flourish through the 1850s and 1860s and, although weakened by the depression of the mid-1870s, the foundry district lingered until the end of the century. During its height of production and innovation in the 1850s and 1860s, Tar Flat was the only major industrial center on the Pacific Coast with both an overseas and local market. The Tar Flat industries were forced to assume a prominent experimental role in mining technology in response to the changes that took place in mining the Sierra Nevada and the Comstock in the 1860s and early 1870s, and which resulted in ore extraction at increasing depths. The workers in the Tar Flat foundries appear to have principally lived in modest single-family houses and cottages located in the area to the south and southeast of Tar Flat, within the Plan area, and more specifically in the three blocks between First and Main Streets and between Folsom and Harrison Streets.

The third zone within the Plan area that was developed during the early Gold Rush Period was Rincon Hill itself. By the mid-1850s, Rincon Hill became a residential district for the elite because of its relatively peripheral location, views, and the ability to develop large-lot villa-type estates that were in vogue in the 1850s. The elite residential enclave on Rincon Hill eventually expanded to include Harrison Street between First and Second Streets, Rincon Place,<sup>92</sup> and First Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets.

During the 1860s, Rincon Hill continued to be the prominent residential district for wealthy and powerful households. Large homes were constructed along portions of First Street and along Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets. However, despite strong opposition, the Second Street Cut was begun in 1869 in order to provide access between downtown and the South Beach waterfront, resulting in the excavation of the western portion of Rincon Hill along Second Street from Bryant Street to Folsom Street and the lowering of a portion of Harrison Street. The result was the sharp fall in property values on Rincon Hill and its gradual demise as the preferred residential enclave for the local elite. By the end of

---

<sup>92</sup> Rincon Place was a north-south street, running between Harrison and Bryant Streets just west of First Street.

the 19th century an increasing number of the Victorian mansions on Rincon Hill were empty. Several of these large houses were donated to charitable foundations or converted to lodging houses or hospitals by the 1890s. However, some wealthy families remained in residence on Rincon Hill until the area was destroyed by fire in 1906.

The arrival of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 was a watershed event for San Francisco that greatly defined the subsequent character of the South of Market Street area. The effect of the railroad was to introduce large numbers of new workers (immigrants from the East Coast and unemployed former railroad construction workers, especially young Irish and Chinese men). Local wages fell significantly as the labor market became saturated. With the East Coast financial panic of 1875, large numbers of unemployed factory workers also were introduced into the local labor pool. Most residents of the Rincon Hill area were probably wage laborers—their income based on earnings from daily labor. Between 1870 and 1880 the city's population increased from 150,000 to 235,000, with much of the new population absorbed into the South of Market. The result was that much of the South of Market area, including most of the Plan area, became typified by rental housing and tenant housing occupied by a population characterized by chronic or episodic unemployment and residential transience.

Ethnically there were three principal immigrant groups that lived in the working-class neighborhoods south of Market: the Irish, German, and French.<sup>93</sup> Following the Prussian defeat of France in 1870, the French tended to leave the South of Market Area because of local hostilities with German residents.

An important institution in the Rincon Hill area in the 19th century was Saint Mary's Hospital, constructed by the Roman Catholic religious order of the Sisters of Mercy in 1861. During the 19th century the hospital grew into a large complex occupying more than two-thirds of the southern portion of the block between Rincon Place and First Street and Harrison and Bryant Streets. Although most of the Saint Mary's Hospital complex was just outside of the Plan area, the site of the Sisters of Mercy convent is within the Plan area.

Much of the southeastern portion of the Plan area (east of First Street and south of Harrison Street), below the bluff was not filled in until the 1870s and 1880s. With the development of the Beale Street Wharf and Main Street Wharf, the southern waterfront along Rincon Point became an important shipping warehouse area; especially for heavy bulk items such as lumber and coal. However, atop the bluff along Harrison Street between Spear and Fremont Streets were small, single family houses, many dating from the 1850s.

The earthquake and fire of 1906 permanently transformed the land use and demographic pattern of the Plan area. The building inventory was destroyed by the fire. Within a day of the earthquake nearly all of the 62,000 residents of the South of Market area were refugees. Initially, poorer residents, having no alternative were allowed to return and permitted to construct sheet metal shanties. Eventually temporary housing was constructed for this largely unemployed or underemployed single, male population. Much of

---

<sup>93</sup> The three ethnic groups tended also to be distinct in terms of occupation and social class.

this “temporary” housing subsequently became permanent in form of cheap boarding houses and hotels. For the most part after 1906 new construction in the Plan area tended to be light industrial development.

### ***ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT***

Rincon Hill and Rincon Point have been the focus of a number of archaeological studies in the last fifteen years. Nearly all of these archaeological studies have been assessments of the identity and significance of archaeological resources that could be affected by specific projects or development scenarios. Although 13 studies are known to include the Plan area, there have been very few archaeological reports based on field projects within the Plan area to confirm (or disaffirm) the archaeological assessment studies (Archeo-Tec, 1989; McIlroy, 2004). The one known archaeological data recovery project in the Plan area was also the topic of a published report (Pastron and Delgado, 1991). The most extensive of these studies are two archaeological research designs prepared for the SF-480 Terminal Separation Rebuild and for the seismic retrofit/replacement of the West Approach of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge project (Praetzellis, M. et. al., 1993 and Ziesing, G. et. al., 2000) and the archaeological assessment report for the Transbay Redevelopment Project (David Chavez & Associates, 1997). Together, the two research designs studied the portion of the Plan area west of First Street and the area south of Harrison Street and west of Beale Street. Within this area, the research designs identified the potential for archaeological resources to be present associated with certain elite San Francisco families (1850s-1900), cottages occupied by domestic servants of elite families, workers at St. Mary’s Hospital, dockworkers (1850s-1906), and the Sisters of Mercy Convent.

The thirty-block study area of the Transbay Redevelopment Project archaeological assessment report (David Chavez & Associates, 1997) includes the portion of the Plan area west of Main Street except for the Bryant Street-fronting properties between Beale and Spear Streets. The Transbay study is a generalized block-level identification of potential archaeological resources and recommends the preparation of site-specific archaeological studies at the time that specific projects are proposed involving substantial soils disturbance. Archaeological resources that the Transbay archaeological study identified as potentially present within the Plan area include prehistoric deposits and shoreline structures, wharves, commercial buildings, and domestic deposits (1830s-1906).

The archaeological assessment report for the once proposed Rincon Sports Center (Holman & Associates, 1996) includes the block between Main and Spear Streets and the northern half of the block between Main and Beale Streets between Folsom and Harrison Streets. (Most of this site is now the location of the recently approved 300 Spear and 201 Folsom projects.) This study concluded that, although the southern part of the Sports Center site had been probably intensely disturbed by the grading for existing buildings, including the site of the U.S. Marine Hospital/Sailors’ Home (1853-1920s), the northern half of the site potentially contains deposits associated with immigrant foundry men/longshoremen occupying small single-family dwellings and deposits associated with small commercial establishments of the period 1850s-1880s. The Sports Center archaeological study recommended preparation of an archaeological

research design once project plans were complete; however, this project was never built and further studies were not pursued.

The archaeological literature related to the Plan area has found that expected archaeological resources could have important research value. Examples of research themes that have been proposed to which expected archaeological resources could contribute significant data include: resistance to, and modification or acceptance of middle-class values by working-class households of various ethnicities and occupations over time; the availability of various classes of consumer goods; activities used by working-class households to balance economic strategies (home gardens, fishing, domestic butchering); use of material culture/dietary practices as symbols to define or maintain group boundaries; the relationship of local institutions to specific local ethnic, religious, racial, and economic groups; evidence of undocumented/poorly documented industrial processes; and technology of 19th century wharf construction. Although there are many critical themes within archaeological/historical literature to which expected prehistoric or Gold Rush Period archaeological resources would significantly contribute, a number of recent Rincon Hill archaeological reports have determined that, because of their scarcity, prehistoric and Gold Rush Period sites can be considered eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. More recent historic-period resources that could exist in the Plan area include artifacts related to the waterfront strike of 1934, in which strikers and police fought pitched battles along the Embarcadero and, on July 5, 1934—“Bloody Thursday”—striking longshoremen and their supporters were forced by a police tear gas attack to retreat up the slopes of Rincon Hill. Such artifacts—tear gas canisters and shell casings, for example—would be the result of relatively ephemeral events but, nonetheless, could be buried on Rincon Hill.

### ***HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE***

CEQA Section 21084.1 states that “a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” A “historical resource” is one that is listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources (CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15064.5(a)(1)). In addition, a resource that (i) is identified as significant in a local register of historical resources, such as Article 10 and Article 11 of the San Francisco Planning Code, or (ii) is deemed significant due to its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(g), is presumed to be historically significant “unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the resource is not historically or culturally significant” (CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15064.5(a)(2)). Finally, CEQA Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(3) permit a lead agency to determine that a resource constitutes a historical resource even if the resource does not meet the foregoing criteria. A “substantial adverse change” is defined in Section 15064.5(b)(1) of the state CEQA Guidelines as “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.”

### **Prior Surveys**

Portions of the Rincon Hill Plan area have been included in previous surveys of historic architectural resources. These include the Planning Department’s 1976 citywide survey; surveys by San Francisco Architectural Heritage; the Rincon Hill Area Plan survey; and, more recently, surveys conducted for environmental review of the Embarcadero Freeway/Terminal Separator Structure project (FHWA, 1996) and the proposed Caltrain extension project (FTA, 1997). Also reviewed for this EIR were listings of the

National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, and California Historical Landmarks. These prior surveys are described below.

### ***1976 San Francisco Planning Department Survey***

The San Francisco Planning Department (1976) conducted a citywide inventory of architecturally “significant” buildings from 1974 to 1976.<sup>94</sup> The inventory assessed the architectural importance of 10,000 structures citywide from the standpoint of overall design and particular design features. Both contemporary and older buildings were included, but historical associations were not considered. Each building was numerically rated according to its overall architectural significance, from a low of “0” to a high of “5.” The Planning Department survey rated about 12 buildings within the project area. Four buildings were rated “3” or higher: Union Oil Company (now Bank of America) Building and Clock Tower (4), the Sailors’ Union of the Pacific (4), Hills Brothers Coffee Company (3), and Hathaway Warehouse (3); each of these buildings is discussed below, under “San Francisco General Plan and Planning Code.”

### ***Heritage Survey (Splendid Survivors)***

San Francisco Architectural Heritage (Heritage) in 1979 undertook an architectural survey of the downtown and South of Market areas. The results of this survey have been published in *Splendid Survivors* (Page and Corbett, 1979). Heritage has subsequently expanded its surveys to encompass other areas of San Francisco; these additional survey results were not published but are available at Heritage. Buildings were assigned a rating of “A” through “D,” with A- and B-rated buildings representing those most important and deserving of preservation. Within the Rincon Hill Area, Heritage has rated about 19 structures, with about 7 of the total rated as an “A” or “B.”<sup>95</sup> Buildings listed in *Splendid Survivors* include the four buildings identified above under the 1976 Planning Department citywide survey.

### ***Federal and State Lists of Resources Within the Project Area***

Other sources listing important resources within the Rincon Hill Area include the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources, and California Historical Landmarks. The National Register of Historic Places is the official U.S. government list of properties that have architectural, historical or cultural significance at the national, state or local level. The Register is administered by the National Park Service, an Agency of the Department of the Interior. Listing of a property on the National Register does not prohibit demolition or alteration of that property, but does denote that the property is a resource worthy of recognition and protection.<sup>96</sup> Within the Rincon Hill

---

<sup>94</sup> This use of the word significant is placed in quotation marks to differentiate it from its use in the sense under CEQA that denotes an effect that constitutes a substantial adverse change in the environment. Significant, when used in reference to historic architectural resources, denotes a resource’s importance, in that context. Also, City Planning Code Article 11 uses Significant to identify important buildings that should be preserved, and the word is used similarly in the San Francisco General Plan.

<sup>95</sup> Documentation is available at the Heritage Offices, 2007 Franklin Street, San Francisco. For a detailed description of the Heritage rating system and criteria, see Page & Corbett, 1979.

<sup>96</sup> For federally funded or approved projects, the lead federal agency must make a formal determination regarding the project’s effect on resources listed on the National Register, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The project does not include any federal action.

- Area, the Coffin-Redington Building, at 300 Beale Street, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Other buildings, including the Sailors' Union of the Pacific Building (450 Harrison Street), Hills Brothers Coffee Company (2 Harrison Street), Klockars Blacksmith Shop (443 Folsom Street), and the
- Edwin W. Tucker & Co. Building (347 Fremont Street), have been determined eligible for listing. In addition, the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and its west approach ramps, which extend through (over) and adjacent to the Plan area, are listed on the National Register.

The State Office of Historic Preservation maintains the California Register of Historical Resources. The California Register includes properties listed in, or formally determined eligible for, the National Register and California Registered Landmarks from No. 770 onward.<sup>97</sup> The California Register can also include properties designated under local ordinances or identified through local historical resource surveys. Within the project area, approximately 6 properties are listed in the California Register, and nearly all of these are rated "1," "2," or "3", meaning they are listed in, are eligible for, or appear eligible for listing in the National Register.

One California Historical Landmark is also located immediately adjacent to the project area: Landmark No. 84, Rincon Hill itself; the plaque marking Rincon Hill is at the northeast corner of Rincon and Bryant Streets, within the loop formed by the Fremont Street off-ramp.

### ***San Francisco General Plan and Planning Code***

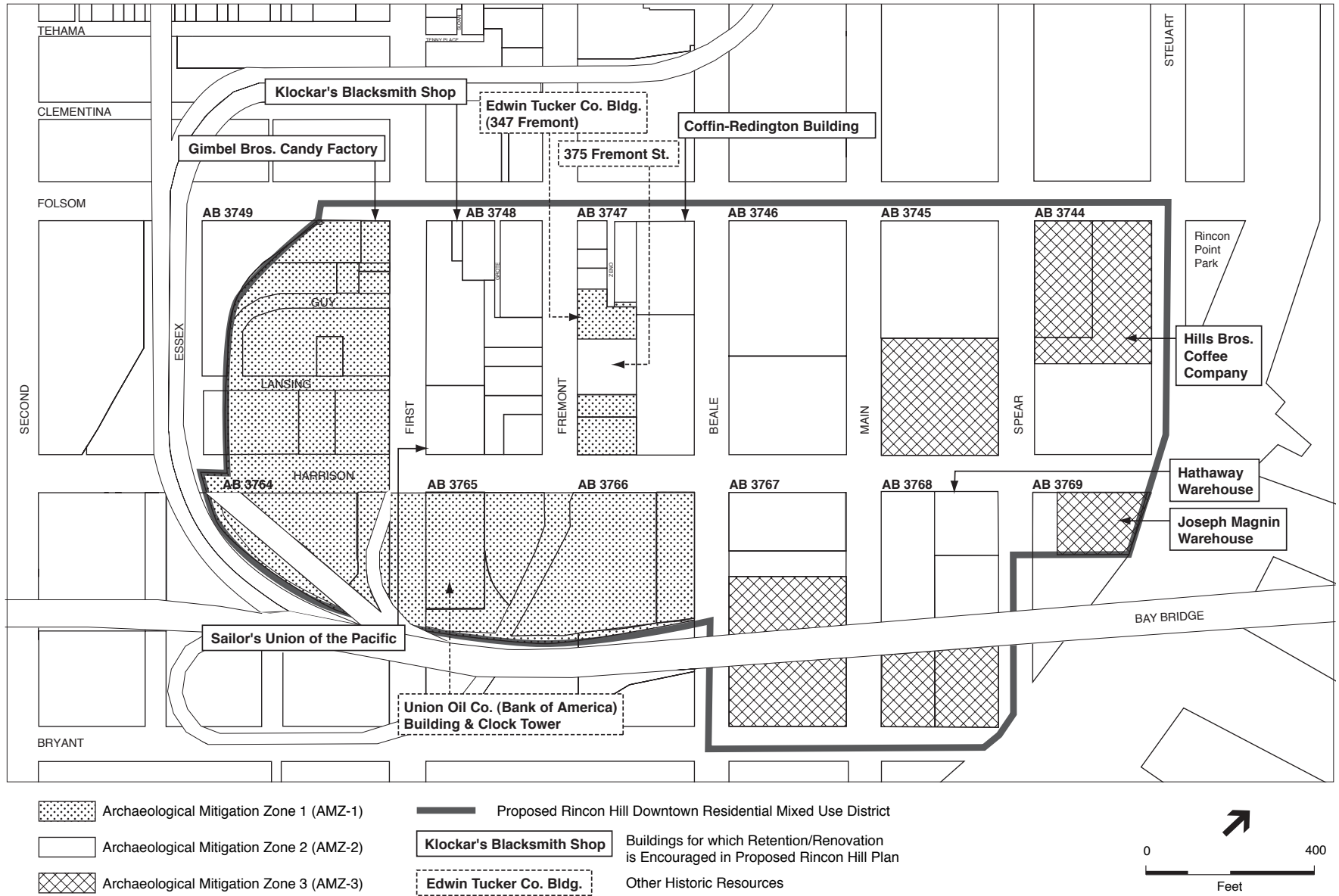
Prior to the adoption of several area plans of the San Francisco General Plan, surveys were conducted of historic architectural resources within those areas. The existing Rincon Hill Area Plan recognizes and lists eight individual buildings, two of which are also identified as City Landmarks in Article 10 of the Planning Code, that may be deemed worthy of recognition and preservation for their historic architectural merit.

Article 10 provides for review by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the Planning Commission of proposed alterations to designated landmarks. It permits the city to delay alteration or demolition of listed resources for up to one year, but does not generally prohibit demolition. Article 10 lists two individual city landmarks in the Rincon Hill Plan area: Klockars Blacksmith Shop (Landmark No. 149, 449 Folsom Street), and the Hills Brothers Coffee Company (Landmark No. 157, 2 Harrison Street; now part of the mixed-use Hills Plaza).

The existing Rincon Hill Area Plan identifies eight buildings, described below, as Significant Buildings based on their architectural and historical attributes (see Figure 61). Seven of these buildings are proposed to retain the Significant Building designation:

---

<sup>97</sup> Landmarks from No. 1 through 769 and California Points of Historical Interest will be evaluated and recommended to the State Historical Resources Commission for inclusion in the California Register when criteria for evaluating properties for listing are adopted (see California Historical Landmarks, below).



SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department; Environmental Science Associates

Case No. 2000.1081E: Rincon Hill Plan EIR (203516) ■

**Figure 61**  
 Historic Buildings and  
 Archaeological Mitigation Zones



**Sailors Union of the Pacific—450 Harrison Street.** Built in 1950, the Sailors' Union of the Pacific is a monumental granite block with two separate compositional sections. While the building's two wings are characterized by long horizontal window bands, the central section is essentially a great concrete block with an enframed window wall entrance. A series of six concave piers, connected by wave panels and banded tubing, frames the tall vertical windows of the entrance. The grey façade walls, designed by William Gladstone Merchant, surrounding the design are blank, and bear a marked resemblance to Merchant's "Pacific House," the theme building of the 1939-1940 exposition on Treasure Island. The Sailors' Union building has a National Register status code of 2S2 (determined individually eligible for listing on the National Register).

**Klockar's Blacksmith Shop—443–447 Folsom Street.** This city landmark (Number 149) building houses one of two known extant blacksmith operations in San Francisco. The two-story blacksmith shop is a wood frame structure with a parapet roof, whose profile is characteristic of the Mission Revival style. An example of western vernacular architecture, the building's "western style" frame façade would have been at home in any of the hundreds of late 19th century towns and villages in the American West. The rest of the lot also contains two auxiliary structures. This building has a National Register status code of 2S2 (determined individually eligible for listing on the National Register).

**Hills Brothers Coffee Company—2–30 Harrison Street.** Hills Brothers is the largest and most impressive of all coffee buildings along the waterfront. It was built in 1924, and was designed by George Kelham, whose other work includes the old Main Library (now the Asian Art Museum) in the Civic Center, the Palace Hotel on Market Street—for which Kelham was supervising architect on behalf of the New York architectural firm of Trowbridge and Livingston—and the Standard Oil and Shell Buildings on Bush Street, Russ Building on Montgomery Street, and the old Federal Reserve Building on Sansome Street, as well as the cross on Mount Davidson. The Hills Brothers packing and roasting building is a red brick block with a 175-foot tall square tower. Romanesque arches on the ground and fifth stories and a cornice composed of smaller arches are used to articulate the massive façade. The building is also decorated with pattern brick work and elaborately crafted bronze grillwork doors. The great tower, generally without fenestration, contains a series of round arches on its upper section and is capped by a pyramidal red tile roof. It was designated a local landmark (Number 157) in 1982. In 1989, the building was converted to office use as part of the mixed-use Hills Plaza project that occupies the entire block bounded by Harrison, Spear, and that also includes ground-floor retail space, 67 condominium units in a taller tower on Folsom Street, and extensive publicly accessible open space. This building has a National Register status code of 2S2 (determined individually eligible for listing on the National Register).

**Joseph Magnin Warehouse—29–35 Harrison Street.** This five-story reinforced concrete warehouse was designed by George Applegarth in 1918 for the A.B. Spreckels Securities Co. The building block is faced in white concrete, relieved by a rusticated stucco base. The three-part composition is divided by giant pilasters into a series of great horizontal windows whose six-lite pivotal windows are divided by industrial sash. Decorative elements include ashlar scoring of the exterior walls (which thus appear as if

constructed of giant stonework), and brick spandrel panels below each window bay. A restrained classical cornice concludes the powerful industrial design. This building has been renovated for office use. This building has a National Register status code of 4S (must be re-evaluated for eligibility using current standards).<sup>98</sup>

**Hathaway Warehouse—400 Spear Street.** One of the oldest extant warehouses in the city, the ground story of this splendid brick structure has its origins in the third quarter of the 19th century, possibly as early as 1856. Additions to the Harrison Street façade were completed in 1875 and the upper sections of the building were completed by about 1900. The two-story brick building, now painted a cream color, is distinguished by projecting brick hood moldings on the ground floor along Spear Street. Brick pilasters with corbelled capitals divide the façade into a series of paired window bays. A projecting belt course separates the two stories on the building’s facades. As late as 1919, its length was virtually double that of today. Around the turn of the last century, another portion of it may have been demolished. The building was converted to residential lofts in 1996. The Hathaway Warehouse has a National Register status code of 3S (appears eligible for the National Register).

**Coffin-Redington Building—301 Folsom Street.** In the design of this 1937 office/warehouse building, Frederick H. Meyer, founder of the California College of Arts and Crafts, employed a restrained Moderne idiom. The Coffin-Redington Building is a two-part reinforced concrete block whose stucco façade has been painted a mustard-yellow color. The building’s great mass is articulated by differentiating its end bays through the modulation of their width in respect to the central bays. Moderne elements include decorative chevrons and half circles at the frieze and fluted piers, dividing the façade into a series of horizontal window bays with industrial sash. A dentilated lintel, fluted piers, and decorative floral patterns and chevrons decorate the two entrances. The building was converted to residential lofts with ground-floor retail space in 1997. This building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in February 2001.

**Gimbel Brothers Candy Factory—501 Folsom Street.** The Gimbel Brothers Building was constructed in 1916 according to the designs of Alfred Kuhn. The building was used for the production and storage of candy. The four-story block is divided into two sections by an elaborate stringcourse and faced in a red English Garden Wall brick bond. The ground story contains large square windows, some of whose sash has been replaced over the years. Brick pilasters, with stepped capitals, divide the façade into a series of recessed single window bays while differentiated end bays contain paired windows flush with the façade. All windows are concluded by segmental arches whose voussoirs blend well with the orthogonal surface. The building is concluded by a coping above its restrained cornice. This building is currently in office use.

The eighth Significant Building identified in the existing Area Plan is on the site of the currently proposed 425 First Street (“One Rincon Hill”) project (Case No. 2003.0029). Because this proposed project would provide needed housing and would be integral to the Draft Plan’s goal to “develop a cohesive urban form for Rincon Hill that fits into the larger form of the downtown, the natural landform, and the waterfront

<sup>98</sup> Based on new California Register Status Code system adopted by the State Office of Historic Preservation in August 2003; see <http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1069/files/announcement%20status%20codes%20revision.pdf>.

and the Bay,” and would be consistent with the height and bulk controls in the Preferred Option, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan does not recommend retaining the Significant Building Designation for the following resource, which is discussed in additional detail in light of its proposed demolition.<sup>99</sup>

**Union Oil Co. Building (now Bank of America Building)—425 First Street.** The Union Oil Company Building is a 62,240-square-foot, three-story, steel-frame and reinforced-concrete office building consisting of three major parts: an office building, a clock tower, and a parking structure. The building was originally constructed in 1940-41, altered and expanded with the addition of the clock tower and parking garage in 1953-55, and then again altered in 1995. The building’s footprint covers most of its nearly 38,000-square-foot lot, located on the east side of First Street, between Harrison Street and the Bay Bridge West Approach. The office component is three stories in height with a basement, a penthouse, and a 183-foot tall tower. The primary facade faces west onto First Street. The south wall faces the Bay Bridge, the east wall faces the Fremont Street off-ramp, and the north wall, which is mostly composed of the parking garage, abuts Harrison Street. Facade materials include terra cotta panels, roman brick, stucco, painted concrete, porcelain enameled metal paneling and glass block. The roof is flat and the windows are either glass block or aluminum multi-light awning sash. The exterior makes use of many of the trademark elements of the Streamline Moderne style, including smooth continuous wall planes, ribbon windows filled with glass blocks, the use of color as the primary ornament, simple straight, curved or concentric “speed lines” and flat roofs and canopies. The building also presents characteristics of the International Style, including cubic massing, straight lines, ribbon windows, neutral off-white color scheme and industrial sash.

The building was designed by San Francisco architect Lewis Hobart. Hobart’s other notable credits include Grace Cathedral on Nob Hill, the Macy’s (originally O’Connor-Moffatt) department store building at O’Farrell Stockton Streets, the Bohemian Club building on Post Street, and the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park. In 1953, architect Ralph N. Kerr of Oakland was retained to design several major additions in a compatible manner to Hobart’s original plan. Additions to the east and north walls of the office building were identical to Hobart’s original Streamline Moderne aesthetic, more so than the tower or the parking garage, which were rendered in stripped down International Style mode. A new 183-foot tower replaced Hobart’s original 140-foot tower and although it departed from the original in terms of plan, massing, materials and detailing, it still adhered to the generalized “modernistic” aesthetic of the original. The building served as the headquarters for Union Oil Company’s Central Sales Territory for over half a century until it was purchased by Bank of America in 1995. Bank of America remodeled the building’s interior and replaced the Union Oil “76” orange ball on the clock tower with its own signage. The building was sold in 2002.

The Union Oil Company Building is not listed on either the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, and does not have a National Register or California Register

---

<sup>99</sup> The following is summarized from a historic resources evaluation prepared for the proposed 425 First Street project by Page & Turnbull. The historic resources evaluation is available by appointment for review at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, First Floor, San Francisco, in Case File No. 2003.0029, 425 First Street.

Status Code. It is not a San Francisco Landmark nor is it a contributor to a local historic district under Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code. The building is identified in the 1976 Citywide Survey as a “4” (with “5” being the highest rating), was rated “A” (Highest Importance) by Heritage, and, as noted, is a Significant Building in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan.

Although an historic resources survey found the building ineligible for the National Register due to the 1953-55 additions,<sup>100</sup> the Planning Department disagreed and filed comments with the state Office of Historic Preservation arguing that the building should be considered individually eligible for listing in the National Register. The 425 First Street historic resources evaluation determined that Union Oil Company Building does appear to be eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3 (Architecture),<sup>101</sup> in that the building is a rare and well-preserved example of a transitional Streamline Moderne/International Style.

Based on the conclusion in the 425 First Street historic resource evaluation that the Union Oil Company Building meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Places, the building is, therefore, considered an historical resource under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(3).

### ***Other Evaluations***

As part of the project-specific CEQA analysis for the proposed project on file at 375 Fremont Street (Case No. 2002.0449E), a consultant prepared a Historic Resources Evaluation (HRE) of the existing building on that site that concluded that the building was not a historical resource under CEQA because the building was deemed not to be eligible for listing on the California Register. However, the Planning Department technical preservation specialist who reviewed the HRE disagreed with the conclusion that the 375 Fremont Street building is not of sufficient artistic value, and lacks sufficient integrity, to warrant listing under the California Register’s “Architecture” criterion, noting that “there are characteristics about this warehouse that separates it from other warehouses of its age, and therefore could be considered a resource due to artistic merit. Specifically, the façade organization and ornament is more vertical in orientation, more intricate and fine-grained, and more unique than most other warehouses” and that “enough of the building, including all other parts of the façade, and the industrial sash window have been retained, allowing the building’s integrity to be maintained.”<sup>102</sup> Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, the building at 375 Fremont Street is considered a historical resource under CEQA.

---

<sup>100</sup> Patrick McGrew, “Mid-Embarcadero/Terminal Separator Project Historic Properties Survey Report,” cited in U.S. Department of Transportation, Caltrans, and City of San Francisco, “Alternatives to Replacement of the Embarcadero Freeway and the Terminal Separator Structure,” Draft EIS/EIR, August 25, 1995.

<sup>101</sup> Criterion 3 is as follows: “Resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.”

<sup>102</sup> Mat Snyder, Preservation Technical Specialist, memorandum regarding 375 Fremont Street (Block 3747 / Lot 6), Case No. 2002.0449E, to Ben Helber, Major Environmental Analysis, December 19, 2003.

## IMPACTS

### ***SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA***

CEQA requires that the effects of a project on archaeological resources shall be taken into consideration and that if a project may affect an archaeological resource, that it shall first be determined if the resource is an “historical resource”; that is, whether the archaeological resource meets the criteria for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.5(a)(1) and (3) and (c)(1) and (2)). An archaeological resource that qualifies as a historical resource under CEQA generally does so under Criterion D (demonstrated potential to significantly contribute to questions of scientific/historical importance). An archaeological resource may qualify for listing under Criterion D when it can be demonstrated that the resource has the potential to significantly contribute to questions of scientific importance.<sup>103</sup>

Regarding historic architectural resources, CEQA Section 21084.1 states that “a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” A “historical resource” is defined in Section 15064.5 of the state CEQA Guidelines as a resource that is listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources; is identified as significant in a local register of historical resources, such as Article 10 and Article 11 of the San Francisco Planning Code or is deemed significant due to its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(g); or is determined by the lead agency to be historically significant based on substantial evidence. A “substantial adverse change” is defined in Section 15064.5(b)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines as “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.” As noted in the setting, the Union Oil Company Building is considered a historical resource for purposes of CEQA.

The state CEQA Guidelines indicate that projects that are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings<sup>104</sup> (“Secretary’s Standards”) generally “shall be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historic resource” (Section 15064.5(b)(3)).

For a project that would not be consistent with the Secretary’s Standards, the impact evaluation must determine whether the proposed changes would constitute “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.”

A project also would have a significant effect if it would:

- Conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area.

---

<sup>103</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation, *Preservation Planning Bulletin No. 5*.

<sup>104</sup> The Secretary’s Standards are presented in their entirety in Appendix B.

According to the project Initial Study, the proposed would not conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area. This chapter therefore focuses on potential impacts to prehistoric or historic archaeological sites and to historic architecture.

## ***IMPACTS TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES***

### **Expected Archaeological Resources**

#### ***Prehistoric***

Although there has been to date no prehistoric site encountered within the Plan area, six prehistoric sites (SFR-2, SFR-28, SFR-112, SFR-113, SFR-114, and a recent CALTRANS encountered site) have been encountered and recorded in the vicinity of the Plan area. Most of these sites have been associated with settlements ranging in date from 1500 to 5500 years before the present. Paleobotanical data recovered from the oldest and farthest inland site indicates that it was at the time of deposition not an inland location, but situated on a tidal marsh, thus providing evidence that there are early prehistoric sites in San Francisco that lie deeply buried beneath sediment deposition associated with the Holocene rise in sea-level. A number of these prehistoric sites also were found to be deeply buried under sterile sand dune deposits that were blown from the coast less than 2,000 to 3,000 years ago. One prehistoric site (CA-SFR-114), two blocks from the Plan area, appears to have been associated with a settlement of regional significance with an unusual degree of social stratification, in contrast to the small and simple structure of the indigenous societies encountered by the Spanish in the late 18th century in San Francisco.

#### ***Historical***

Historical archaeological resources potentially present within the Plan area comprise several types, as indicated by previous archaeological documentation. The archaeological property types and resource categories into which the previously identified potential archaeological resources may be grouped are:

##### Domestic Deposits:

- Elite households (1850s–1906)
- Domestic servants of elite households (1850s–1906)
- Workers at St. Mary’s Hospital (1860s–1906)
- Workers in maritime-related occupations (1850s–1906)
- Working class occupants of cottages/row houses (1850s–1880s)
- Rincon Hill squatters (1906?–1930s)

##### Institutional Deposits:

- St. Brendan’s Catholic Church and Rectory (1882–1914)
- Flora Sharon’s Kindergarten (1857–1880s)
- Our Lady of Mercy Kindergarten (1890s)
- Sisters of Mercy convent (1860s–1906)

##### Industrial Deposits:

- Charles Hare Shipwrecking Yard
- Sutter Iron Works (1853–1860)

**Prehistoric Deposits:**

Prehistoric deposits (general)  
Deeply buried, early prehistoric deposits

**Wharves:**

Beale Street Wharf  
Coffey & Risdon Wharf  
Main Street Wharf

Archaeological research designs prepared for a portion of the Plan area have also identified a number of research topics to which the identified archaeological resources could contribute significant information.

An archaeological testing program (McIlroy, 2003) conducted in 2001-2003 for the Bay Bridge seismic retrofit program confirms that, at least in parts of the Plan area, the archaeological context remains sufficiently intact to yield valuable comparative research data. Some of the testing locations were adjacent to or near the Plan area. Among the testing results was the exposure along one short street just north of the Plan area of seven privies, six pits and five additional features. Twelve of the features were determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Although analysis of the recovered data is not completed, it appears that the domestic features date from 1860-1880s and are associated with working-class households. The testing program also revealed a relatively intact prehistoric deposit southwest of the Plan area. A significant number of the encountered archaeological features had been previously looted or were looted in the course of the testing program.

**Previous Disturbance**

The most significant source of soils disturbance in the Plan area has been the construction of the west approach of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, freeway and associated ramps in the 1930s. The area disturbed for the construction of these improvements is discontinuous and often localized. The large footings on the east side of Spear Street and on the east and west sides of Main Street beneath the bridge are located in landfill deposited in the 1870s and 1880s. The Harrison Street off-ramp required some excavation within the narrow alignment of the ramp that could have disturbed archaeological resources if present within the central portion of the block east of the alignment of Fremont Street and south of Harrison Street. Some excavation and terracing also resulted from construction of the First Street on-ramp west of First Street. Substantial grading also was required along Harrison Street between First and Essex Streets. In some cases, grading for the Bay Bridge approach and ramps may have only slightly truncated archaeological resources. Generally, during the period from 1906 until the mid-1990s private sector development within the Plan area included light industrial warehouse construction and, west of First Street, boarding house-residential flat construction that required little excavation for one-level basements on concrete foundations. In the main, where this type of construction remains present in the Plan area, the integrity of archaeological features may have not been substantially disturbed.

A number of large-scale projects, principally residential towers constructed since the mid-1990s, have required significant soils disturbance for subgrade parking garages and foundation support. However,



because of the high incidence of contaminated soils in the Plan area, few planned subgrade parking garages have been realized and the impacts of most of the residential tower project on subgrade soils has been partial-story excavation and foundation supports, thus, in some cases, leaving the possibility that archaeological deposits could remain present and with no significant loss of integrity. The portions of the Plan area where project construction may have resulted in substantial soils disturbance include the south half of the block bounded by Folsom, Beale, Harrison, and Main Streets; the southeast quadrant of the block between Beale and Fremont Streets and Folsom and Harrison Streets, and the PG&E Embarcadero Substation site at Fremont and Folsom Streets. The relationship between subgrade construction impacts of the existing development, depth of historic living surfaces, and land fill is less clear in other locations. Also, a certain amount of disturbance has occurred due to cutting back the bluff along South Beach between Main Street and the current escarpment west of Beale Street.

