



## Community Plan Area Profiles:

The previous five sections illuminated many of the issues and trends that have affected the Eastern Neighborhoods as a whole over the past decades. What follows in this final section are a series of community profiles which pull together these themes and integrate them into the particular context of each neighborhood. Employment, business, housing, and land use trends have each had a distinct impact on the different communities in the Eastern Neighborhoods. The following Community Plan Area Profiles are presented to show this interaction in

While the community plan areas can and should be considered individually, it is also important to consider the relationship of each plan area to the rest of the Eastern Neighborhoods, and in turn the role that the Eastern Neighborhoods play in the City as a whole. The Eastern Neighborhoods do not just provide a high proportion and quantity of PDR jobs within the City's overall employment picture. As individual communities get planned and rezoned in the future, decisionmakers and the public should be cognizant of the role that each community plays within the Eastern Neighborhoods and the City. If a critical mass of sites or structures that host a particular type of activity could be displaced as a result of a zoning reclassification, decisionmakers should take into consideration whether the City wants or needs to retain that activity, what the shape and location of the future home for that activity should be, whether it presently exists or can relocate elsewhere within the City.

# South of Market

Since the turn of the twentieth century, the South of Market Area has boasted an eclectic mix of commerce, entertainment and living space. SoMa has always been a uniquely mixed-use area in San Francisco. The hard-working merchant marines and day-laborers who first made their home in SoMa spent the bulk of their days working and their nights sharing small single room apartments. Early zoning regulations in San Francisco pushed much of the city's industrial activity south of Market Street. In response, worker housing was built for factory and warehouse workers close to their places of employment, as well as merchant marines, sailors, and others associated with San Francisco's extensive waterfront activity. New immigrants to the city were drawn to low rents typical of SoMa throughout the century and the proximity to jobs. Successive waves of ethnic groups have called SoMa home. When various immigrant groups such as the Germans, Mexicans, Ukrainians, and Irish have moved out of the area, their churches and community centers have remained and preserved their relationship to this area.

According to the 2000 Census, there are about 13,500 people living within the SoMa Community Plan Area boundaries. A decade ago there were fewer than 8,000 and in 1980, there were just 5,400 people living in this same area. Compared to a citywide population growth of 11 percent between 1990 and 2000, this area's population grew by 80 percent! Similarly, the seven percent Citywide growth from 1980 to 1990 pales in comparison

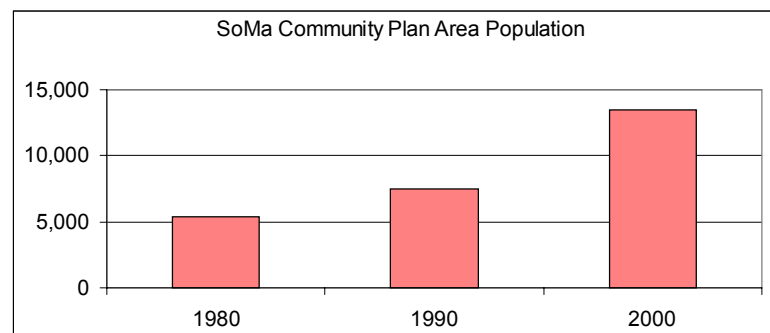
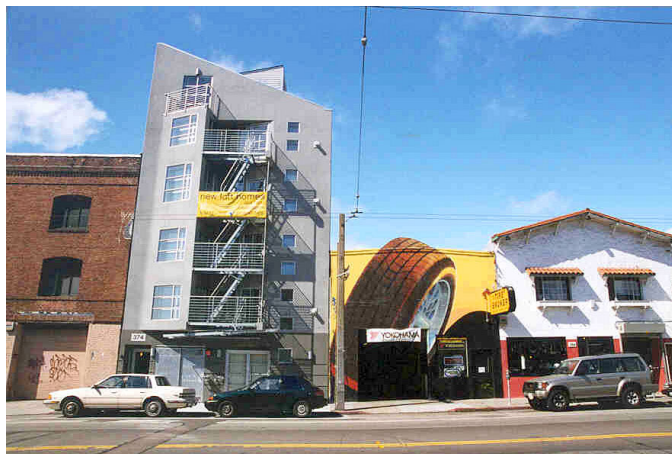


Figure 6.1.1 SoMa Community Plan Area Population

to the 40 percent leap in residents experienced in this area over the same decade. The influx of this large resident population has presented numerous challenges to SoMa.

While all major race categories have grown by healthy levels in SoMa community plan area over the past two decades, only the white population has increased its share of the total. The strong Asian presence of the 1980s and 1990s has dissipated, whereas the Latino representation has remained relatively constant, and the African-American component has steadily diminished.

The last of the wave of immigrants to arrive in SoMa was the Filipino-Americans, beginning in the late 1960s. Like immigrant communities before them, Filipinos have contributed to as well as having taken advantage of the existing fabric of the area. Numerous small Filipino-American family-owned stores are scattered throughout the area, catering to the day-to-day needs of the local population. Filipinos worship at St. Patrick's Church, a San Francisco landmark in South of Market. Their children go to Bessie Carmichael Elementary School. They play in the South of Market Recreational Center, picnic in the Yerba Buena Gardens and live on streets bearing names of Filipino national heroes.

Although people have lived in SoMa since its beginnings, the area is known for its industry. The garment industry as well as printing and publishing and auto repair have long been a presence in SoMa. These businesses form clusters, where individual businesses and the economy as a whole benefit from their agglomeration. The design industry and the downtown office core benefit from proximity to these clusters of businesses.

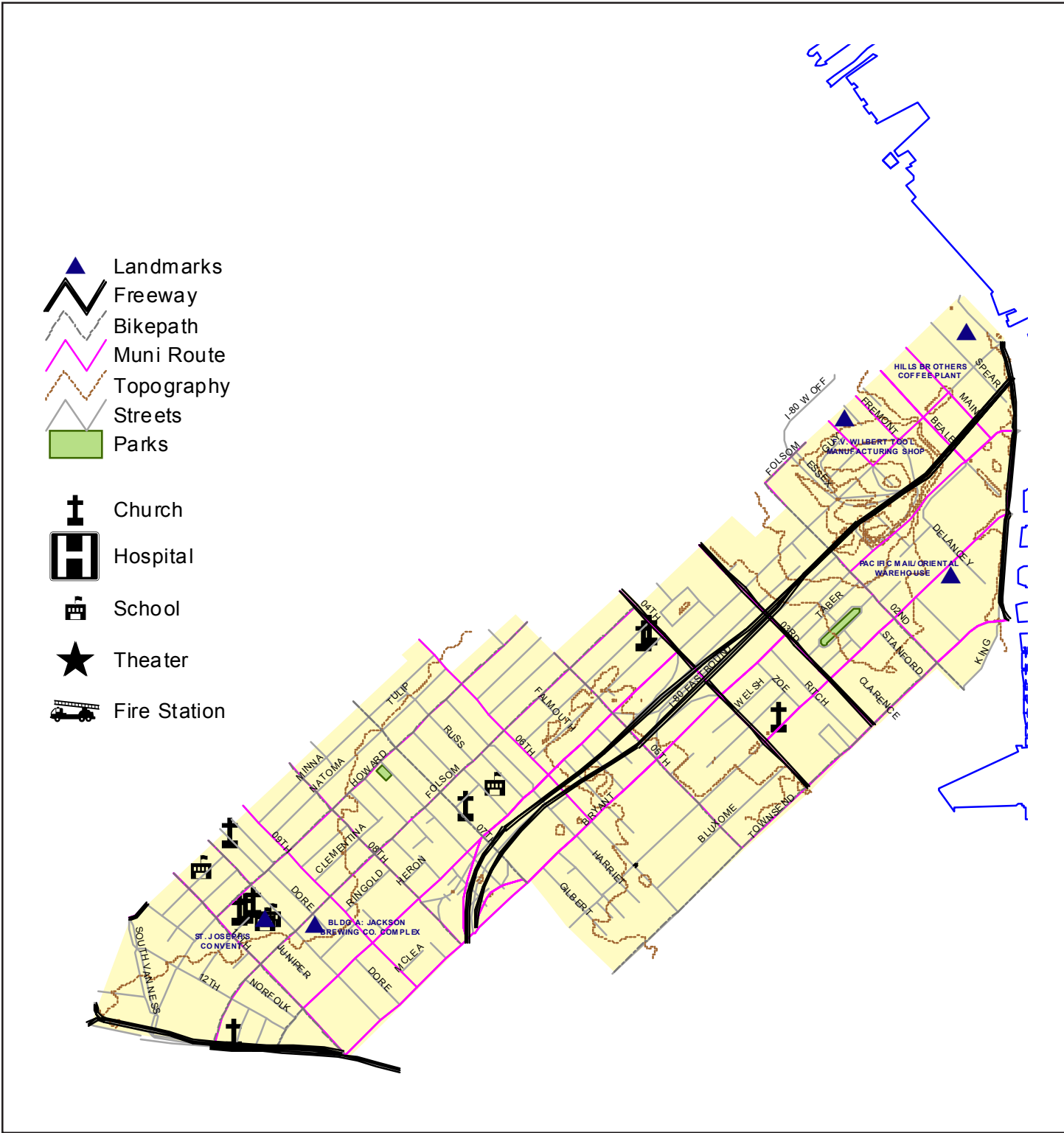


Figure 6.1.2 SoMa Community Facilities Map



# Transitions

SoMa has always experienced transition hand in hand with its diversity. Not only have the demographics of SoMa shifted over time, but whole neighborhoods have sprouted in places formerly devoid of residents. Change has come in the form of business activities, building types, business and residential tenants in these buildings, occupancy rates and the cost of leasing or buying space. In fact, that which does not change in SoMa often is considered an anomaly.

The tides of the economy dictate many of these changes. SoMa has clearly been affected by the economic roller coaster of the past several years. The Multimedia Gulch emerged in SoMa in the area surrounding South Park. Technically savvy entrepre-