Much of the Plan area appears to have not been subject to significant soils disturbing activities including the north half of the blocks between Beale and Spear Streets and Folsom and Harrison Streets, most of the properties fronting on Fremont Street between Folsom and Harrison Streets, the interiors of the blocks south of Harrison Street from Essex Street to the edge of the bluff west of Beale Street, the south side of Harrison Street between Spear and Main Streets, and properties fronting along Guy Place and Lansing Street (except the sites of recent condominium projects).

### **Previous Data Recovery**

The only archaeological data recovery project (SFR-115/H) that has been carried out within the Plan area to date was conducted in 1988 on the site of the Hills Plaza project south of Folsom Street between Spear and Steuart Streets. This effort resulted in the identification and recovery of remains of the Charles Hare ship wrecking yard (1852-1859). Based on the morphology of recovered ship parts, evidence of the dismantling process of at least four vessels was identified. The data recovery program yielded important scientific information: that ship dismantling during the Gold Rush Period was a methodical, selective reverse construction process, with a high level of skilled supervision, and an emphasis on salvage of yellow metal, mainly copper and brass (Archeo-Tec, 1989). The results of the SFR-115/H archaeological data recovery program corrected the view of Gold Rush Period ship dismantling derived from the documentary record, as an informal two-stage process of ship burning and haphazard salvage.

### **Effects Common to All Options**

The proposed project would encourage new private and public land improvement that has a substantially greater potential to result in the disturbance of soils below the existing surface than exists under the current zoning, particularly given the proposed requirement that all residential parking be provided below grade. Since significant archaeological resources are expected to be present within existing subgrade soils of the Plan area, the project could adversely affect significant archaeological resources both directly and indirectly.

### *Direct Effects*

Land Use: The Rincon Hill DTR District would allow and encourage mixed, high-density residential development in the majority of the Plan area, whereas existing zoning permits such uses within about one-half of the Plan area, with industrial and public uses permitted within the remainder of the Plan area. The proposed project, including proposed zoning changes, would permit and encourage substantial new high-density residential development throughout the Plan area, with between three and seven new residential towers, depending on the option approved, anticipated to be constructed, in addition to five towers already approved (two at 300 Spear Street, two at 201 Folsom Street, and one at 325 Fremont Street) and the two just completed at 333 First Street. Under the Preferred Option, these new towers also would be taller than currently allowed. Such taller towers would generally require a greater number of parking spaces to be built, below grade, and such development would result in greater soils disturbance from deep subgrade parking structures, foundation supports (site excavation, pilings, soils grouting), and remediation of contaminated soils than might otherwise be proposed, increasing the potential to adversely affect buried archaeological resources. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure I.1, p. 227, the potential land use effects would be less than significant.

Parking: The proposed Rincon Hill DTR District would require all parking to be located below street grade, in contrast to current zoning. In the last ten years, large-scale projects in the Plan area have typically included two- to three-level parking garages at and above street grade. The requirement of parking to be located below the current land surface has the potential to result in greater disturbance of soils, that under the current zoning would not be disturbed by new parking improvements. This could result in adverse effects to archaeological resources.

In addition, the proposed Rincon Hill DTR District would not permit parking as a principal use. Parking lots typically involve no or little soils disturbance, thus, preserving any archaeological resources that may be present. The proposed rezoning would not permit any additional surface parking lots in the Plan area and would make the existing parking lots legally nonconforming. The limitations on enlargement, alteration, or reconstruction of legally nonconforming status would result, over time, in the replacement of existing parking lots by legally conforming uses, which would, in general, result in greater soils disturbance than would parking lots and, thus, result in a greater potential to adversely affect archaeological resources. Implementation of Mitigation Measure I.1, p. 227, would reduce these potential parking effect to a less-than-significant level.

### *Indirect Effects*

As noted above, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and accompanying rezoning would allow development of greater height and intensity in the majority of the Plan area than is allowed by the current zoning, resulting in increasing land values over time. Assuming that future development demand in the Plan area is comparable to current and recent demand, any substantial appreciation in land value as a consequence of the rezoning, could motivate land owners to develop or redevelop properties with uses that can better capture the increased value than current property use. The more closely that new development would

approximate the objectives of the Rincon Hill Plan in land use density, generally greater would be the effect on soils disturbance for parking, foundation support, and/or site remediation, and, thus, an associated greater potential to adversely disturb archaeological resources. Implementation of Mitigation Measure I.1, p. 227, would reduce this effect to a less-than-significant level.

Additionally, because parts of the Plan area contain or may contain persistent hazardous wastes from 19th and early 20th century industrial, ship-building and repair, and other land uses using chemical processes, there is a potential that greater site remediation for hazardous wastes would occur in conjunction with development under the Rincon Hill DTR District, than under the current zoning. Site remediation can result in the disturbance and removal of soils in excess of soils that would be disturbed by the other components of a project such as foundations or parking. Thus, mitigation of hazardous materials within the soils of a project site may adversely affect archaeological deposits within the affected soils independent of all other aspects of a project. Implementation of Mitigation Measure I.1, p. 227, would reduce this effect to a less-than-significant level.

## ***IMPACTS TO HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE***

### **Effects Common to All Options**

Of the eight buildings identified in the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would retain seven as Significant Buildings, based on architectural and historical attributes. The Draft Plan anticipates demolition of the former Union Oil Company building at First and Harrison Streets and, therefore, proposes not to carry forward the listing of this building as Significant. Effects of demolition of this building are discussed below.

The draft Rincon Hill Plan proposes that the Sailors' Union of the Pacific building be rehabilitated for reuse, in part, as a Community Center. It is anticipated that such rehabilitation, assuming it proceeds, would be undertaken consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, and therefore no significant adverse effect would result.

Of the remaining six Significant Buildings, as identified in the existing Area Plan, one, the Klockars Blacksmith Shop, remains in its original use, while the other five buildings have been renovated in recent years, primarily for office and residential use. No changes are foreseeable for the rehabilitated buildings, all of which are occupied and fully functional, and therefore none of these buildings is anticipated to be adversely affected by implementation of the proposed Plan. Regarding the Klockars Blacksmith Shop, the current owner has expressed interest in continuing to operate the blacksmithing facility. It is not unreasonable, however, to anticipate that this may not be a viable long-term use in a densifying, primarily residential urban environment. Furthermore, it would seem likely that there are a limited number of operators who might continue the blacksmithing operation over the long term. Nothing in the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would preclude continued operation, and the Plan proposes that the Klockars Building retain its designation as Significant based on architectural and historical attributes. (As noted, the building is also a City Landmark.) Furthermore, development pressures already exist in the Plan area due

to high-rise residential buildings constructed and approved in the vicinity without benefit of the Plan. However, if the Plan succeeds in furthering such development, particularly through taller, more valuable buildings, the Plan could ultimately contribute to impeding further operation of a blacksmithing operation, which could ultimately lead to the loss of this resource. For purposes of a conservative analysis, this would be considered a significant cumulative impact to which the proposed Plan could contribute.<sup>105</sup> At such future time as a project, if any, were proposed at the Klockars Blacksmith Shop site, whether or not involving renovation of the existing building, impacts of that specific project would undergo analysis under CEQA.

In addition, further research and analysis may be required prior to specific development proposals affecting other potential historical resources not yet identified. In the case of some resources, that additional analysis would need to focus on whether resources are indeed “historical resources” under CEQA and what qualities / features contribute to their historical significance. In other cases, additional analysis would need to determine whether changes proposed would constitute substantial and adverse changes to the resources, or whether they would constitute acceptable changes that would not substantially affect the resources’ significance.

### ***Union Oil Company Building***

Because the Rincon Hill Plan proposes to remove the building’s designation as a Significant Building in the Rincon Hill Area Plan, and because the Rincon Hill Plan anticipates development of the 425 First Street residential project, which in turn proposes demolition of the Union Oil Company Building, a historical resources under CEQA, the Rincon Hill Plan would be considered to have a significant, unavoidable impact on historical resources.

Furthermore, according to the 425 First Street historic resources evaluation, demolition of historic buildings within the Rincon Hill area “is changing the overall character of the neighborhood from a concentrated industrial/maritime-related district, as it evolved between the 1906 Earthquake and the Second World War, into a high-rise predominantly residential district. While the majority of the buildings intended for demolition are in most cases not individually significant, the cumulative effect of demolishing older buildings would alter the area’s character. The impact of demolishing one of the limited number of identified significant buildings could have a cumulative negative impact on Rincon Hill because of the small number of identified significant buildings on Rincon Hill and the even smaller number of significant Streamline Moderne buildings in the City.”

### ***Other Historical Resources***

Two other buildings that are identified as historical resources under CEQA could be demolished and replaced by new podium-level or tower construction under all Plan options: 347 Fremont Street and

---

<sup>105</sup> It is noted that, while recent construction of the residential project at 333 First Street (The Metropolitan towers) appears to encroach upon the blacksmith shop, this new project also could offer some protection for the blacksmith, in that the Klockars building now sits on a small lot, likely unsuitable for intensification of use, between 333 First Street on the west and a service yard and natural gas fueling station adjacent to the PG&E Embarcadero Substation to the east.

375 Fremont Street; in particular, the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option calls for a new tower on the 375 Fremont Street site. As noted in the setting, 347 Fremont Street (the Edwin W. Tucker & Co. Building) has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register, while 375 Fremont was found by the Planning Department to warrant listing on the California Register. Therefore demolition of these buildings, should it occur, would result in a significant and unavoidable impact. The new development that could replace these buildings would be podium-height (85-foot-tall) residential development under all options in the case of 347 Fremont Street, while, in the case of 375 Fremont Street, new construction could be 85 feet tall under the Preferred Option and Existing Controls (150-foot Tower Separation) Option; under the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option, a 300-foot-tall tower would be built on a portion of the 375 Fremont Street site.

In summary, the proposed Rincon Hill Plan would not directly result in the removal and loss of any historic architectural resources, but would, if adopted as proposed, encourage and facilitate the loss of the Union Oil Company Building, along with buildings at 347 Fremont Street and 375 Fremont Street; the loss of these buildings would be an indirect significant effect of the proposed plan. The proposed Plan might contribute to the loss of other historic architectural resources, particularly in the case of the Klockars Blacksmith Shop. This impact would be considered a potentially significant cumulative impact.

---

## REFERENCES—Historical Resources

Archeo-Tec, 1989. *Hills Plaza: Archaeological Data Recovery Program*.

Archeo-Tec, 1991. *Archival Cultural Resources Evaluation of the Proposed San Francisco Embarcadero Postal Center*.

Archeo-Tec, 2003a. *Archaeological Cultural Resources Evaluation of the Proposed 375 Fremont Street Project*.

Archeo-Tec, 2003b. *Archaeological Research Design & Treatment Plan 399 Fremont Street Project*. April.

Archeo-Tec, 2003c. *Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan 333 Fremont Street Project*. June.

California Office of Historic Preservation, 1991. *Guidelines of Archaeological Research Designs: Preservation Planning Bulletin No. 5*.

David Chavez & Associates, 1997. *Archaeological Resources Investigations for the Transbay Redevelopment Project*. June.

FHWA (Federal Highway Administration), U.S. Department of Transportation; State of California Department of Transportation; and City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, *Alternatives to Replacement of the Embarcadero Freeway and the Terminal Separator Structure Final Environmental Impact Statement / Final Environmental Impact Report*, (Case Numbers 92.202E and 94.060E), Final EIR certified September 1996.

- FTA (Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation) and Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, *CalTrain San Francisco Downtown Extension Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report*, March 1997
- Holman & Associates, 1996. *An Inventory of Potential Archaeological Resources in the Rincon Sports & Entertainment Center Project Area, San Francisco, California*. February.
- Holman & Associates, 1990. *Report on Potential Cultural Resources for the San Francisco Downtown Terminal Relocation*.
- LPAB (San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board), 1990. *A Context Statement and Architectural/Historical Survey of Unreinforced Masonry Building (UMB) Construction*. November.
- McIlroy, Jack, 2004. *Archaeological Fieldwork Report for the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge West Approach Project*. Anthropological Studies Center. February.
- McIlroy, Jack et al, 2003. *Archaeological Resource Study for 425 First Street*. Anthropological Studies Center. August.
- Milliken, R., 1995. *A Time of Little Choice The Disintegration of Tribal Culture in the San Francisco Bay Area 1769-1810*. Ballena Press Anthropological Papers No. 43.
- Moratto, M., 1984. *California Archaeology*. Academic Press.
- Page, Charles Hall & Associates; and Michael Corbett, 1979. *Splendid Survivors: San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*, prepared for the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. San Francisco: California Living Books.
- Pastron, Allen and James Delgado, 1991. *Archaeological Investigations of a Mid-19th-Century Shipbreaking Yard, San Francisco, California*. *Historical Archaeology* 25(3):61-77. 1991
- Praetzellis, Mary and Adrian, eds., 1993. *Tar Flat, Rincon Hill and the Shore of Mission Bay: Archeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for SF-480 Terminal Separation Rebuild*, prepared for the California Department of Transportation. Rohnert Park, CA: Anthropological Studies Center, Sonoma State University. December.
- San Francisco Planning Department, *1976 City-Wide Architectural Survey*. Survey results are available for public review at the San Francisco Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street.
- William Self Associates, 1998. *Summary Report on Archaeological Monitoring at the Bay Towers Project, 388 Beale Street*.
- Ziesing, G. et al., 2000. *Replacement of the West Approach to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge: Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan*. Anthropological Studies Center. July.

## J. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

### SETTING

#### *WATER FEATURES AND USES*

There are currently no natural surface water bodies or streams in the Rincon Hill Plan area, with the exception of the San Francisco Bay, which is located to the east of the Plan area. Historically, there were small creeks flowing from the east side of the City to the Bay, but most all of the creeks were filled during development of the City. The area of San Francisco Bay east of the Rincon Hill Plan area is referred to as the Central Bay. Average annual precipitation in the area is about 21 inches, which predominantly occurs from November to April.

The waters of San Francisco Bay are primarily used for navigation, boating, fishing, recreation, and industrial source waters. Freshwater flow into the southern reach of the Central Bay is limited, unlike the northern reach of the Central Bay, where there is a constant mixing of freshwater from the Delta and saltwater from the ocean. The limited circulation and mixing of waters in the southern reach is governed mainly by tidal influence, though there is less tidal exchange in this portion of the Bay compared to the northern reach of the Central Bay near the Golden Gate.

#### *DRAINAGE*

Freshwater flow to the Bay from the City, including the Rincon Hill Plan area, has been almost entirely diverted to the City's combined sewer and stormwater system. The combined system collects and transports both sanitary sewage and stormwater runoff in the same set of pipes. Stormwater drainage from most of the Rincon Hill Plan area is conveyed through the combined sewer system, treated, and eventually discharged to the Bay through outfalls and overflow structures along the shoreline.

#### **Combined Sewer System and Overflows**

Wastewater flows from the east side of the City, including the entire Rincon Hill Plan area, are transported to the Southeast Water Pollution Control Plant (Southeast Plant), which is located in the Bayview District. This plant treats up to 150 million gallons per day (mgd) of sewage to a secondary level,<sup>106</sup> and the annual average wastewater flow during dry weather is 65 to 70 mgd. During dry weather, wastewater flows consist mainly of municipal and industrial sanitary sewage and wastewater; all dry weather wastewater flow is treated to a secondary level at the Southeast Plant. The treated wastewater is then discharged to the Bay through the deep water outfall at Pier 80, north of the Islais Creek Channel, just south Cesar Chavez Street, along the Southern Waterfront.

---

<sup>106</sup> Secondary treatment is the treatment of wastewater or sewage involving removal of organic matter using biological and chemical processes. This is a higher level of treatment than primary treatment, which is removal of floating and settleable solids using physical operations such as screening and sedimentation. Secondary treatment is less intensive than tertiary treatment, in which additional chemical and biological treatment processes are used to remove additional compounds that may be required for discharge or reuse purposes.



During wet weather, the combined sewerage system collects large volumes of stormwater runoff in addition to municipal and industrial wastewater, and the combined wastewater and stormwater flow is conveyed to treatment facilities before eventual discharge to the Bay. Depending on the amount of rainfall, wet weather flows are treated to varying levels before discharge to the Bay. Up to 150 mgd of wet weather flows receive secondary treatment at the Southeast Plant. The Southeast Plant can also treat up to an additional 100 mgd to a primary treatment standard plus disinfection. Treated wet weather discharges from the Southeast Plant occur through the Pier 80 outfall directly to the Bay or through the Quint Street outfall to Islais Creek Channel, on the south bank of Islais Creek, one block west of the Third Street bridge over Islais Creek. Only wastewater treated to a secondary level is discharged at the Quint Street outfall.

Up to an additional 100 mgd of wet weather flows receive primary treatment plus disinfection at the North Point Wet Weather Facility, located on the north side of the City at Bay and Kearny Streets, which operates only during wet weather. Treated effluent from this facility is discharged through four deep water outfalls, approximately 800 feet from the Bay shore and 18 feet below mean lower low water. Two of the deep water outfalls terminate at the end of Pier 33 and two terminate at the end of Pier 35 on the northeastern Bay shore, north of the Rincon Hill Plan area.

The combined sewer system includes storage and transport “boxes”—large concrete culvert-like structures—that, during wet weather, retain the combined stormwater and sewage flows that exceed the capacities of the Southeast Plant and the North Point Wet Weather Facility for later treatment. When rainfall intensity results in combined flows that exceed the total capacity of the Southeast Plant, North Point Facility, and the storage and transport boxes, the excess flows are discharged through 29 combined sewer overflow (CSO) structures located along the City’s Bayside waterfront from Fisherman’s Wharf to Candlestick Point. Discharges from the CSO structures, consisting of about 6 percent sewage and 94 percent stormwater, receive “flow-through treatment,” which is similar to primary treatment, to remove settleable solids and floatable materials. Wet weather flows are intermittent throughout the rainy season, and CSO events vary in nature and duration depending largely on the intensity of individual rainstorms.

All discharges from the combined sewer system to the Bay, through either the outfalls or the CSO structures, are operated in compliance with the federal Clean Water Act and the State’s Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act through permits issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board,<sup>107</sup> San Francisco Bay Region (RWQCB).

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) Water Pollution Control Division manages the City’s wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system. In 2004, the SFPUC initiated a Clean Water Master Plan to develop a long-term strategy for the management of the City’s wastewater and stormwater; to address system deficiencies, community impacts, public interests, and future needs; and to maximize system reliability and flexibility. In addition, in 2003, the SFPUC began updating the Recycled Water

---

<sup>107</sup> Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin, 1995.

Master Plan. The Clean Water Master Plan and the Recycled Water Master Plan Update will examine the combined sewer system infrastructure and facilities as part of these related planning efforts.

### ***GROUNDWATER***

The Plan area is underlain by the Downtown Groundwater Basin, which extends beneath much of northeast San Francisco over an area of nearly 12 square miles, at an average depth of about 175 feet below grade (deeper beneath the higher parts of the Plan area). Historically, there were numerous groundwater wells, but currently potable water supply service for the entire City, including the Plan area, is provided by the SFPUC. Some industrial and landscape irrigation use is made of groundwater in the Downtown basin. There are no plans for potable groundwater development within the Project Area.

### ***WATER QUALITY CONDITIONS***

#### **San Francisco Bay**

Ambient offshore Bay water quality is not regularly monitored in the immediate vicinity of the Plan area. However, in 1993, the RWQCB initiated the Regional Monitoring Program for the San Francisco estuary for the general purposes of assessing regional water quality conditions and characterizing patterns and trends of contaminant concentrations and distribution in the water column, as well as identifying general sources of contamination to the Bay. The program has established a database of water quality and sediment quality in the estuary, particularly with regard to toxic and potentially toxic trace elements and organic contaminants. The most recent water quality data for the Central Bay,<sup>108</sup> the monitoring locations closest to the Project Area, was collected in 2002.<sup>109</sup> This data indicates that, with the exception of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), water quality conditions remain well within water quality objectives established by the RWQCB for the parameters monitored. These parameters include conventional water quality parameters (ammonia, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, dissolved organic carbon, silicates, hardness, nitrate, nitrite, pH, phosphate, salinity, temperature, suspended solids, phaeophytin, and chlorophyll); trace elements (aluminum, arsenic, cadmium, cobalt, chromium, copper, iron, lead, manganese, mercury, methylmercury, nickel, selenium, silver, and zinc); trace organics including polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, PCBs, and pesticides; and toxicity.

---

<sup>108</sup> In previous years, the Regional Monitoring Program included collection of samples from specific sampling locations; the closest stations monitored were Alameda and Oyster Point. In 2002 the program adopted a stratified-random sampling design which included collection of samples from random locations within five specific hydrographic regions of the Bay. The data discussed in this section are for samples collected from four randomly selected locations with the Central Bay hydrographic region, which is adjacent to the Project Area.

<sup>109</sup> San Francisco Estuary Institute, *2002 Regional Monitoring Program Annual Monitoring Results*, May, 2004.

## **REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

### **Water Quality Regulations**

The federal Clean Water Act and subsequent amendments, under the enforcement authority of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was enacted “to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters.” The Clean Water Act gave the EPA the authority to implement pollution control programs such as setting wastewater standards for industry. The Act also set water quality standards for surface waters and established the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to protect water quality. Under Section 402 of the Act, discharge of pollutants to is prohibited unless the discharge is in compliance with an NPDES permit. In California, the EPA has determined that the State’s water pollution control program had sufficient authority to manage the NPDES program under California law in a manner consistent with the Clean Water Act. Therefore, implementation and enforcement of the NPDES program is conducted through the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine RWQCBs. The San Francisco Region RWQCB regulates water quality in San Francisco Bay under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act through regulatory standards and objectives in the *Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin*, commonly referred to as the “Basin Plan.” The Basin Plan identifies existing and potential beneficial uses and provides numerical and narrative water quality objectives to protect those uses.

### **Beneficial Uses**

Applicable water quality criteria for a specific water body are determined on the basis of the beneficial use(s) of the water. The Basin Plan identifies the following existing beneficial uses for the San Francisco Bay, Central and Lower portions: ocean, commercial and sport fishing; estuarine habitat; industrial service supply; fish migration; navigation; preservation of rare and endangered species; water contact recreation; non-contact water recreation; shellfish harvesting; and wildlife habitat. The Central Bay is also identified as having industrial process supply and fish spawning as existing beneficial uses. No “potential” beneficial uses are identified for these waters.

### **Impaired Water Bodies and Total Maximum Daily Loads**

In accordance with Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, states must present the EPA with a list of “impaired water bodies,” defined as those water bodies that do not meet water quality standards. The RWQCB has listed the Central Bay as an impaired water body. The pollutants that have been identified as causing impairment in San Francisco Bay include chlordane, DDT, diazinon, dieldrin, dioxin compounds, furan compounds, mercury, exotic species, and PCBs.<sup>110</sup> The law requires the development of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) to identify the maximum concentration of particular pollutants that will no impair water quality and to identify pollution prevention, control, or restoration strategies. The RWQCB has developed TMDL reports for PCBs and mercury, and has proposed a Basin Plan

---

<sup>110</sup> Regional Water Quality Control Board. San Francisco Bay Region, *2002 CWA Section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segment*, Approved by the USEPA: July 2003.

amendment to incorporate the mercury TMDL. Current TMDL projects are ongoing for copper, nickel, and exotic species, and future projects are planned for diazinon, chlordane, dioxins, furans, and selenium.

### **NPDES Waste Discharge Regulations**

NPDES permits for wastewater and industrial discharges specify discharge prohibitions and effluent limitations and also include other provisions (such as monitoring and reporting programs) deemed necessary to protect water quality. In California, the SWRCB and the RWQCBs implement and enforce the NPDES program. Between 1972 and 1990, NPDES regulations focused on municipal and industrial wastewater discharges. The 1987 amendments to the federal Clean Water Act added requirements for regulation of stormwater quality discharges under the NPDES program. In 1990, Phase I of the NPDES stormwater program was issued and addressed stormwater discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems serving populations over 100,000 and industrial activities, including discharges from construction activities disturbing five acres or more. San Francisco was not subject to the Phase I requirements because of its combined sewer system, although certain areas within the Port of San Francisco were subject to and complied with permit requirements for industrial sites.

In 1999, NPDES Phase II regulations were issued, requiring stormwater discharge permits for municipalities not covered under Phase I as well as for construction activities disturbing over one acre. These Phase II stormwater regulations became effective in March 2003. In accordance with the Phase II stormwater regulations, those portions of San Francisco that are not served by the combined sewer system (not applicable to the Rincon Hill Plan area) are subject to the requirements of the statewide General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems.<sup>111</sup>

### **Federal Combined Sewer Overflow Control Policy**

On April 11, 1994, the EPA adopted the Combined Sewer Overflow Control Policy (CSO Control Policy), which became part of the Clean Water Act in December 2000. This policy establishes a consistent national approach for controlling discharges from combined sewers. Using the NPDES permit program, the policy initiates a two-phased process with higher priority given to more environmentally sensitive areas. During the first phase, the permittee is required to implement the controls that constitute the technology-based requirements of the Clean Water Act and can reduce the frequency of CSOs and their effects on receiving water quality.

The City is currently implementing these controls as required by the CSO Control Policy. This includes development of a Water Pollution Prevention Program which focuses on minimizing pollutants from entering the City's combined sewer system and addresses pollutants from residential, commercial, industrial, and nonpoint pollutant sources.

---

<sup>111</sup> State Water Resources Control Board, Water Quality Control Order No. 2003-0005—DWQ. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit No. CAS000004. Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for Storm Water Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (General Permit), 2003.

During the second phase, the permittee is required to continue implementation of the controls, properly operate and maintain the completed CSO controls in accordance with the operational plan, and implement the post-construction monitoring program. In conformance with the CSO Control Policy, the City has developed a long-term control plan to select CSO controls to comply with water quality criteria and to protect the beneficial uses of the receiving waters. The plan utilizes the presumptive approach for the protection of water quality. In accordance with the CSO Control Policy, this approach must meet one of these criteria:

- An average of four CSO events per year;
- Elimination or capture no less than 85 percent by volume of the combined sewage collected in the combined sewer system during precipitation events on a system-wide average basis; or
- Removal of the mass of any contaminant causing water quality impairment that would be otherwise removed by eliminating or capturing the flow as specified above.

The CSO Control Policy requires that any CSOs that occur after implementation of nine minimum control measures<sup>112</sup> should receive a minimum of primary clarification (removal of floatables and settleable solids), solids and floatable disposal, and disinfection (if necessary to meet water quality standards and protect the beneficial uses of the receiving water). The San Francisco Wastewater Control Program exceeds the specifications of the presumptive approach because 100 percent of the combined sewer flows are captured and treated rather than the required 85 percent. As defined in the CSO Control Policy, San Francisco has no remaining untreated overflow events because the overflows that occur in San Francisco currently receive the equivalent of primary treatment within the storage/transport boxes, consisting of removal of floatables and settleable solids.

The City is currently in full compliance with the CSO Control Policy. In 1997, the City completed construction of a 20-year, \$1.6 billion Wastewater Master Plan, which included extensive storage, transport and treatment upgrades to the combined sewer system that meet approved design criteria for overall protection of beneficial uses. Operation and implementation of these facilities satisfies the CSO Control Policy, including maximizing use of the system during wet weather.

### **Planning Efforts Affecting CSO Discharges**

The City is currently conducting ongoing planning efforts that address CSO discharges and associated water quality impacts and may directly or indirectly affect new developments resulting from implementation of the Project. Three of these planning efforts are discussed below: Clean Water Program New and Redevelopment Guidelines, Clean Water Master Plan, and Recycled Water Master Plan Update.

---

<sup>112</sup> The nine measures are: 1. Conduct proper operation and regular maintenance programs for the combined sewer system and CSO outfalls; 2. Maximize the use of the collection system for storage; 3. Review and modify pretreatment programs to ensure that CSO impacts are minimized; 4. Maximize flow to the treatment plant for treatment; 5. Prohibit CSOs during dry weather; 6. Control solids and floatable materials in CSOs; 7. Develop and implement pollution prevention programs that focus on contaminant reduction activities; 8. Notify the public; and 9. Monitor to effectively characterize CSO impacts and the efficacy of CSO controls.

### ***Clean Water Program New Development and Redevelopment Guidelines***

The SFPUC is currently preparing sewage and stormwater management guidelines for new developments and major redevelopments within San Francisco to augment existing utility infrastructure requirements. The goal of this effort is to develop a systematic, citywide approach for planning stormwater management systems and to ensure that proposed developments will provide a high level of service with the City's continued compliance with water quality regulations and protection of beneficial uses in San Francisco Bay and the ocean. These guidelines will outline stormwater control measures required in areas of the City served by a separate sewer system, and will also recommend stormwater control measures feasible for implementing in areas of the City served by the combined sewer system. The guidelines are being developed as part of the compliance strategy for the City's existing Phase II stormwater permit. Stormwater management would occur in three phases: site design, source control and structural treatment controls. The first two phases aim to either reduce the quantity of stormwater transported to the combined sewer system or to prevent stormwater pollutants from entering the runoff stream. The third phase aims to improve the quality of runoff generated as well as to reduce the quantity. The proposed guidelines are similar to those being initiated by other communities throughout the Bay Area.

### ***Clean Water Master Plan***

In 2004, the SFPUC began project development of the Clean Water Master Plan, which will lead to the development of a Clean Water Facilities Plan and a Clean Water Financial Plan. The Clean Water Master Plan will address the City's long-term vision and strategy for the management of San Francisco's wastewater and stormwater. Identified tasks to be conducted during the planning and engineering phase include identifying and evaluating alternatives to: (1) resolve flooding problems and hydraulic deficiencies; (2) reduce and/or disinfect combined sewer overflows in the Bay and Ocean; (3) redirect treated effluent discharges from the Bay to the Ocean; (4) maximize water conservation and reuse opportunities; (5) implement a more decentralized wastewater treatment approach; (6) separate sections of the City's combined sewer system into a separate sewer system; (7) eliminate/minimize odors at treatment facilities and in the collection system; (8) address biosolids issues; and (9) incorporate innovative and environmentally-beneficial technologies. The Clean Water Master Plan will be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA.

### ***Recycled Water Master Plan Update***

The SFPUC established a recycled water program in the early 1990s and is currently preparing a Recycled Water Master Plan Update. Recycled water is highly treated wastewater that can safely be used for non-drinking applications, such as irrigation, vehicle or facilities washdown, and industrial cooling water. The purpose of the plan is to provide guidance on the development of recycled water as an alternative water supply source. Use of recycled water can preserve use of high quality potable water for drinking water. One of the major benefits of water recycling is that it would reduce loading to the City's combined sewer system, thereby reducing ultimate discharges to the Bay and Ocean. The Rincon Hill Plan area is already subject to the City's Recycled Water Ordinance, which requires dual plumbing

system installation<sup>113</sup> in larger buildings within identified non-potable water use areas and use of recycled water when it is available.

### **Construction Stormwater Management Requirements**

Construction stormwater discharges in the Rincon Hill Plan area would occur to the combined sewer system and would be subject to the requirements of the City's NPDES permit and the federal CSO Control Policy. These discharges would be subject to the requirements of Article 4.1 of the San Francisco Public Works Code, which incorporates and implements the City's NPDES permit and the nine minimum controls described in the federal CSO Control Policy. The required controls include development and implementation of a pollution prevention program. At a minimum, the City requires that the project sponsor develop and implement an erosion and sediment control plan to reduce the impact of runoff from the construction site. The erosion and sediment control plan must be reviewed and approved by the City prior to implementation, and the City conducts period inspections to ensure compliance with the erosion and sediment control plan.

## **IMPACTS**

### ***SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA***

Implementation of any of the options for the Rincon Hill Plan would have a significant effect on hydrology and water quality if it were to:

- substantially alter existing drainage patterns or increase the rate and/or amount of surface water runoff;
- substantially degrade water quality;
- degrade a potential or existing potable water supply;
- substantially degrade or deplete groundwater resources or interfere with groundwater recharge; or
- cause substantial flooding, erosion, or siltation.

Criteria for evaluating surface and groundwater quality in the San Francisco Bay Area are based on beneficial uses and water quality objectives established by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB as authorized under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act and the Clean Water Act. Both beneficial uses and water quality objectives are described within the Basin Plan. Criteria for evaluating flooding hazards are based on effects to on-site and downstream 100-year flood zones as established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

---

<sup>113</sup> Dual plumbing is a separate set of pipes installed and coded specifically for recycled water use, and there are strict regulations to prevent any cross connections with the drinking water supply.



The project effects section that follows does not discuss impacts to potable water supply, groundwater resources or flooding because the Rincon Hill Plan would not result in impacts in these areas for the following reasons: Potable water supply is not an issue because the Rincon Hill Plan area would be served by an existing water supply and is not located within a potable water supply watershed or over a potable groundwater aquifer. Groundwater resources or groundwater recharge are not issues because any of the options for Rincon Hill Plan would result in negligible effects to groundwater. Groundwater dewatering may be required for construction of specific development projects; however, this temporary dewatering would not substantially affect groundwater resources, and discharge of any groundwater produced by dewatering to the sewer system would be regulated by a permit from the City, as discussed in the Setting. Further, groundwater is not used or planned as a potable water supply in this part of San Francisco. Flooding hazards are not an issue because, with the possible exception of flooding due to inadequate sewer capacity, the Rincon Hill Plan area is not subject to flooding and the Project would have no impacts on flooding. There are no FEMA flood hazard zones in San Francisco. Therefore none of these impacts are discussed further.

### ***CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS***

Implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan would lead to new development and attendant construction activities throughout the Rincon Hill Area. Construction activities could affect water quality due to grading and earthmoving operations, use of fuels and other chemicals for construction equipment, and demolition and construction. Grading and earthmoving activities would result in exposure of soil during construction and could result in erosion and excess sediments carried in stormwater runoff to the combined sewer system. In addition, construction activities would also likely require temporary on-site use and storage of vehicles, fuels, wastes and other pollutant sources; if improperly handled, these pollutants could be transported in stormwater runoff. However, with proper mitigation and compliance with appropriate water quality regulations, water quality impacts associated with construction activities in the Plan area would be less than significant.

Construction projects would be subject to the requirements of the NPDES permit for the Southeast Plant, and North Point Wet Weather Facility, including compliance with the nine minimum controls described in the federal CSO Control Policy. Each project would be required to develop an erosion and sediment control plan specifying Best Management Practices to prevent the off-site migration of sediment and other pollutants and to reduce the effects of runoff from the construction site to the combined sewer system. Any stormwater drainage during construction would flow to the City's combined sewer system, where it would receive treatment at the Southeast Plant or other wet weather facilities and would be discharged through an existing outfall or overflow structure in compliance with the existing NPDES permit. The erosion and sediment control plan must be reviewed and approved by the City prior to implementation and the City would conduct periodic inspections to ensure compliance with the erosion and sediment control plan.

Therefore, water quality impacts related to discharge of construction related stormwater runoff would be less than significant with compliance with the General Construction Stormwater NPDES Permit, the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity from Small Linear Underground/Overhead Projects, or the NPDES permit for the Southeast Plant, North Point Wet Weather Facility and Bayside Wet Weather Facilities for discharge of construction-related stormwater to the combined sewer system. (See also Mitigation Measure concerning potential groundwater contamination encountered during construction, p. 227.)

### ***OPERATIONAL EFFECTS COMMON TO ALL PLAN OPTIONS***

Two aspects of any of the Plan options could result in long term changes to the wastewater flows to the City's combined sewer system: (1) new development would increase sanitary sewage flows year-round to the combined sewer system, and (2) increased landscaping and decreased impervious surfaces would decrease the volume of stormwater runoff to the combined sewer system. The effects of both factors on the combined sewer system are closely related, and the combined effect of both factors could indirectly result in increased volume and/or frequency of discharges to the Bay. An increase in volume of CSO discharges could affect water quality and could be considered a potentially significant water quality impact due to the potential to degrade water quality. However, this potential impact must be evaluated in context of the City's compliance with existing regulatory requirements and ongoing planning efforts addressing long term protection of water quality and beneficial uses of San Francisco Bay. The two factors are first discussed separately, followed by a discussion of the combined impacts.

#### **Changes in Sanitary Sewage Flows**

The Plan options would result in area plan and zoning changes that would encourage and promote new residential development throughout the Rincon Hill Plan area. When implemented, the new development would result in a densification of land uses and an associated increase in sanitary sewage generated by new residents and associated land uses in the Plan area. For the purposes of this analysis, a conservative approach will be taken which assumes that as a worst-case scenario that all sanitary sewage from any new development would result in a year-round increase in wastewater volume requiring treatment and disposal in the City's combined sewer system.