Race in SoMa as % of Total Population			
	1980	1990	2000
White	42%	46%	48%
African-American	19%	16%	12%
Asian	31%	27%	25%
Latino	7%	11%	10%

Figure 6.1.3 Ethnic Groups Share of Total SoMa Population

neurs who sought cheap space near the downtown found converted warehouse space to rent, move into, and develop their business ideas.

## The Live/Work Phenomenon

San Francisco and specifically South of Market became internationally recognized as a mecca for people with new ideas in the field of technology. These people needed somewhere to live. Developers keenly aware of this influx of young people with discretionary income began to promote live/work as a perfect solution. Industrial land in SoMa was the cheapest land in proximity to the Multimedia Gulch. Another enticing advantage was the fact that building on industrially zoned land was less restrictive in terms of building standards and planning requirements. Unlike other San Francisco neighborhoods, SoMa had little community scrutiny of individual projects. As a result, live/work projects were built in an ad-hoc manner throughout the area. Before 1996, there were 425 live/work units in the South of Market community plan area. Since January 1996, almost



1,000 new units were completed. Most striking, however, is the fact that there are about 1,500 additional live/work units either currently under construction or approved to begin construction.

The open floor plan in these loft style apartments is targeted to a small, adult household. The large volume design yields fewer units per square foot of land than typical apartment buildings. The present day live/work interior layout evokes earlier live/work spaces which were warehouses divided into smaller spaces in which people could live and work. These loft style apartments are sold as condos or rented at market rate levels. Over the past five to six years, sale prices have escalated as the number of workers and residents expanded with the economy.

During the same time period, the other housing type built in substantial numbers in SoMa other than live/work has been affordable housing, available to households earning less than half of the median income in the City. Very few new units are available for moderate income households.

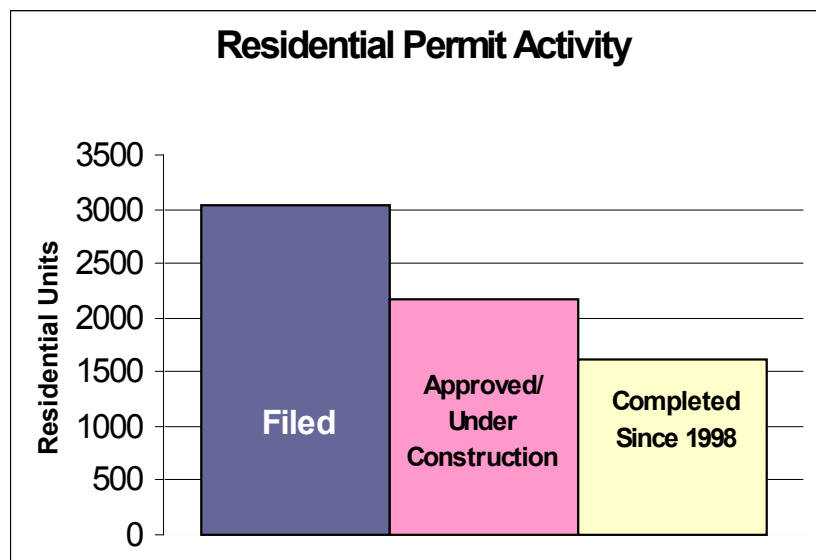


Figure 6.1.4 Residential Permit Activity



## Dot-Com Office Space

The mass production of live/work units was the first of two waves of real estate development that changed the landscape of SoMa. The second wave came in the form of new office space. Multimedia activities such as the development of CD-Roms and computer animation brought people to San Francisco in the mid-1990s; eventually many of these newcomers migrated onto Internet businesses. As venture capitalists invested billions of dollars in Internet start-up companies in the Bay Area, the impact on SoMa came in the form of large sums of money thrown into the commercial estate market. Developers redirected their focus to office. Internet start-ups sought spaces with flexible open floor plans and high ceilings. (See Chapter Two.)

## Lost in the Shuffle

On the flip side of all of this growth, the production, distribution and repair (PDR) businesses suffered. For the past half-century, the printing and publishing, and apparel industries have been the largest PDR sectors in SoMa. In 1998, over 100 SoMa businesses in the apparel- manufacturing and import/export trade sectors employed over 2,400 people. By 2001, the number of apparel sector businesses and employees in SoMa dropped to just under 800 people employed by about 40 businesses. While the