During dry weather (typically May 1 to October 15), all sanitary sewage generated in the Plan area would be treated at the Southeast Plant. The Southeast Plant is currently operating at about 80 percent of its design capacity and treats all dry weather flow from the entire eastside of the City (about two thirds of the City's area) to a secondary level prior to discharge through outfalls to the Bay. The additional dry weather flow associated with implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan would be a negligible incremental increase to the existing dry weather flow and could be accommodated within the system's existing capacity.

During wet weather (typically October 16 to April 30), however, there is a wide variation in volume of wet weather flow due to the addition of stormwater, and the combined sewer system is operated under a wet weather mode different from dry weather operations. The volume of wet weather flows is directly related to the rainfall intensity, and treatment of the wet weather flows varies depending on the characteristics of any individual rainstorm. The combined system is designed and permitted to handle a wide range of wet weather flows. During periods of intense rainfall, the combined sewer system is designed to discharge treated overflows through the CSO structures to the Bay (see Setting).

Although the total increase in sanitary sewage generated as a result of implementation of the Plan options could be accommodated within the existing system's operating capacity and permitted discharges, the incremental increase of sanitary sewage during wet weather would affect the overall system's wet weather operations. This increase in sanitary sewage could cumulatively contribute to an increase in average volume of CSO discharges to the Bay in the Plan area. An increase in the volume of CSO discharges could be a concern because the RWQCB has designated this portion of the Bay as an impaired water body under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, which indicates water quality standards are not expected to be met after implementation of technology-based effluent limitations, and because CSO discharges contain pollutants for which the Bay is impaired; however, the ongoing TMDL process (described in the Setting) is designed to improve water quality of impaired water bodies.

### **Changes in Stormwater Runoff**

Stormwater runoff in an urban location such as the Rincon Hill Plan area is a known source of pollution. As described in the Setting, the Plan area is served by the combined sewer system, so that stormwater runoff from these areas flows to the combined sewer system where it is captured and treated to varying degrees, depending on the characteristics of individual rainstorms.

Runoff from new development and redevelopment projects may contain many types of pollutants including polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons from vehicle emissions; heavy metals such as copper from brake pad wear and zinc from tire wear; dioxins as products of combustion; mercury resulting from atmospheric deposition. All of these materials, and others, may be deposited on paved surfaces and rooftops as fine airborne particles, thus yielding storm water runoff pollution that is unrelated to the particular activity or use associated with a given new or redevelopment project. In addition, individual development projects could contribute specific pollutants including car maintenance wastes, pesticides, household hazardous wastes, pet wastes, and trash which can be washed into the combined sewer system. These pollutants can all affect water quality.

However, the Plan options would include design guidelines and the "living streets" program, which would promote increased landscaping, street trees and open space. If these programs were to result in the replacement of paved areas or structures with landscaping, trees, or other pervious surfaces and/or other stormwater Best Management Practices, then there would be an incremental increase in infiltration of rainwater into the ground and an associated decrease in the volume of stormwater runoff flowing to the combined sewer system. Depending on how the design and street programs are implemented, this would

indirectly be a beneficial impact of the Project. However, the details of site design measures are not known at this time.

Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, a conservative approach will be taken which assumes that as a worst-case scenario, the volume of stormwater runoff draining to the combined sewer system would remain the same if any the Rincon Hill Plan options are implemented. No increase in stormwater runoff is anticipated, because the Plan area is virtually entirely covered with impervious surfaces (buildings, streets and sidewalks, and parking lots) at present; there would be no increase in impervious surface with implementation of the Plan.

### **CSO Discharges**

Under any of the Plan options, all discharges from the combined sewer system to the Bay, through either the outfalls or the CSO structures, would continue to operate in compliance with the City's existing NPDES permit. The current permit states that the City's combined sewer system is regulated under the federal CSO Control Policy, and the RWQCB has determined that the current design and operation of the wet weather facilities satisfy the CSO Control Policy requirements. Under this policy, the City must operate the combined sewer system to maximize treatment of wet weather flows and to minimize combined sewer overflows. Compliance is based on implementation of nine minimum controls specified in the CSO Control Policy and implementation of the long term control plan, which includes both construction of the system (already completed) and appropriate operations of the system. The permit acknowledges that some years have more intense rainstorms than others and that there may be times when there is more flow than anticipated in the system design criteria.

The City is currently implementing the nine minimum controls as required by the CSO Control Policy. Any development in the Plan area resulting from implementation of the Project would require coordination with the SFPUC to ensure that the City continues to remain in full compliance with all aspects of the controls. Specifically, the following control would apply to individual projects:

- Develop and implement pollution prevention programs that focus on contaminant reduction activities.

The goal of the SFPUC's Water Pollution Prevention Program is to prevent pollutants from entering the City's combined sewer system, and the program addresses pollutants from residential, commercial, industrial and nonpoint pollutant sources. Water pollution prevention strategies implemented in accordance with this program minimize pollutant loading into the combined sewer system, thereby decreasing the potential for violating discharge limits and also decreasing the City's reliance on treatment technologies as a means to reduce pollutant loads.

The pollutants of concern addressed by the Water Pollution Prevention Program include fats, oil, and grease; mercury; copper, organophosphorous pesticides; and dioxin. Each of these pollutants is listed either because it affects performance of the combined sewer system, is identified as a potential pollutant as a result of analyses conducted in support of the NPDES permit, is listed in the Basin Plan or the

California Toxics Rule (under which EPA in 2000 identified California-specific water quality criteria), or is listed as a pollutant causing water quality impairment of the San Francisco Bay as defined in Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. The Water Pollution Prevention Program includes plans to reduce or prevent these pollutants from entering the combined sewer system and to control nonpoint sources of pollution. These plans rely primarily on public education, outreach, and technical assistance methods to reduce pollutant loading into the combined sewer system at the source. Additional programs focus on collection of used motor oil, street cleaning, environmental education, promotion of “green business,” catch basin stenciling, and public outreach activities.

As individual projects in the Rincon Hill Plan area are developed, each project sponsor would be required to coordinate with SFPUC to ensure that these new developments would actively participate in and be in compliance with appropriate pollution prevention programs, which would in turn ensure compliance with the NPDES permit requirements and the federal CSO Control Policy.

### ***Net Impact to CSO Discharges***

Based on the above discussion, implementation of any of the Plan options would facilitate new development in the Rincon Hill Plan area, which would generate increased year-round sanitary sewage flows to the combined sewer system but would result in no increase in stormwater runoff. Because the combined sewer system is designed to overflow during intense storms and because the increase in sanitary sewage flows would occur year-round, development pursuant to the Draft Plan could indirectly result in cumulative, long-term contributions to an increase in average volume of CSO discharges in the Rincon Hill Plan area.

However, compliance with the following existing regulations and policies would protect water quality and beneficial uses of the Bay:

- All new development Project Sponsors would be required to coordinate with the SFPUC to ensure that new developments resulting from implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan would remain in full compliance with all aspects of the federal CSO Control Policy, including the nine minimum controls and appropriate pretreatment and pollution prevention programs. This includes compliance of all new developments with Article 4.1 of the San Francisco Public Works Code during both construction and operation. This would ensure consistency with existing water quality regulation protecting Bay water quality.
- All new development Project Sponsors would be required to comply with conservation of water use consistent with existing and future guidelines recommended by the SFPUC. This would reduce the volume of sanitary flow to the combined sewer system.

In addition, as described in the Setting, concurrent with the proposed schedule for implementation of the Rincon Hill Plan, the SFPUC has numerous ongoing planning efforts that address CSO discharges and associated water quality impacts as part of citywide plans and programs. These planning efforts address long-term objectives of compliance with existing and future regulatory requirements and overall protection of water quality, aquatic resources and beneficial uses of San Francisco Bay. Any activities associated with the Rincon Hill Plan that could affect wastewater and stormwater management must be

conducted within the context of the existing regulatory framework but also coordinated within the context of ongoing and future citywide planning efforts. Coordination of Rincon Hill Plan with these plans would provide additional protection of water quality and beneficial uses.

Based on compliance with existing and future regulations and coordination with ongoing planning efforts to provide long-term water quality protection of the Bay, water quality impacts associated with changes in combined sewer overflow discharges to the Bay would be considered less than significant.

---

## K. GROWTH INDUCEMENT

San Francisco consistently ranks as one of the most expensive housing markets in the United States. San Francisco is the central city in an attractive region known for its agreeable climate, open space and recreational opportunities, cultural amenities, strong and diverse economy, and prominent educational institutions. As a regional employment center, San Francisco attracts people who want to live close to where they work. These factors continue to support strong housing demand in the City. New housing to relieve the market pressure created by the strong demand is particularly difficult to provide in San Francisco because the amount of land available for residential use is limited, and because land and development costs are high.

In general, a project would be considered growth-inducing if its implementation would result in substantial population increases and/or new development in other nearby areas that might not occur if the project were not approved and implemented, particularly if the project would facilitate growth by removing a major obstacle to development in a particular area (such as by provision of major new public services to an area where those services are not currently available). As described elsewhere in this EIR, the Rincon Hill Plan would encourage the continued development of a high-density residential neighborhood in close proximity to the major employment center of downtown San Francisco. The Plan would encourage reuse of what has until very recently been a relatively underutilized neighborhood (except for through traffic traveling to and from the Bay Bridge) where basic urban infrastructure is provided and, as such, would be more appropriately characterized as infill development that would meet demand for housing in San Francisco and the Bay Area, rather than a growth-inducing phenomenon that would facilitate development in areas not currently ripe for growth. Depending on the needs of current and future residents, some neighborhood-specific services could be required to be added, including parks (which are proposed both in the Plan area and in the Transbay area to the north) and, potentially, a school (although the potential student generation figures presented in Section III.D, Population and Housing, p. 135, do not appear to support the need for a school). Such additional services, if determined to be required at a subsequent date, would augment existing city services.

Furthermore, to the extent that residents of the Plan area were to work in or near downtown San Francisco, residential expansion in the Plan area would result in substantially less impact on transportation systems and air quality than would development of a similar number of residential units in a more outlying part of the Bay Area where fewer services and less transit access is provided.

In summary, the project would not result in substantial inducements to growth, but instead would contribute incrementally to meeting existing and future housing demand in San Francisco.



## CHAPTER IV

---

### MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

In the course of project planning and design, measures have been identified that would reduce or eliminate potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Some of these measures would be adopted by the project sponsor or the project architect and contractor(s) and thus are proposed; some may require consideration. Implementation of some may be the responsibility of other agencies. Measures that would be taken under consideration or those that may be rejected by a project sponsor may be required by the Planning Commission as conditions of project approval, as individual projects are approved under the proposed Rincon Hill Plan.

There are several items required by law that would serve to mitigate potential significant impacts; they are summarized here for informational purposes. These measures include: no use of mirrored glass on the building to reduce glare, as per City Planning Commission Resolution 9212; limitation of construction-related noise levels, pursuant to the San Francisco Noise Ordinance (Article 29 of the San Francisco Police Code, 1972); compliance with Chapter 36 of the San Francisco Building Code, Work Practices for Exterior Lead-Based Paint; and observance of State and federal OSHA safety requirements related to handling and disposal of other hazardous materials, such as asbestos.

Measures that are not required by legislation but would serve to mitigate significant environmental impacts appear below. Mitigation measures preceded by an asterisk (\*) are from the Initial Study (see Appendix A). All of the following measures will be required of all projects proposed for implementation with future development under City of San Francisco jurisdiction.

#### CONSTRUCTION NOISE

- \* • For projects requiring pile driving, individual project sponsors would ensure that piles be pre-drilled wherever feasible to reduce construction-related noise and vibration. No impact pile drivers should be used unless absolutely necessary. To reduce noise and vibration impacts, sonic or vibratory sheetpile drivers, rather than impact drivers, shall be used wherever sheetpiles are needed.

Construction noise is regulated by the San Francisco Noise Ordinance, Article 29 of the City Police Code. The ordinance requires that noise levels from individual pieces of construction equipment, other than impact tools, not exceed 80 dBA at a distance of 100 feet from the source. Impact tools (jackhammers and impact wrenches) must have both intake and exhaust muffled to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works. Section 2908 of the Ordinance prohibits construction work between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. if noise would exceed the ambient noise level by five dBA at the project property line, unless a special permit is authorized by the Director of Public Works.

## C. TRANSPORTATION, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

- C.1a At the Beale/Folsom intersection, LOS E operating conditions would primarily be due to the high volume of southbound left turns (due to the closure of Beale Street) and high future volumes on eastbound Folsom Street. To improve operating conditions in the 2020 with project and 2020 cumulative scenarios at the intersection of Beale and Folsom Streets to an acceptable level of service, the City could provide four eastbound lanes on Folsom Street: three through lanes and a right-turn pocket (the Plan-proposed configuration for Folsom Street would provide two through lanes and a through-right lane).
- C.1b At the Main/Folsom intersection, LOS F operating conditions would primarily be due to the high eastbound volume on Folsom Street (due to vehicles rerouted from Beale Street to Main Street) and to northbound traffic volumes. To improve operating conditions in the 2020 with project and 2020 cumulative scenarios at the intersection of Main and Folsom Streets to an acceptable level of service, the City could widen the northbound approach for a distance of about 75 feet to accommodate a left-turn pocket, and could create additional capacity on eastbound Folsom Street by providing four eastbound lanes: two through lanes, a left-turn pocket, and a through-right lane (the Plan-proposed configuration for Folsom Street would provide three eastbound lanes).

Because mitigation measures to ensure an acceptable LOS at Beale/Folsom and Main/Folsom would necessitate maintaining four eastbound lanes on Folsom Street the intersection approaches, the above two measures, if adopted, would preclude the Draft Plan's proposed extension of the existing westbound lane on Folsom Street from Main Street westward to Fremont Street. Further, the necessity to obtain adequate right-of-way on eastbound Folsom Street would require implementation of this measure when initial improvements are made to Folsom Street to avoid more costly future acquisition and construction costs. Alternatively, the impact would be significant and unmitigable if four eastbound lanes were not maintained on Folsom Street. Installation of a left-turn pocket on northbound Main Street could be accomplished within the existing right-of-way and could be implemented as intersection operating conditions warrant, subject to an ongoing monitoring program; however, this measure would not, itself, mitigate conditions at the Main/Folsom intersection to a less-than-significant level.

- C.1c At the Spear/Folsom intersection, LOS F operating conditions would primarily be due to the high eastbound volume on Folsom Street. To improve operating conditions in the 2020 with project and 2020 cumulative scenarios at the intersection of Spear and Folsom Streets to an acceptable level of service, the City could prohibit westbound left turns from Folsom onto Spear, or could widen the eastbound approach on Folsom Street to four lanes: three through lanes and a right-turn lane.

Prohibition of left turns would require no physical change and, as such, could be implemented as intersection operating conditions warrant, subject to an ongoing monitoring program. Should the decision be made to provide four eastbound lanes on Folsom Street, this improvement, like the Folsom Street changes identified in the two preceding measures, would require implementation of this measure when initial improvements are made to Folsom Street to avoid more costly future acquisition and construction costs. Alternatively, the impact would be significant and unmitigable if four eastbound lanes were not maintained on Folsom Street.

## IMPROVEMENT MEASURE IDENTIFIED IN THIS EIR

### **CONSTRUCTION**

- C.2 Construction contractor(s) for the individual development projects would need meet with the Traffic Engineering Division of the Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT), the Fire Department, Muni, the Planning Department and other City agencies to determine feasible measures to reduce traffic congestion, including any potential transit disruption and pedestrian circulation impacts during construction of the project. In addition, the temporary parking demand by construction workers would need to be met on-site or within other off-site parking facilities, and the construction contractor(s) would need to determine the location of an off-site parking facility for construction workers during the construction period.

## **E. AIR QUALITY**

### CONSTRUCTION-RELATED AIR QUALITY

- E.1 The City shall condition approval of individual development proposals under the proposed project upon implementation of an appropriate dust abatement program, patterned after the BAAQMD approach described below.

The BAAQMD approach to dust abatement, as put forth in the BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines, calls for “basic” control measures that should be implemented at all construction sites, “enhanced” control measures that should be implemented at construction sites greater than four acres in area, and “optional” control measures that should be implemented on a case-by-case basis at construction sites that are large in area, located near sensitive receptors or which, for any other reason, may warrant additional emissions reductions.

Elements of the “basic” dust control program for project components that disturb less than four acres shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Water all active construction areas at least twice daily. Watering should be sufficient to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Increased watering frequency may be necessary whenever wind speeds exceed 15 miles per hour. Reclaimed water should be used whenever possible.
- Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard (i.e., the minimum required space between the top of the load and the top of the trailer).
- Pave, apply water (reclaimed if possible) three times daily, or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at construction sites.
- Sweep streets (with water sweepers using reclaimed water if possible) at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads.

Elements of the “enhanced” dust abatement program for project components that disturb four or more acres are unlikely to be required, in that no sites anticipated for development in the Plan area are as large as four acres. Should a site this size be proposed for development, dust control shall include all of the “basic” measures in addition to the following measures to be implemented by the construction contractor(s):

- Hydroseed or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for one month or more).
- Enclose, cover, water twice daily or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers to exposed stockpiles (dirt, sand, etc.).
- Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.
- Limit the amount of the disturbed area at any one time, where possible.
- Pave all roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. as soon as possible. In addition, building pads should be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.
- Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.
- Designate a person or persons to monitor the dust control program and to order increased watering, as necessary, to prevent transport of dust offsite. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress. The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the BAAQMD prior to the start of construction.

The “optional” dust-control measures supplement the “basic” and “enhanced” programs to address site-specific issues. They include:

- Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto streets, or wash off trucks and equipment leaving the site.
- Install windbreaks, or plant tree/vegetative wind breaks at windward side(s) of construction areas.
- Suspend excavation and grading activity when winds (instantaneous gusts) exceed 25 mph.

Ordinance 175-91, passed by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, project sponsors would require that construction contractors obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose.

Implementation of the above measure would reduce construction impacts to a less-than-significant level.