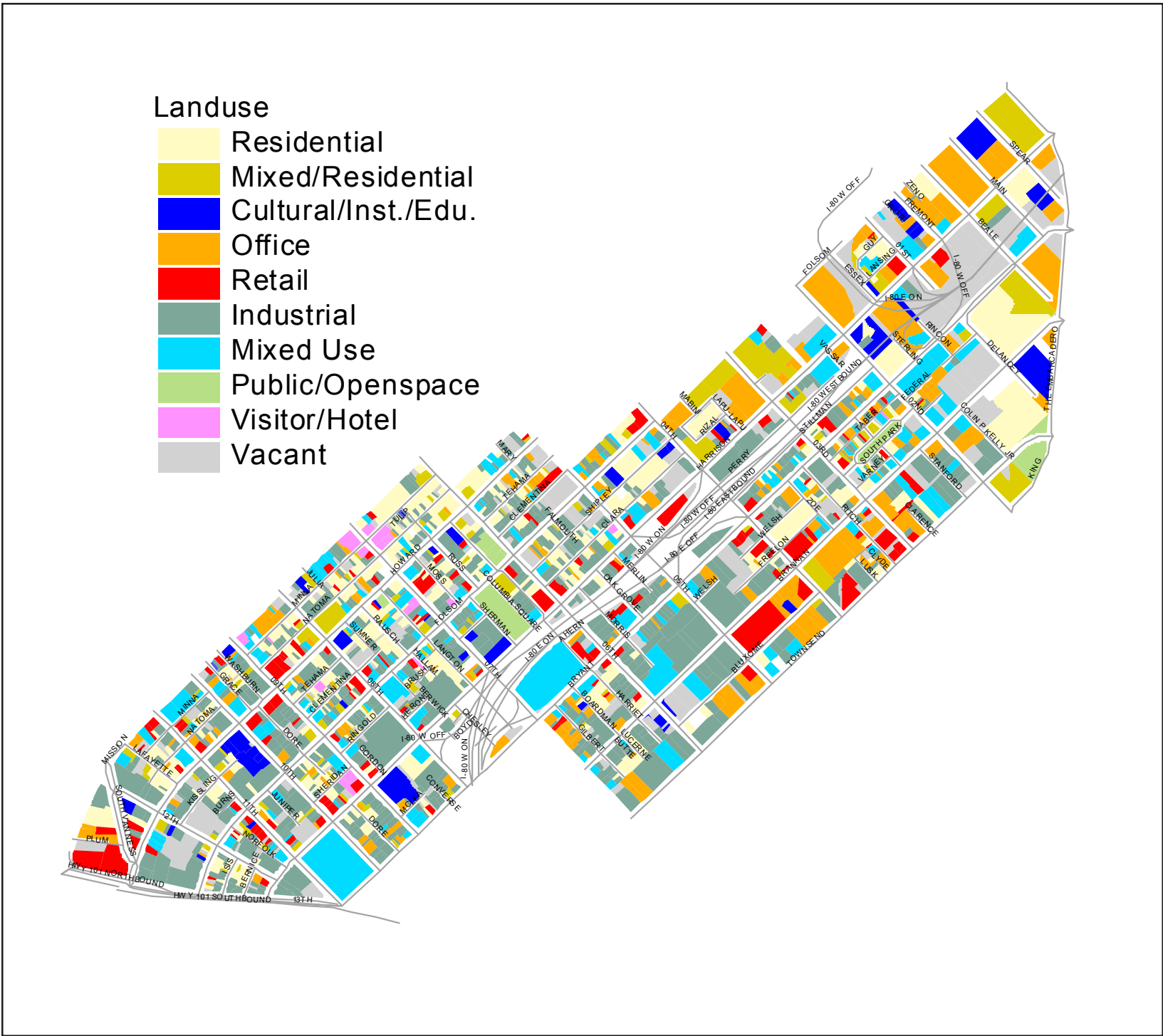


Figure 6.1.5 SoMa Land Use Map

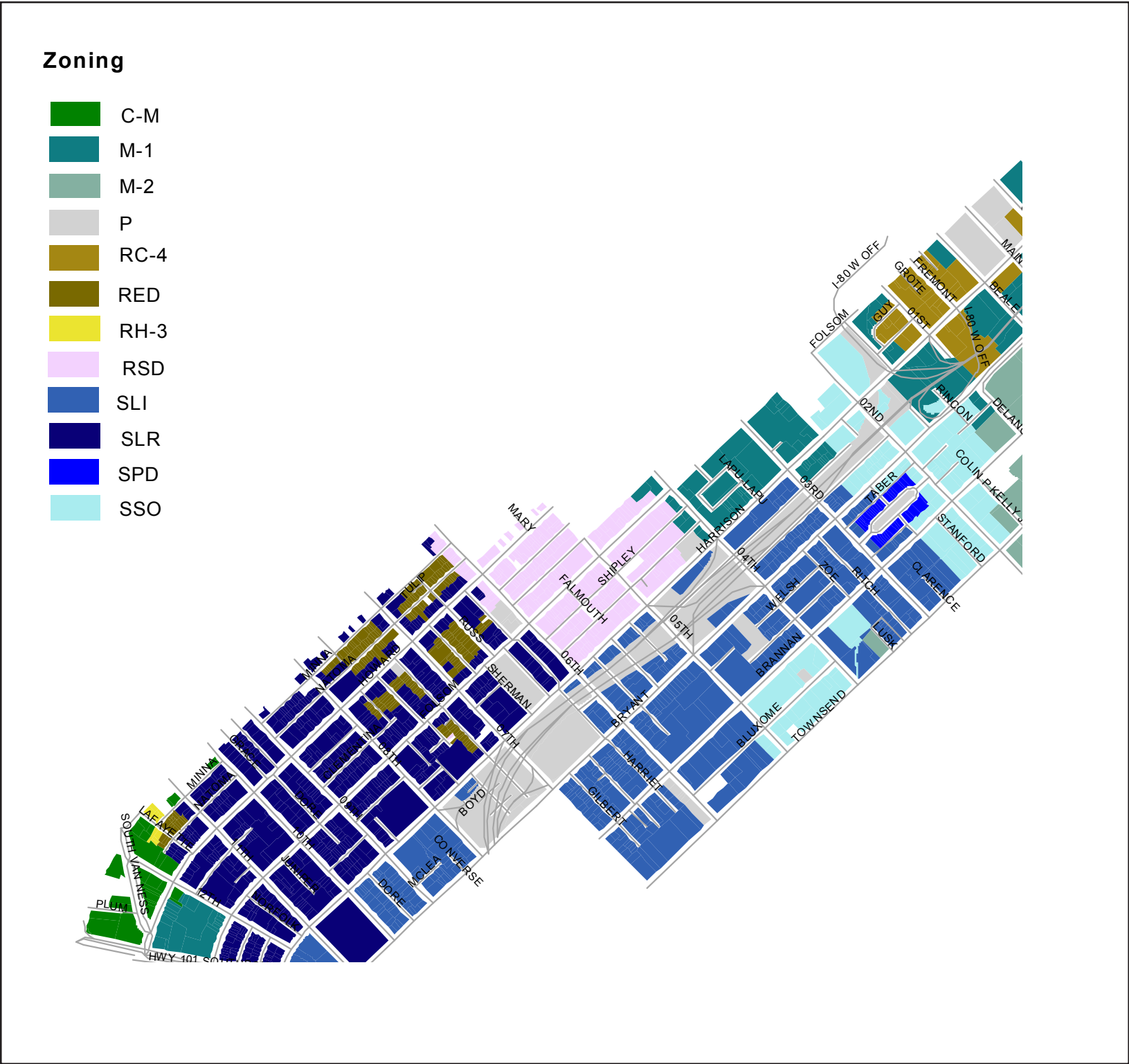


Figure 6.1.6 SoMa Zoning Regulations Map

apparel-manufacturing sector lost two-thirds of its employees, the printing and publishing sector was reduced by more than half. In 1998 the printing and publishing sector boasted more individual businesses than any other PDR sector; there were about 1,700 people working for almost 140 printing and publishing companies. In 2001, 80 printing and publishing companies provided 660 jobs in SoMa.



While the number of apparel and printing jobs has diminished in the SoMa Community Planning Area, other industries that produce, distribute or repair have gained employees. As of 2001, there are many more jobs in the telecommunications field as well as in radio broadcasting. (Please see the Introduction for a definition of these terms.) Since 1998, there has been a net loss of 16 percent in the number of PDR businesses but only a six



percent loss in jobs. Larger firms have survived and grown in the area while some smaller firms may not have been able to compete for the limited and expensive space available.

The influx of higher-end residential units as well as large scale office developments have also impacted nighttime/entertainment venues. South of Market has long been home to a variety of bars and after-hour clubs. Conflicts continue to arise about uses which some new residents may find dirty, noisy or troublesome.

## How Other Sectors Fared

Office businesses on the other hand, while not increasing much at all prior to 1997, doubled their staff during the economic boom. There were 50% more office employees in the South of Market Community Plan Area, as of mid 2001, than there were in 1998. The retail sector, a more stable sector, has remained consistent in its visibility in the area. For the past 5 years, about 15% of the area's establishments have been retail stores or restaurants. Employees of these places have decreased somewhat however, since 1998.