## OPERATIONAL AIR QUALITY

E.2 Given the potential for the proposed Rincon Hill Plan to contribute to cumulative air quality impacts, the City could implement, or require project sponsors to implement, the following measures to reduce any significant impacts to a less than significant level. Some of these measures that could be a part of development projects within the project’s jurisdiction include:

1. Ridesharing: Implement carpool/vanpool program (e.g., carpool ride matching for employees, assistance with vanpool formation, provision of vanpool vehicles, etc.).
2. Transit:
  - (i) Construct transit facilities such as bus turnouts/bus bulbs, benches, shelters, etc.; and

- (ii) Design and locate buildings to facilitate transit access (e.g., locate building entrances near transit stops, eliminate building setbacks, etc.).
- 3. Services:
  - (i) Provide on-site shops and services for employees, such as cafeteria, bank/ATM, dry cleaners, convenience market, etc.; and
  - (ii) Provide on-site child care, or contribute to off-site child care within walking distance.
- 4. Shuttles:
  - (i) Establish mid-day shuttle service from work site to food service establishments/commercial areas; and
  - (ii) Provide shuttle service to transit stations/multimodal centers.
- 5. Parking:
  - (i) Provide preferential parking (e.g., near building entrance, sheltered area, etc.) for carpool and vanpool vehicles;
  - (ii) Implement parking fees for single occupancy vehicle commuters; and
  - (iii) Implement parking cash-out program for employees (i.e., non-driving employees receive transportation allowance equivalent to value of subsidized parking).
- 6. Bicycle/Pedestrian:
  - (i) Provide secure, weather-protected bicycle parking for employees;
  - (ii) Provide safe, direct access for bicyclists to adjacent bicycle routes;
  - (iii) Provide showers and lockers for employees bicycling or walking to work;
  - (iv) Provide secure short-term bicycle parking for retail customers or non-commute trips; and
  - (v) Provide direct, safe, attractive pedestrian access from project area to transit stops and adjacent development.
- 7. Other Measures:
  - (i) Implement compressed workweek schedule (e.g., 4 days/40 hours, 9 days/80 hours); and
  - (ii) Implement home-based telecommuting program.

As noted in Chapter III, Plan-generated operational air quality impacts would be less than significant, and the Plan would not contribute considerably to cumulative air quality impacts. However, implementation of the above measures would reduce the Plan's direct and cumulative impacts on air quality. The above measures also would act to reduce Plan-generated traffic through reduction of vehicle trips generated in the Plan area. However, the reduction in Plan area traffic would not be expected to be sufficient to reduce traffic impacts to a less-than-significant level.

## **G. WIND**

- G.1 The City shall incorporate into the Planning Code for the Rincon Hill Downtown Residential Mixed-Use (DTR) District controls on wind speeds that are, at a minimum, functionally equivalent to those controls contained in Planning Code Sections 148 and 249.1(a)(3).

Implementation of the above controls into the Planning Code would ensure that development within the proposed Rincon Hill DTR District would not result in a significant impact with respect to ground-level winds.

## **H. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

- H.1 For any development project in a site not covered by the Maher Ordinance (Article 20 of the Public Works Code and Article 22 of the Health Code), the project sponsor shall perform and submit to the City a Phase I environmental site assessment. If warranted by the Phase I study, and in consultation with the Department of Public Health (DPH), Environmental Health Section, the project sponsor shall prepare a Phase II environmental assessment that includes sampling of, as determined necessary by DPH, soil and/or groundwater. If soil and/or groundwater contamination is discovered in the Phase II assessment, the project sponsor shall, as required by DPH, enter into a voluntary cleanup agreement with DPH, complete and implement a Site Mitigation Plan that is approved by DPH, prepare and implement a Site Health and Safety Plan, and, if required, record a deed restriction limiting the site to future use compatible with remaining hazards, if any.
- H.2 For any development project, if dewatering is necessary, the project sponsor shall follow the recommendations of the site assessment/remediation consultant, in consultation with the Bureau of Environmental Regulation (BERM) of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, regarding treatment, if any, of pumped groundwater prior to discharge to the combined sewer system. Any groundwater encountered during construction of the proposed project would be subject to requirements of the City's Industrial Waste Ordinance (Ordinance Number 199 77), requiring that groundwater meet specified water quality standards before it may be discharged into the sewer system. The BERM must be notified of projects necessitating dewatering. That office may require water analysis before discharge.

If dewatering is necessary, groundwater pumped from the development site shall be retained in a holding tank to allow suspended particles to settle, if this is determined necessary by the BERM to reduce the amount of sediment entering the combined sewer system. The project sponsor shall require the general contractor to install and maintain sediment traps if determined necessary by the BERM.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would ensure that any potential effects due to contaminated soil and/or groundwater, if present, would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

## **I. HISTORICAL RESOURCES**

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

- I.1 All but approximately one-fifth of the Plan area has been the focus of some type of archaeological study. However, these studies vary greatly in their inclusion, adequacy, and specificity of

discussion of the potential presence, identity, and significance of archaeological resources, prior soils disturbance, and evaluation of project effects. For this reason, these studies vary in their adequacy to serve as evaluations of potential effects on archaeological resources under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(a)(1)(3) and (c)(1)(2)). For the purposes of assessing potential effects to archaeological resources and the need for and appropriate type of mitigation in the Plan area, the principal value of the existing archaeological reports is the identification of potential archaeological resources and of research themes and questions, and of prior disturbance. The archaeological documentation record that has been prepared for the majority of the Plan area has shown that: prehistoric and historical archaeological resources are potentially present within the Plan area; in many cases the expected archaeological resources could contribute significant scientific/historical information that early, deeply buried prehistoric resources may be present; the soils disturbing activities in the Plan area to date may not, in general, have significantly impaired the integrity of archaeological resources expected to be present; and even recent large-scale project have resulted in less soils disturbance than anticipated in order to avoid remediation of contaminated soils.

Thus, based on prior archaeological documentation and the analysis of the Plan area, it can be concluded that significant archaeological resources that have not been substantially affected by prior disturbance may be present within the Plan area and that development pursuant to the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and accompanying rezoning has a greater potential to result in adverse effects to these resources than might occur under the existing zoning. Implementation of the following mitigation measures can reduce this potential adverse effect to a less-than-significant level. Since there is no physical project proposed other than surface-level streetscape and open space improvements, the evaluation of project-specific impacts can only occur at the time a development project is proposed, and in accord with these mitigation measures.

The Plan area is subdivided into three archaeological mitigation zones (see Figure 61, p. 193): based on the potential for significant archaeological resources to be present within the site and /or the adequacy of previous archaeological documentation to assess this potential. For any project involving soils disturbing activities (for example, excavation, grading, foundation work, piles, utilities installation, remediation of contaminated soils) responsibility for the mitigation of potential effects to archaeological resources shall be required based on the location of the project site.

### ***PROJECTS LOCATED IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION ZONE 1 (AMZ-1)***

I.1a AMZ-1 includes those properties within the Plan area for which a final archaeological research design and treatment plan (ARD/TP) is on file in the Northwest Information Center and the Planning Department. Any soils-disturbing project proposed within the AMZ-1 shall be required to submit to the Environmental Review Officer (ERO) for review and approval an addendum to the respective ARD/TP prepared by a qualified archaeological consultant with expertise in California prehistoric and urban historical archaeology. The addendum to the ARD/TP shall evaluate the potential effects of the project on significant archaeological resources with respect to the site- and project-specific information absent in the ARD/TP. The addendum report to the ARD/TP should have the following content:

- 8) Summary: Description of subsurface effect of the proposed project and of previous soils-disturbing activities;
- 9) Historical Development: If demographic data for the project site is absent in the discussion in the ARD/TP, the addendum shall include new demographic data regarding former site occupants;



- 10) Identification of potential archaeological resources: Discussion of any identified potential prehistoric or historical archaeological resources;
- 11) Integrity and Significance: Eligibility of identified expected resources for listing to the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR); Identification of applicable Research Themes/Questions (in the ARD/TP) that would be addressed by the expected archaeological resources that are identified;
- 12) Impacts of Proposed Project;
- 13) Potential Soils Hazards: Update discussion for proposed project;
- 14) Archaeological Testing Plan (if archaeological testing is determined warranted): the Archaeological Testing Plan (ATP) shall include:
  - A) Proposed archaeological testing strategies and their justification
  - B) Expected archaeological resources
  - C) For all historic archaeological resources
    - a) Historic address or other location identification
    - b) Archaeological property type
  - D) For all archaeological resources
    - a) Estimate depth below the surface
    - b) Expected integrity
    - c) Preliminary assessment of eligibility to the CRHR
  - E) ATP Map
    - a) Location of expected archaeological resources
    - b) Location of expected project subgrade impacts
    - c) Areas of prior soils disturbance
    - d) Archaeological testing locations by type of testing
    - e) Base map: 1886/7 Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map

***PROJECTS LOCATED IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION ZONE 2 (AMZ-2)***

- I.1b AMZ-2 is those properties within the Plan area for which no archaeological assessment report has been prepared or for which the archaeological documentation is incomplete or inadequate to serve as an evaluation of potential effects on archaeological resources under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5(a)(1)(3) and (c)(1)(2)). In the latter case, the existing archaeological documentation may lack site-specific identification of potential archaeological resources, a historical context or site history discussion, an assessment of prior soils disturbance, an evaluation of eligibility to the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) of potential archaeological resources, or specific information about site occupants.

For projects proposed in AMZ-2, a Preliminary Archaeological Sensitivity Study must be prepared by an archaeological consultant with expertise in California prehistoric and urban historical archaeology. The Sensitivity Study should contain the following:

- 1) Determine the historical uses of the project site based on any previous archaeological documentation and Sanborn maps;
- 2) Determine types of archaeological resources/properties that may have been located within the project site and whether the archaeological resources/property types would potentially be eligible for listing in the CRHR;

- 3) Determine if 19th or 20th century soils-disturbing activities may adversely affected the identified potential archaeological resources;
- 4) Assess potential project effects in relation to the depth of any identified potential archaeological resource;
- 5) Conclusion: assessment of whether any CRHP-eligible archaeological resources could be adversely affected by the proposed project and recommendation as to appropriate further action.

Based on the Sensitivity Study, the Environmental Review Officer (ERO) shall determine if an Archaeological Research Design/Treatment Plan (ARD/TP) shall be required to more definitively identify the potential for CRHP-eligible archaeological resources to be present within the project site and determine the appropriate action necessary to reduce the potential effect of the project on archaeological resources to a less than significant level. The scope of the ARD/TP shall be determined in consultation with the ERO and consistent with the standards for archaeological documentation established by the Office of Historic Preservation for purposes of compliance with CEQA, in Preservation Planning Bulletin No. 5).

### ***PROJECTS LOCATED IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION ZONE 3 (AMZ-3)***

- I.1c AMZ-3 is those sites within the Plan area in which it is believed there are no significant archaeological resources, or that those resources have been significantly disturbed, or that those resources have been investigated and those resources with significant research value removed and curated as the result of an archaeological data recovery program. Although properties within the AMZ-3 have a low potential to contain significant archaeological resources, implementation of the following mitigation measure shall ensure that in the event of an inadvertent and unanticipated encounter of an archaeological resource, the project would have a less-than-significant-effect on archaeological resources.

The following mitigation measure is required to avoid any potential adverse effect from the proposed project on accidentally discovered buried or submerged historical resources as defined in *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5(a)(c). The project sponsor shall distribute the Planning Department archaeological resource "ALERT" sheet to the project prime contractor; to any project subcontractor (including demolition, excavation, grading, foundation, pile driving, etc. firms); or utilities firm involved in soils disturbing activities within the project site. Prior to any soils disturbing activities being undertaken each contractor is responsible for ensuring that the "ALERT" sheet is circulated to all field personnel including, machine operators, field crew, pile drivers, supervisory personnel, etc. The project sponsor shall provide the Environmental Review Officer (ERO) with a signed affidavit from the responsible parties (prime contractor, subcontractor(s), and utilities firm) to the ERO confirming that all field personnel have received copies of the Alert Sheet.

Should any indication of an archaeological resource be encountered during any soils disturbing activity of the project, the project Head Foreman and/or project sponsor shall immediately notify the ERO and shall immediately suspend any soils disturbing activities in the vicinity of the discovery until the ERO has determined what additional measures should be undertaken.

If the ERO determines that an archaeological resource may be present within the project site, the project sponsor shall retain the services of a qualified archaeological consultant. The archaeological consultant shall advise the ERO as to whether the discovery is an archaeological resource, retains sufficient integrity, and is of potential scientific/historical/cultural significance. If an archaeological resource is present, the archaeological consultant shall identify and evaluate the

archaeological resource. The archaeological consultant shall make a recommendation as to what action, if any, is warranted. Based on this information, the ERO may require, if warranted, specific additional measures to be implemented by the project sponsor.

Measures might include: preservation in situ of the archaeological resource; an archaeological monitoring program, or an archaeological testing program. If an archaeological monitoring program or archaeological testing program is required, it shall be consistent with the Major Environmental Analysis (MEA) division guidelines for such programs. The ERO may also require that the project sponsor immediately implement a site security program if the archaeological resource is at risk from vandalism, looting, or other damaging actions.

The project archaeological consultant shall submit a Final Archaeological Resources Report (FARR) to the ERO that evaluates the historical significance of any discovered archaeological resource and describing the archaeological and historical research methods employed in the archaeological monitoring/data recovery program(s) undertaken. Information that may put at risk any archaeological resource shall be provided in a separate removable insert within the final report.

Copies of the Draft FARR shall be sent to the ERO for review and approval. Once approved by the ERO, copies of the FARR shall be distributed as follows: California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center (NWIC) shall receive one (1) copy and the ERO shall receive a copy of the transmittal of the FARR to the NWIC. The Major Environmental Analysis division of the Planning Department shall receive three copies of the FARR along with copies of any formal site recordation forms (CA DPR 523 series) and/or documentation for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places/California Register of Historical Resources. In instances of high public interest or interpretive value, the ERO may require a different final report content, format, and distribution than that presented above.

Implementation of the above measure would eliminate potentially significant effects on subsurface cultural resources, since resources would be identified and documented in accordance with accepted laws, regulations, and professional standards.

## HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

- I.2a To partially offset the loss of the Union Oil Company Building, the project sponsor of the 425 First Street project shall ensure that a complete survey, to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), is undertaken prior to demolition. This survey should include a written description and history, large-format photographic recordation and detailed HABS level drawings to record the building in its present condition.
- I.2b To partially offset the potential loss of the Edwin W. Tucker & Co. Building (347 Fremont Street), the project sponsor of the 333 Fremont Street project shall ensure that a complete survey, to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), is undertaken prior to demolition, if any. This survey should include a written description and history, large-format photographic recordation and detailed HABS level drawings to record the building in its present condition.
- I.2c To partially offset the potential loss of the 375 Fremont Street Building, the project sponsor of the 375 Fremont Street project shall ensure that a complete survey, to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), is undertaken prior to demolition, if any. This survey should include a written description and history, large-format photographic recordation and detailed HABS level drawings to record the building in its present condition.

- I.2d To partially offset the loss of any other buildings identified during project-specific review as historical resources under CEQA, the project sponsor of the project under review shall, at a minimum, ensure that a complete survey, to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), is undertaken prior to demolition, if any. This survey should include a written description and history, large-format photographic recordation and detailed HABS level drawings to record the building in its present condition.

According to Section 15126.4(b)(2) of the Public Resource Code (CEQA), documentation of a historical resource, by way of historic narrative, photographs and /or architectural drawings (often HABS-Level), as mitigation for the effects of demolition of the resource will typically not mitigate the effects to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the loss of the Union Oil Company Building, and of 347 Fremont Street and 375 Fremont Street, should they be demolished, would be a significant, unavoidable impact even after implementation of the above mitigation measures.

- **IMPROVEMENT MEASURE IDENTIFIED IN THIS EIR**

- ***AREA SURVEY***

- I.3 The Planning Department will undertake an evaluation of the Rincon Hill Plan area for cultural/historical resources. The City-managed survey/evaluation would be funded by contributions from developers of projects within the Plan area. The study would consist of 1) research (beginning with what has been developed to date for the area) on the patterns of history and significance of the area in various contexts (i.e., early San Francisco settlement, labor, Filipino and other ethnic communities, etc.), resulting in a comprehensive context statement for the Plan area, including map locations; 2) architectural evaluation of the area's built environment in relation to the context statement, resulting in individual property evaluations and identification of any clusters, sub-areas, or themes to which the property belongs; and 3) determination of enough resources with sufficient integrity remain to support formation of a historic district.
- This measure would run in parallel with decision-making on the Plan and projects in the Plan area. This improvement measure would not reduce impacts of the Plan to a less-than-significant level.

# CHAPTER V

---

## SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED IF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS ARE IMPLEMENTED

In accordance with Section 21067 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and with Sections 15040, 15081 and 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the purpose of this chapter is to identify impacts that could not be eliminated or reduced to an insignificant level by mitigation measures included as part of each project, or by other mitigation measures that could be implemented, as described in Chapter IV, Mitigation Measures, pp. 222-232.

This chapter is subject to final determination by the Planning Commission as part of its certification process for the EIR. The Final EIR will be revised, if necessary, to reflect the findings of the Commission.

With the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in Chapter IV, Mitigation Measures, pp. 222-232, most potential significant impacts associated with the proposed project would be reduced to a less-than-significant level, with the following exceptions:

### TRANSPORTATION

- The addition of traffic from the proposed Rincon Hill Plan and the proposed changes in street configurations under the Plan, including the introduction of “living streets” treatments described in Chapter II, Project Description, which would convert Main, Beale, and Spear Streets from one-way streets to two-way operation, as well as narrowing certain streets, would result in a **significant** impact at six of the study intersections (Fremont/Harrison, which would degrade from LOS E to LOS F; and First/Market, Embarcadero/Folsom, Beale/Folsom, Main/Folsom, and Spear/Folsom, which would degrade from LOS D or better to LOS E or F). At the last three intersections, the impact would be significant and unavoidable if four eastbound lanes were not maintained on Folsom Street.

Plan-generated traffic would contribute to a significant cumulative impact related to intersection LOS degradation at two intersections in the Plan area and vicinity.

### HISTORICAL RESOURCES

- The proposed Rincon Hill Plan would, if adopted as proposed, encourage and facilitate the loss of the Union Oil Company Building and, potentially, 347 Fremont Street (the Edwin W. Tucker & Co. Building), and 375 Fremont Street. The loss of these buildings would be an indirect significant effect of the proposed plan. The proposed Plan might contribute to the loss of other historic architectural resources, particularly in the case of the Klockars Blacksmith Shop. This impact would be considered a potentially significant cumulative impact.

# CHAPTER VI

---

## ALTERNATIVES

This chapter identifies alternatives to the three options for the proposed Rincon Hill Plan, discusses environmental impacts associated with each alternative, and, where an alternative has been considered by the project sponsor in development of the project, gives the reasons the alternative was rejected in favor of the project. Project decision-makers could adopt any of the following alternatives, if feasible, instead of approving one of the three options to the proposed Plan that are described in Chapter II, Project Description, and analyzed in Chapter III, Environmental Setting and Impacts.

### **A. NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

#### DESCRIPTION

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A) states that, generally, where a project being analyzed is the revision of an existing land use or regulatory plan—such as the Rincon Hill Area Plan and Planning Code Section 249.1 and the Zoning Maps that implement the area plan—the No Project Alternative should be considered to be continuation of the existing plan, policy or operation into the future. “Typically this is a situation where other projects initiated under the existing plan will continue while the new plan is developed. Thus, the projected impacts of the proposed plan or alternative plans would be compared to the impacts that would occur under the existing plan.” Consistent with this guidance, the No Project Alternative considered in this EIR is the maintenance of the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan and the existing zoning and height and bulk controls.

One of the options analyzed in the body of this EIR include elements of the No Project Alternative as defined by the continuation of existing planning controls. The Existing Controls (150-foot) Tower Separation Option would, in fact, maintain the 150-foot separation between high-rise towers that is contained in both the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan and in Planning Code Section 270(e)(4), which implements the bulk limits for the area plan’s R Bulk District. However, whereas under existing conditions exceptions to the separation of towers requirements have been granted in accordance with Planning Code Section 271, under the Existing Controls (150-foot) Tower Separation Option, no exceptions to the tower separation provisions would be permitted. Like the No Project Alternative, too, the Existing Controls Option would not increase height limits beyond those existing today. Therefore, the Existing Controls Option, the impacts of which are identified in the body of the EIR text, could be considered to be the No Project Alternative, assuming that approvals were granted in accordance with the intent of the controls as written, without exceptions.

On the other hand, it is also possible that the No Project Alternative could trend more towards the Extended Pipeline Option, which is described under Plan Options Considered and Withdrawn on p. 35. As noted in the description of the Extended Pipeline Option:

“This option was intended to illustrate the maximum potential development that could occur should the Preferred heights (see Figure 5, p. 11) be adopted but limitations on tower separation not be enforced. This option *essentially could be construed as being a continuation of existing practices in the Plan area* but with greater height limits because, while the current controls ostensibly require a 150-foot tower separation, projects—such as the two projects permitted on Folsom Street in February 2004—have been approved with substantially less distance between towers using existing exceptions in the Planning Code, which are based on criteria enumerated in Section 271 of the Code.” (*italics added*)

Because tower separation exceptions have been granted and rezoning to increase height limits has been approved since the adoption of the Rincon Hill Area Plan and corresponding zoning and height and bulk controls, it is not unreasonable to assume that the No Project Alternative could take on at least some characteristics of the Extended Pipeline Option.

## IMPACTS

Impacts of the No Project Alternative are likely to fall somewhere between those of the Existing Controls (150-foot) Tower Separation Option and the Extended Pipeline Option. As noted, the Existing Controls Option is analyzed throughout the body of the EIR text. Physical effects of the Extended Pipeline Option are presented in Section III.B, Visual Quality, and Section III.F, Shadow, where effects of the Extended Pipeline Option are presented alongside those of the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option. (See, for example, Figures 26–50, pp. 92–116, and Figures 52–60, pp. 163–171.) Regarding wind, as noted in Section III.G, “In general, for test points in the western portion of the Plan area, where new development under the Plan would be concentrated, the test results were very similar for the scenarios evaluated. To the extent that there were differences in the results, the test scenarios with more towers generally performed better than scenarios with fewer towers, in terms of exceedances of the 36-mph hazard criterion.” This would be anticipated to hold true for the Extended Pipeline Option as well; that is, little change in ground-level winds would be anticipated. Furthermore, as with other alternatives, project-specific wind testing would ensure that no significant impacts would occur.

Effects related to the intensity of development within the Plan area would be somewhat greater under the Extended Pipeline Option concept for the No Project Alternative than they would for the three Plan options analyzed elsewhere in this EIR. Total population within the Plan area would increase to approximately 8,800, compared to a maximum of about 8,200 under the three Plan options analyzed in the EIR, with an increase over existing population of about 7,300 under this option, compared to a maximum of about 6,700 under the three Plan options analyzed in the EIR. Of the 7,300 increase, about 4,500 would be due to development that could be newly approved, compared to about 3,900 under the three Plan options analyzed in the EIR. The relatively small difference (9 percent of the growth in population compared to existing conditions) would incrementally increase p.m. peak-hour trip generation



and vehicle delay at some intersections, but would be unlikely to result in any new or substantially more severe impacts compared to those analyzed in the EIR. Likewise, Plan-generated air quality impacts would increase only marginally, and the difference would not result in new significant effects.

Impacts related to site-specific conditions, such as hazardous materials and archaeology, could be marginally more substantial under the Extended Pipeline Option because more towers likely would translate into more excavation. However, the same mitigation measures as are applicable to the Plan options would reduce these effects to a less-than-significant level.

This alternative, like the three Plan options, would result in a significant unavoidable impact on historical resources resulting from the demolition of the Union Oil (now Bank of America) Clock Tower at 425 First Street and, potentially, the demolition of 347 Fremont Street and 375 Fremont Street.

As with the Plan options analyzed in this EIR, the Extended Pipeline Option (as No Project Alternative) would encourage the continued development of Rincon Hill as a primarily residential neighborhood, consistent with the trend since the adoption of the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan in 1985, and particularly with development over the last few years, while updating the existing Plan's implementation to ensure adequate separation between towers and provide neighborhood services and amenities. The primary difference between the Extended Pipeline Option and the three options analyzed in this EIR would be in terms of visual quality, urban design, and shadow, with the Extended Pipeline Option resulting in the greatest concentration of new residential towers.

## **B. PRESERVATION ALTERNATIVE**

### **DESCRIPTION**

This Alternative would preserve and reuse the three buildings identified as historical resources under CEQA—the Union Oil (Bank of America) Clock Tower and Building, the Edwin W. Tucker & Co. Building (347 Fremont Street), and the 375 Fremont Street building. Otherwise, this alternative would be the same as the Preferred Plan Option analyzed in this EIR.

- The retention of the Union Oil office building and Clock Tower would result in that site (part of the proposed 425 First Street project site) being unavailable for residential construction. A single residential tower, rather than the two towers proposed by the applicant for that project and assumed in the Preferred Option and the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option, would be constructed at the location of the existing surface parking lot adjacent to the Union Oil Company building (the other part of the proposed 425 First Street project site). As a result, this alternative would include three newly permitted residential towers—one on Harrison Street at Fremont Street, at the northeast corner of the 425 First Street project site; one at 45 Lansing Street; and one near the northwest corner of Harrison and Fremont Streets. With the elimination of one of the two towers at the 425 First Street site, this alternative would include the three newly permitted towers, the five already approved towers, and the two towers just completed at 333 First Street, for a total of ten towers in all, the same as with the Existing Controls (150-foot Tower Separation) Option analyzed in the EIR. The number of housing units would be less than with the Preferred Option but greater than with the Existing Controls Option, however, because the Preservation Alternative would

include the proposed height increases of the Preferred Alternative. Reuse of the other two buildings under this alternative, at 347 and 375 Fremont Street, would result in a reduction in the number of housing units on those sites, as neither of these buildings is as tall as the 85-foot buildings assumed on those sites under the Preferred and Existing Controls (150-foot Tower Separation) Options (or the tower proposed on the 375 Fremont Street site in the 82.5-foot Tower Separation Option), although some of this housing might be relocated to other tower sites within the Plan area. Thus, it is assumed that the number of new housing units would be approximately midway between the 1,630 of the Existing Controls Option and the 2,200 of the Preferred Option.

## IMPACTS

Because the Preservation Alternative would result in an increase in housing units approximately midway between the increase with the Existing Controls Option and the increase with the Preferred Option, resulting impacts related to the intensity of development, including traffic, population, and air quality, would be with the range of those impacts analyzed in the EIR. Effects on visual quality and shading impacts would be similar to those of the Preferred Alternative, as buildings constructed would be of the same heights, with the one difference being that only a single tower would be constructed at the 425 First Street site. In particular, this would reduce shading on the new park proposed alongside the Fremont Street off-ramp, adjacent to this site.

Impacts related to site-specific conditions, such as hazardous materials and archaeology, would be essentially the same as those of the Preferred Option, as the one less tower would make only a minimal difference in the amount of excavation; the same mitigation measures as are applicable to the Plan options would reduce these effects to a less-than-significant level.

As with the Plan options analyzed in this EIR, the Preservation Alternative would encourage the continued development of Rincon Hill as a primarily residential neighborhood, consistent with the trend since the adoption of the existing Rincon Hill Area Plan in 1985, and particularly with development over the last few years, while updating the existing Plan's implementation to ensure adequate separation between towers and provide neighborhood services and amenities.

Because it would eliminate the Draft Plan's significant impacts on historical resources, this Alternative would be considered the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

# CHAPTER VII

## DRAFT EIR DISTRIBUTION LIST

---

### A. DEIR DISTRIBUTION LIST

#### **STATE AGENCIES**

Office of Intergovernmental Mgmt.  
State Clearinghouse  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Northwest Information Center  
Calif. Hist. Resources Info. System  
Sonoma State University  
1303 Maurice Avenue  
Rohnert Park, CA 94928

Calif. Dept. of Transportation  
Ofc. of Transportation Planning  
Attn: Nandini N. Shridhar  
P.O. Box 23660  
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Barbara J. Cook  
Dep't. of Toxic Substances Control  
700 Heinz Avenue, Suite 200  
Berkeley, CA 94710-2721

Debbie Pilas-Treadway  
Native American Heritage Comm.  
915 Capitol Mall, Room 364  
Sacramento CA 95814

#### **REGIONAL AGENCIES**

Assn. of Bay Area Governments  
Attn: Suzan Ryder  
P.O. Box 2050  
Oakland, CA 94604-2050

Assn. of Bay Area Governments  
Attn: Jean Pedersen  
101 8th Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

Bay Area Air Quality Mgmt. Dist.  
Attn: Joseph Steinberger  
939 Ellis Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

#### **CITY AGENCIES**

San Francisco Planning Comm.  
Attn.: Linda Avery, Secretary  
1660 Mission Street, Suite 500  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
Shelley Bradford Bell, President  
Sue Lee, Vice President  
Michael J. Antonini  
Kevin Hughes  
William L. Lee  
Christina Olague

S.F. Landmarks Pres. Advisory Bd.  
Attn.: Andrea Green, Secretary  
1660 Mission Street, Suite 500  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
Tim Kelley, President  
Elizabeth Skrondal, V. President  
Robert Cherny  
Ina Dearman  
Paul Finwall  
Jeremy Kotas  
Frank W. Lee  
M. Bridget Maley  
Suheil Shatara

Maria Ayerdi, Executive Director  
Transbay JPA  
201 Mission St., Rm. 1960  
San Francisco CA 94105

Mayor's Ofc. of Housing  
25 Van Ness Ave Suite 600  
San Francisco CA 94102

Mayor's Ofc. of Community Devel.  
25 Van Ness Ave Suite 700  
San Francisco CA 94102

Peter Straus  
S.F. Municipal Railway  
MUNI Planning Division  
949 Presidio Avenue, Room 204  
San Francisco, CA 94115

Lorrie Kalos Asst Deputy Chief  
San Francisco Fire Department  
Division of Planning & Research  
698 Second Street  
San Francisco CA 94107

Tiffany Bohee  
S.F. Redevelopment Agency  
770 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Michael Grisso  
S.F. Redevelopment Agency  
770 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

David Habert  
S.F. Redevelopment Agency  
770 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Supervisor Chris Daly  
City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B Goodlett Place  
Room 244  
San Francisco CA 94102-4689

Rajiv Bhatia, MD, MPH  
Dir., Occupat. & Environ. Health  
Department of Public Health  
1390 Market Street, Suite 822  
San Francisco, CA 94102

#### **LIBRARIES**

Stanford University Libraries  
Jonsson Library of Gov't. Docs.  
State & Local Documents Div.  
Stanford, CA 94305

Government Publications Dept.  
S.F. State University Library  
1630 Holloway Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94132

Hastings College Law Library  
200 McAllister Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4978

Institute of Government Studies  
109 Moses Hall  
University of California  
Berkeley, CA 94720

Government Information Svcs.  
San Francisco Main Library  
100 Grove Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**MEDIA**

John King  
San Francisco Chronicle  
901 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Gerald Adams  
San Francisco Chronicle  
901 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Patrick Hoge  
City Hall Bureau  
San Francisco Chronicle  
901 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Jean Chung  
San Francisco Examiner  
450 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

San Francisco Independent  
Attn: City Desk  
450 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

**GROUPS &  
INDIVIDUALS**

Geoff Apps  
18 Lansing St #208  
San Francisco CA 94105

Joyce Armstrong  
955 Connecticut St  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Dave Asheim  
300 Beale #608  
San Francisco CA 94105

Steve Atkinson  
Steeffel Lewitt & Weiss  
One Embarcadero Center, 30th Flr.  
San Francisco CA 94111

Gerald Carl Baker  
18 Lansing St #102  
San Francisco CA 94105

Susan Baker  
18 Lansing St  
San Francisco CA 94105

Kay Beaumont  
75 Folsom St #906/907  
San Francisco CA 94105

Albert Beck  
3028 Esplanade Street, Suite - A  
Chico, CA 95973-4924

Diane K Belanger  
William Belanger  
75 Folsom St #908  
San Francisco CA 94105

Reed Bement  
75 Folsom Street #1800  
San Francisco CA 94105

Bob Bennett  
88 King Street, #1005  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Kathy Bennett  
81 Gregory Lane Ste 230  
Pleasant Hill CA 94523

Jim Berk  
SOMPAC Land Use Cttee. Chair  
PO Box 77068  
San Francisco CA 94107

Louise Bird  
South Park Improvement Assn.  
115 South Park  
San Francisco CA 94107

Lucian R. Blazej  
50 Laidley Street  
San Francisco, CA 94131

William H Boggs  
75 Folsom St #1105  
San Francisco CA 94105

Peter Bosselman  
Environmental Simulation Lab.  
119 Wurster Hall  
University of California  
Berkeley, CA 94720

Sheryl Bratton  
Jones Lang Wootton  
Two Embarcadero Center, Ste. 2370  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Bobbie Y Caiuer  
75 Folsom St #1400  
San Francisco CA 94105

Georgia Brittan  
SF'cans for Reasonable Growth  
460 Duncan Street  
San Francisco, CA 94131

Andrew Brooks  
c/o Baycrest  
201 Harrison Street, Suite 120  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Tina Bruderer  
Theodore Brown & Partners Inc  
1620 Montgomery St Ste 320  
San Francisco CA 94111

Sumner Burkart  
Ann Burkart  
18 Lansing St #202  
San Francisco CA 94105

Val Caniparoli  
81 Lansing St  
San Francisco CA 94105

T Carlitz  
75 Folsom St #804  
San Francisco CA 94105

Robert Carter  
75 Folsom St #1400  
San Francisco CA 94105

Anthony Chan  
Theodore Brown and Partners  
1620 Montgomery St #320  
San Francisco CA 94111

Damon Chan  
JMA Properties  
118 King Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

James Chappell, Executive Director  
SPUR  
312 Sutter Street  
San Francisco, CA 94108

Alexandria Chun  
75 Folsom St #1201  
San Francisco CA 94105

John Clancy  
Portside Homeowners Association  
115 South Park  
San Francisco CA 94107

Jennifer Clary  
San Francisco Tomorrow  
41 Sutter Street #1579  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Alex Clemens  
Reputation  
1375 Sutter Street, Suite 330  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Tamar Cooper  
San Francisco Beautiful  
41 Sutter Street, Suite 709  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Marty Dalton  
Union Property Capital Inc  
353 Sacramento Street Suite 560  
San Francisco CA 94111

Jack Davis  
South of Market Cultural Center  
(SOMAR) 934 Brannan Street  
San Francisco CA 94103

Janeen Davis  
Law Offices of David Cincotta  
1388 Sutter Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Phillip DeAndrade  
300 Channel St # 12  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Carolyn Dee  
Downtown Association  
5 Third Street, Suite 520  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Margarita Del Campo  
45 Lansing Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Carolyn Diamond  
Market Street Association  
870 Market Street Suite 456  
San Francisco CA 94102

Antonio Diaz  
PODER  
474 Valencia Street #155  
San Francisco CA 94103

Richard Dickerson  
Maynard Rich Company  
2 Townsend St  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Babette Drefke  
701 Kansas St  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Leslie R. Edwards  
650 Delancey Street, #304  
San Francisco CA 94107

John Elberling  
Yerba Buena Consortium  
182 Howard Street, #519  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Jessica Evans  
346 First St #107  
San Francisco CA 94105

Alfonso Felder  
San Francisco Giants  
SBC Park  
24 Willie Mays Plaza  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Richard Forst  
1690 Kevin Drive  
San Jose, CA 95124-6313

Thomas N. Foster  
Rothschild & Associates  
369 Pine Street, Suite 360  
San Francisco, CA 94104-3302

Peter Fodor  
Patricia J Fodor  
75 Folsom #1203  
San Francisco CA 94105

Eric Golanco  
Lennar Communities  
51 Federal Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

John D Goldman  
75 Folsom St #1603  
San Francisco CA 94105

Denyse R Gross  
Kenneth A Morrison  
81 Lansing St Ste 206  
San Francisco CA 94105

G A Guenther  
75 Folsom St #1700/1704  
San Francisco CA 94105

Jim Haas  
Civic Pride  
555 Montgomery St., Suite 850  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Dr. Gunther Halles  
75 Folsom St #1600  
San Francisco CA 94105

Chris Harney  
H,C and M Properties  
1234 Mariposa Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Drew Harper  
Rendezvous Charters  
Pier 40, South Beach Harbor  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Ralph Harris  
75 Folsom St #1702  
San Francisco CA 94105