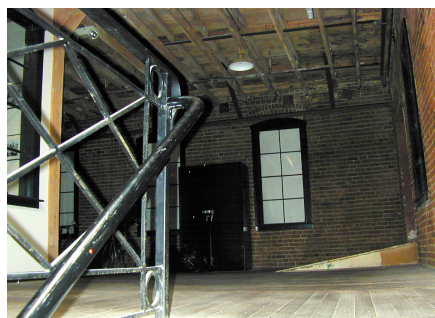
Change in Number of Businesses and Jobs by Sector		
	1998-2001	
	Businesses	Jobs
Cultural/Institutional/Medical	-15%	-12%
Office	0%	49%
Production/Distribution/Repair	-16%	-6%
Retail/Entertainment/Visitor	-14%	-48%
Total	-9%	8%

Figure 6.1.7 Change in Number of Businesses and Jobs by Sector

## The Empty Building

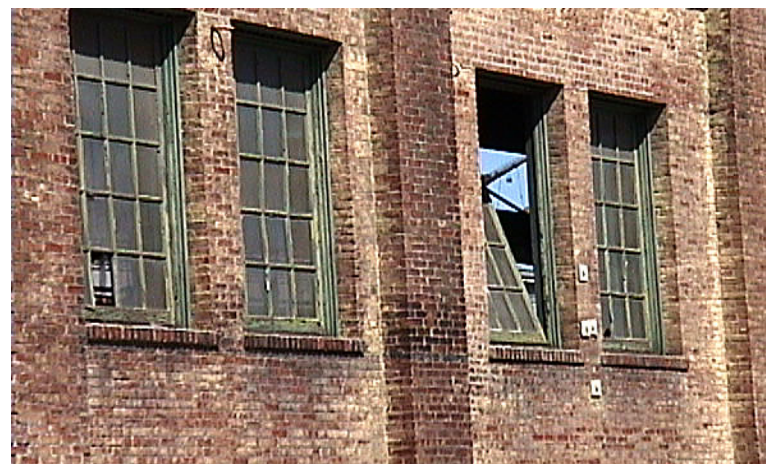
At the height of the demand for office space, vacancy rates were under 1% in the SoMa Community Plan Area.

Class A, Class B and even Class C office space was in very high demand, with little regard for location and transportation accessibility. When the office space demand started to diminish, the areas located furthest from transit and downtown were the first to lose their value. Office vacancy rates in SoMa reached 45 percent at the end of 2001. This represents a loss of approximately 8,500 dot-com jobs. Improved spaces are becoming available at lower rates.



## Planning SoMa

There are a number of public and private agencies working towards plans for SoMa. Currently, the Redevelopment Agency is developing plans for the Transbay area. The Redevelopment Agency is working with the community in the 6th Street Redevelopment Area. The Planning Department is reexamining bulk and height limits for Rincon Hill, as part of a study of the urban form of areas south of downtown, with a view toward increasing housing opportunities with great access to jobs, shopping and other amenities.



Many different Community groups have joined with the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Department and a number of other public agencies to try to ensure a healthy future for the South of Market Area. Organizations such as the West SoMa Merchants, the 6th Street Merchants Association, SoMa Leadership Council, South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition (SoMaD) and the South of Market Foundation are just a sampling of the community organizations that have shared an interest in protecting the diversity and small business culture that still exists in the area.

All of these efforts will be represented in the Community Planning process for SoMa. Recognizing the needs of San Francisco for more housing in attractive, convenient and affordable neighborhoods, this process will consider the needs of the existing

community for homes, jobs and services. It will also grapple with other land use issues now facing San Francisco and SoMa. Where can new neighborhoods be located? How much production, distribution and repair activity does the City need to support residents and businesses? Where in San Francisco can big-box retail be located without negative impacts? Where should office uses be located? How can arts and non-profit organizations survive in the City?