Jacob Herber  
Morrison & Foerster  
345 California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Sue Hestor  
Attorney at Law  
870 Market Street, Room 1128  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Ralph House  
St. Paul of the Shipwreck  
1122 Jamestown Avenue  
San Francisco CA 94124

Molly Hoyt  
403 Main St #818  
San Francisco CA 94105

Alice Hurweill  
Law Offices of David Cincotta  
1388 Sutter Street, Suite 915  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Ellen Johnck  
101 Lombard St., #217 E  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Barbara L Jue  
81 Lansing St #411  
San Francisco CA 94105

Andrew Junius  
Reuben & Junius  
235 Pine Street Suite 1600  
San Francisco CA 94104

Michael Karasik  
ROK Properties/The Rosenberg Co.  
153 Townsend Street, Suite 530  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Randy H Katz  
75 Folsom St #1100  
San Francisco CA 94105

Redmond Kernan  
RFK Associates  
35 6th Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94118

George Kloves  
Linda G Kloves  
75 Folsom St #802  
San Francisco CA 94105

H L Knodle  
Gary A Floyd  
81 Lansing St #404  
San Francisco CA 94105-2638

Sheila Kolenc  
San Francisco Beautiful  
41 Sutter Street Ste 709  
San Francisco CA 94104

Larry Kolinski  
81 Lansing St #410  
San Francisco CA 94105

Michael Kriozere  
Urban West Associates  
6335 El Camino Del Peatro  
La Jolla, CA 92037

Stacey Krum  
Gap Inc.  
Two Folsom Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

R. Kumra  
75 Folsom St #1204  
San Francisco CA 94105

Nancy Kung  
75 Folsom St #1101  
San Francisco CA 94105

Jeanne Lam & Paul Lam  
75 Folsom St #806  
San Francisco CA 94105

John R Lazarus  
75 Folsom St #1503  
San Francisco CA 94105

David Levy  
Morrison and Foerster SSP  
425 Market St  
San Francisco CA 94105

Jeffrey Leibovitz  
115 South Park  
San Francisco, CA 94118

Wilson Loke  
75 Folsom St #1104  
San Francisco CA 94105

Robert Lundahl  
66 Lansing St  
San Francisco CA 94105

York Loo  
York Realty  
243A Shipley Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107-1010

Faye Magee  
69 Lafayette Avenue  
Piedmont, CA 94611

Patrick M Malone  
81 Lansing St #402  
San Francisco CA 94105

Ann Marceaux  
Emerald Fund Inc  
501 Second Street Suite 212  
San Francisco CA 94107

Gerry Markert  
Neighbors for Responsible Devel.  
601 4th Street Suite 121  
San Francisco CA 94107

Richard Mayer  
Artists Equity Assn.  
27 Fifth Avenue  
San Francisco CA 94118

Lee Meyerzone  
Econ. Opportunity Council Dist. 5  
759A Minna Street  
San Francisco CA 94103

Robert Meyers  
Robert Meyers Assoc  
120 Montgomery St Ste 2290  
San Francisco CA 94104

Ed Michael  
1001 Franklin Street #20E  
San Francisco, CA 94109-6840

Gerald Miller  
c/o Delancey Street Foundation  
600 The Embarcadero  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Mary Anne Miller  
San Francisco Tomorrow  
1239 46th Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94122

Dick Millet  
Potrero Boosters  
1459 – 18th Street Suite 133  
San Francisco CA 94107

Jim Monteleone  
88 Guy Place #405  
San Francisco CA 94105

Mary Murphy  
Farella Braun & Martel  
235 Montgomery Street  
San Francisco CA 94104

Don Morosi  
35 Corta Alta  
Novato CA 94949

Maxwell Myers  
658 Howard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Joel Neecke  
Ship Clerks' Association, Local 34  
4 Berry St  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Matthew Needham  
38 Bryant St #903  
San Francisco CA 94105

Louise Nichols  
Nichols Berman  
142 Minna Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Sara O'Malley  
Richard Hylton  
75 Lansing St #4  
San Francisco CA 94105

G W Palmquist  
75 Folsom St #1006  
San Francisco CA 94105

Judith Patterson  
650 Delancey Street #310  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Mike Quinn  
Pillsbury Winthrop  
50 Fremont St  
San Francisco CA 94105

James Reuben  
Reuben and Junius  
235 Pine Street, 16th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Mary Ann Robertson  
81 Lansing Street #306  
San Francisco CA 94105

Alvin Romance  
31-C Guy Place  
San Francisco CA 94105

Cliff & Paula Roth  
81 Lansing St #409  
San Francisco CA 94105

Warner Schmalz  
Forum Design  
1014 Howard St  
San Francisco CA 94103

Kira Schmidt  
Bluewater Network  
300 Broadway, Suite 28  
San Francisco, CA 94133

Ann Shammass  
75 Folsom St #1702  
San Francisco CA 94105

Peter Sheats  
81 Lansing Street #408  
San Francisco CA 94105

Marilyn Z. Smith  
229 Brannan Street #17G  
San Francisco, CA 94107

SOMA Sr. Community Action Grp.  
360 Fourth Street  
San Francisco CA 94107

SOMPAC  
1035 Folsom Street  
San Francisco CA 94103

Doug Stevens, State Coordinator  
Food/Fuel Retail.–Econ. Equality  
770 L Street, Suite 960  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Sustainable San Francisco  
P.O. Box 460236  
San Francisco, CA 94146

Michael Sweet  
219 Brannan Street, #2G  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Michael Sweet  
Murphy Sheneman Julian & Rogers  
101 California Street, Suite 3900  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Tse Ming Tam  
Chinese for Affirmative Action  
17 Walter U Lum Place  
San Francisco CA 94108

Nancy Taylor  
Baker & McKenzie  
Two Embarcadero Center-25th Flr.  
San Francisco CA 94111

Michael Tchao  
346 First Street, #303  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Tishman Speyer Properties  
First Market Tower  
325 Market Street  
San Francisco CA 94105

Jacqueline E Tonge  
75 Folsom St #1000  
San Francisco CA 94105

Cathy Turnquist  
Cityland  
1707 Gough Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Steven L. Vettel  
Morrison & Foerster, LLP  
425 Market Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Joe Walseth  
Health Program Coordinator  
SF Childhood Lead Prevention  
1390 Market Street, Suite 230  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Judith B. Walsh  
301 Bryant Street, #302  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Paul Warenski  
Oriental Warehouse Neigh Cttee.  
650 Delancey Street #130  
San Francisco CA 94107

Gerald Wesson  
Mary Wesson  
75 Folsom St #803  
San Francisco CA 94105

W. Stephen Wilson  
Tobin & Tobin  
500 Sansome Street, 8th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94111-3211

Steven Yee  
P.O. Box 1636  
Orinda, CA 94563

Jonathan H. Ziegler  
75 Folsom Street #1402  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Barbara W. Sahn  
Turnstone Consulting  
330 Townsend St., Suite 216  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Michael Rice  
EIP Associates  
601 Montgomery Street #500  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Tim Erney  
Wilbur Smith Associates  
201 Mission Street, Suite 1450  
San Francisco, CA 94105

**B. DEIR NOTIFICATION DISTRIBUTION**

***FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES***

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605  
Sacramento, CA 95825-1846

California Dep't. of Fish and Game  
Central Coast Region  
Habitat Conservation  
Post Office Box 47  
Yountville, CA 94599

Joseph LeClair  
BCDC  
50 California Street, Suite 2600  
San Francisco, CA 94111

***REGIONAL AND LOCAL AGENCIES***

Metropolitan Transportation Comm/  
Attn: Craig Goldblatt  
101 8th Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

Regional Water Quality Control Bd.  
Attn: Judy Huang  
San Francisco Bay Region  
1515 Clay St., Suite 1400  
Oakland, CA 94612

Mr. Alan Zahradnik  
Dir. of Planning and Policy Anal.  
Golden Gate Bridge District  
1011 Andersen Drive  
San Rafael, CA 94901



Dennis Baker, Chief of Operations  
 City of Daly City  
 Wastewater Treatment Plant  
 153 Lake Merced Blvd.  
 Daly City, CA 94015

**CITY AND COUNTY OF  
 SAN FRANCISCO**

Dept. of Building Inspection  
 Attn: Frank Chiu, Supt.  
 1660 Mission Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94103

John Deakin, Director  
 Bureau of Energy Conservation  
 Hetch Hetchy Water & Power  
 1155 Market Street 4th Floor  
 San Francisco CA 94103

Public Utilities Commission  
 Susan Leal, General Mgr.  
 1155 Market Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94102

Recreation & Park Department  
 McLaren Lodge, Golden Gate Park  
 Attn: Svetlana Karasyova  
 501 Stanyan Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94117

Police Department Planning Div.  
 Attn: Capt. Timothy Hettrich  
 Hall of Justice  
 850 Bryant Street, Room 500  
 San Francisco, CA 94103

S.F. Dept. of Public Works  
 Bureau of Street Use & Mapping  
 Attn: Barbara Moy  
 875 Stevenson Street, Room 465  
 San Francisco, CA 94103

Department of Parking & Traffic  
 Traffic Engineering Division  
 Attn: Bond M. Yee  
 25 Van Ness Avenue  
 San Francisco, CA 94102

San Francisco Fire Department  
 Division of Support Services  
 Paul D. Jones, Asst. Deputy Chief  
 698 Second Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94107-2015

Captain Mario Ballard  
 Bureau of Fire Prevention  
 San Francisco Fire Department  
 1660 Mission Street, 2nd Floor  
 San Francisco, CA 94103

Steve Nickerson, Admin. Analyst  
 S.F. Municipal Railway  
 875 Stevenson St., Rom 260  
 San Francisco, CA 94103

Steve Legnitto, Dir. of Property  
 San Francisco Real Estate Dep't.  
 25 Van Ness Avenue, 4th Floor  
 San Francisco, CA 94102

**GROUPS &  
 INDIVIDUALS**

John R Lazarus  
 75 Folsom St #1600  
 San Francisco CA 94105

Jim Haas  
 163 Prospect Avenue  
 San Francisco, CA 94110

Judith Patterson  
 75 Folsom St #807  
 San Francisco CA 94105

AIA  
 San Francisco Chapter  
 Attn: Bob Jacobvitz  
 130 Sutter Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94104

Chi-Hsin Shao  
 CHS Consulting Group  
 500 Sutter Street, Suite 216  
 San Francisco, CA 94108

Richard Mayer  
 NRG Energy Ctr..  
 410 Jessie St., Suite 702  
 San Francisco, CA 94103

John Bardis  
 Sunset Action Committee  
 1501 Lincoln Way, #503  
 San Francisco, CA 94122

Bruce White  
 3207 Shelter Cove Avenue  
 Davis, CA 95616

Alice Suet Barkley, Esq.  
 Of Counsel  
 Luce, Forward, et. al.  
 121 Spear St., Suite 200  
 San Francisco, CA 94105

Bay Area Council  
 200 Pine Street, Suite 300  
 San Francisco, CA 94104-2702

Michael Dyett  
 Dyett & Bhatia  
 755 Sansome St., Suite 400  
 San Francisco, CA 94111

Morgan Lewis & Bockius  
 Attn: Susan R. Diamond  
 One Market Plaza  
 San Francisco, Ca 94105

Georgia Brittan  
 S.F'cans for Reasonable Growth  
 460 Duncan Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94131

Cahill Contractors, Inc.  
 Attn: Jay Cahill  
 425 California Street, Suite 2300  
 San Francisco, CA 94104

Chicago Title  
 Attn: Carol Lester  
 388 Market Street, 13th Floor  
 San Francisco, CA 94111

Chinatown Resource Center  
 1525 Grant Avenue  
 San Francisco, CA 94133

David Cincotta  
 1388 Sutter Street, Suite 915  
 San Francisco, Ca 94102

Coalition for S.F. Neighborhoods  
 P.O. Box 320098  
 San Francisco, CA 94132-0098

Doug Longyear, Tony Blaczek  
 Coldwell Banker  
 Finance Department  
 1699 Van Ness Avenue  
 San Francisco, CA 94109

Cushman & Wakefield  
 Attn: John Vaughan  
 1 Maritime Plaza, Suite 900  
 San Francisco, CA 94111

Damon Raike & Co.  
 Attn: Frank Fudem  
 201 California Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94111

Yerba Buena Consortium  
 Attn: John Elberling  
 182 Howard Street, #519  
 San Francisco, CA 94105

Mrs. G. Bland Platt  
 362 Ewing Terrace  
 San Francisco, CA 94118

S.F. Architectural Heritage  
Attn: Executive Director  
2007 Franklin Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Gensler and Associates  
Attn: Peter Gordon  
550 Kearny Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Goldfarb & Lipman  
Attn: Richard A. Judd  
One Montgomery Street  
West Tower, 23rd Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Greenwood Press, Inc.  
Attn: Gerry Katz  
P.O. Box 5007  
Westport, Conn 06881-5007

Gruen, Gruen & Associates  
564 Howard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

The Jefferson Company  
10 Lombard Street, 3rd Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94111-1165

Philip Fukuda  
TRI Commercial  
1 California Street, Suite 1200  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Kaplan/McLaughlin/Diaz  
Attn: Jan Vargo  
222 Vallejo Street  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Larry Mansbach  
582 Market St., Suite 217  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Howard Levy, Director  
Legal Assistance to the Elderly  
100 McAllister Street, #412  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Sally Maxwell  
Maxwell & Associates  
1522 Grand View Drive  
Berkeley, CA 94705

Cliff Miller  
89 Walnut Avenue  
Corte Madera, CA 94925-1028

Milton Meyer & Co.  
Attn: James C. DeVoy  
One California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94111

National Lawyers Guild  
Attn: Regina Sneed  
558 Capp Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110

Pacific Exchange  
Attn: Dale Carleson  
301 Pine Street  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Page & Turnbull  
724 Pine Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Patri Merker Architects  
Attn: Marie Zeller  
400 Second Street, Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Pillsbury, Winthrop LLP  
Environmental Land Use Section  
50 Fremont St.  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dennis Purcell  
Coblentz, Patch, Duffy and Bass  
One Ferry Building, Suite 2  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Ramsay/Bass Interest  
Attn: Peter Bass  
3756 Grant Avenue, Suite 301  
Oakland, CA 94610

UCSF Capital Planning Dept.  
Attn: Bob Rhine  
145 Irving Street  
San Francisco, CA 94122

David P. Rhoades & Associates  
364 Bush Street  
San Francisco, CA 94104-2805

Rothschild & Associates  
Attn: Thomas N. Foster  
369 Pine Street, Suite 360  
San Francisco, CA 94104-3302

S.F. Building Trades Council  
Attn: Stanley Warren  
150 Executive Park Blvd., Ste. 4700  
San Francisco, CA 94134 3341

S.F. Chamber of Commerce  
235 Montgomery St., 12th Flr.  
San Francisco, CA 94104-2902

S.F. Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Dale Hess, Executive Director  
201 3rd Street, Suite 900  
San Francisco, CA 94103

San Francisco Labor Council  
Attn: Walter Johnson  
1188 Franklin Street, #203  
San Francisco, CA 94109

John Sanger, Esq.  
1 Embarcadero Ctr., 12th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94111

San Francisco Group  
Sierra Club  
85 2nd Street, Floor 2  
San Francisco, CA 94105-3441

Sedway Group  
505 Montgomery St., Ste. 600  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Shartsis Freise & Ginsburg  
Attn: Dave Kremer  
One Maritime Plaza, 18th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP  
Attn: John Kriken  
One Front Street, Suite 2400  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Solem & Associates  
Jim Ross, Dir. Public Affairs  
550 Kearny Street  
San Francisco, CA 94108

Square One Productions  
Attn: Hartmut Gerdes  
1736 Stockton Street, Studio 7  
San Francisco, CA 94133

Robert S. Tandler  
3490 California St.  
San Francisco, CA 94118-1837

Jerry Tone  
Montgomery Capital Corp.  
244 California St.  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Joel Ventresca  
1278 44th Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94122

Jon Twichell Associates  
70 Hermosa Avenue  
Oakland, CA 94618

Stephen Weicker  
899 Pine Street, #1610  
San Francisco, CA 94108

Calvin Welch  
Council of Community Housing  
409 Clayton Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117

Howard M. Wexler, Esq.  
Farella, Braun & Martel, LLP  
235 Montgomery Street, 30th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Eunice Willette  
1323 Gilman Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94124

Bethea Wilson & Associates  
Art In Architecture  
2028 Scott, Suite 204  
San Francisco, CA 94115

Pete Holloran, President  
Yerba Buena Chapter  
California Native Plant Society  
1033 Noe Street  
San Francisco, CA 94114

Paul Kollerer/Tom Balestri  
Cahill Construction Services  
1599 Custer Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94124-1414

Andrew Tuft  
Singer Associates  
140 Second Street, 2nd Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Diane Wong  
UCSF Campus Planning  
3333 California Street, Suite 11  
San Francisco, CA 94143-0286

Dan Cohen  
EDAW  
150 Chestnut Street  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Brett Gladstone  
Gladstone & Associates  
177 Post Street, Penthouse  
San Francisco, CA 94108

William Rostov  
Commun. for a Better Environment  
1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 450  
Oakland, CA 94612

John H. Elberling  
Tenants & Owners Develop. Corp.  
737 Folsom Street #TR  
San Francisco CA 94107

Rick Kaufman  
City-Core Development  
2352 Post St., Suite 200  
San Francisco, CA 94115

John Montgomery  
1150 Hyde Street, Suite 5  
San Francisco, CA 94109

Doug Willbanks  
219 Brannan St. #14J

San Francisco, CA 94107

Brett Medland  
Bovis Lend Lease  
33 New Montgomery Ste 220  
San Francisco, CA 94105

***MEDIA***

Associated Press  
Attn: Bill Shiffman  
1390 Market Street, Suite 318  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Leland S. Meyerzone  
KPOO FM  
P.O. Box 6149  
San Francisco, CA 94101

San Francisco Bay Guardian  
Attn: Gabe Roth, City Editor  
520 Hampshire Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110

San Francisco Business Times  
Attn: Tim Turner  
275 Battery Street, Suite 940  
San Francisco, CA 94111

San Francisco Chronicle  
Attn: Elliot Diringier  
925 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

The Sun Reporter  
1791 Bancroft Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94124-2644