TRANSIT CENTER
DISTRICT PLAN

Public Workshop #3:
Quality of Place

09.17.2008
San Francisco Planning Department

In partnership with:
San Francisco Redevelopment Agency
Transbay Joint Powers Authority
Transit Center District Plan Area

Private and Public parcels around Transit Center, including Transbay Redevelopment Area Zone 2
Objectives

- Environmentally Responsible Land Use:
  Capitalize on new major transit investment with appropriate land use response in the downtown core

- Building on the Urban Design Element and Downtown Plan:
  - Analyze the downtown form
  - Identify opportunities and set guidelines and standards to build a high-quality public realm and provide public amenities

- Generate more revenue to support the Transbay Transit Center/Caltrain Extension project and other public benefits.
Current Urban Form proposal
Twin Peaks: 1,000’
Dolores Park: 1,000’
Potrero Hill: 1,000’
Opportunity Site Analysis

Plan Boundaries
- Transit Center
- District Plan area
- Transbay Redevelopment Area
- TB Red. Area Zone 1

Opportunity Sites
- 5% Soft site
- 30% Soft site
- Filed Developer Proposal
- Approved but not yet built
- TJPA parcel
## Buildout Potential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Net Additional Space</th>
<th>Increment over Existing Zoning</th>
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<td>5.82 million gsf</td>
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<td>Housing Units</td>
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<td>Hotel Rooms</td>
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<td>Retail Space</td>
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<td><strong>9.2 million gsf</strong></td>
<td><strong>+3.52 million gsf</strong></td>
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Tonight’s Topics

1. Land Use/Zoning
2. Building Design
3. Open Space
4. Historic Resources
5. Sustainability
Land Use/
Zoning
**Existing Zoning**

- Plan area mixture of C-3-O and C-3-O(SD)
Draft Proposed Zoning

- Reclassify all of Plan area to C-3-O(SD)
Goals:
Do not limit the density of development in this transit hub, but ensure that offsetting public infrastructure and benefits are captured for increased densities.

Draft Controls:
• Eliminate 18:1 cap on FAR in C-3-O(SD) district

• Balance public benefit of increased FARs above base allowance (6:1) among varied public benefits:
  • Historic Preservation (TDR)
  • Transit Center funding
  • Transportation and other mitigations
  • Streetscape
  • Public Space
If capacity is largely reserved for office space where currently permitted...

- There is almost enough capacity to meet Baseline office demand through 2035, but...
- There is a significant shortfall in meeting Smart Growth scenario.

There is more than sufficient planned and zoned capacity Downtown to meet housing projections through 2035.
Goals:

• Reserve bulk of space in core Transit District for downtown job growth

• Limit amount of non-commercial uses on major opportunity sites, while permitting mixed-use (e.g. office with housing or hotel) in large buildings and permitting buildings without commercial uses on smaller sites

• Seek to achieve an overall ratio in new construction in the district of 70% office/30% non-office (e.g. residential, hotel, cultural)

Draft Control:

Create Commercial Sub-district for part of the Plan area where…

… major new projects (new construction greater than 7:1 FAR on sites larger than 10,000 sf) require at least 3 s.f. of commercial space for every 1 s.f. of residential, hotel, or cultural space.
Proposed Commercial Sub-district
Goal:

On limited key street frontages, ensure continuous consumer retail (i.e. eating/drinking, shopping, personal service) and maximum diversity of businesses on the ground floor to create lively destination commercial areas.

Draft Control:

On ground floor frontages identified:

- Required ground floor retail
- Limited street frontage width of 50’ per tenant
- Prohibit non-consumer uses (financial service, insurance, travel/real estate agency, gyms, medical, general office, education/institution)
- Discourage lobbies and service functions on these frontages
Ground Floor Uses: Active Retail Required
**Goal:**

Encourage active and public uses in adjacent buildings which activate the Transit Center Park.

**Draft Control:**

Create FAR exemption for any retail, community facilities, or publicly-accessible space provided at the level of the Transit Center rooftop park in adjacent buildings that is directly accessible by a footbridge from the park.
Public Realm:
Building Design
Expansive lobby frontages do not activate the street or contribute to an engaging pedestrian experience…

…and can negatively dampen or discourage the life and character of the district.
Frontages where lobbies are minimized in width (but prominent) at the street face can be lined with active spaces, such as commercial uses and public space, create an engaging and exciting place to be and to walk.
Goal:

Ensure ground floors that are engaging to the pedestrian and enliven the street environment.

Draft Control:

Limit the street frontage width of lobbies to that necessary for circulation and require them to be lined with public-oriented uses, including commercial uses and public open space.
**Goal:**

Encourage tall and spacious ground floor spaces

**Control:**

Eliminate Floor Area Ratio penalty for tall floors.

(Sec. 102.11 currently requires creating and counting “phantom floors” in square footage calculation where average floor-to-floor height exceeds 15 feet. This discourages gracious tall ground floor spaces.)
Ground Floor Design: Curb Cut Restrictions
Setbacks

Where and Why?

• Achieve wider sidewalks where there are significant contiguous stretches of anticipated new development

Example: North side of Folsom Street in Zone 1

Where and Why not?

• Conservation/Historic District and frontages with consistent streetwall at the property line

• Spotty or non-contiguous redevelopment of parcels that would not create consistent sufficient sidewalk width for pedestrian flow or consistency for streetscape treatments
Due to increased development and the Transit Center project, there will be a major increase in pedestrian volumes *throughout the district*, not just at a couple locations adjacent to new buildings...
Pedestrian Space and Streetscape

... and the sidewalks are barren of landscaping and pedestrian amenities throughout the area, and not wide enough to accommodate increases in pedestrian traffic and consistent corridor-length streetscape improvements.
Pedestrian Space and Streetscape

- Trash Receptacles
- Continuous Streetwall
- Roadway and Pedestrian Lighting
- Cafe Tables

Dimensions:
- 14'-3"
- 7'
- 21'-3"
- 40'

0 7.8 15 30 Feet
Goal:

Pursue building setbacks to augment a sidewalk widening program on street frontages where there are significant stretches of parcels likely to be redeveloped in key locations.

In the Plan area, future development is generally spotty and non-contiguous, with much recent development, and many historic buildings...

...therefore building setbacks are not a practical strategy district-wide to achieve the needed consistent corridor-length sidewalk widths for pedestrian volumes and streetscape improvements.
Draft Control:

10’ building setback required on the following frontages:

North side of Mission Street between 1st and 2nd Streets

North side of Howard Street between 1st Street and 2nd Street

South side of Mission Street between 1st and Fremont Streets (Transit Tower)

West side of 1st Street between Market and Mission Streets

Setback must be designed as an extension of the sidewalk:
• at sidewalk grade
• completely free of all columns or other building elements
• be open at all times for pedestrian circulation
Arcades and Sidewalks

Why not create arcades?

Arcades generally are not successful, as they don’t feel and function like an extension of the sidewalk.

Arcades tend to deaden the sidewalk environment by withdrawing the building ground floor away from the sidewalk and behind a line of columns.

Pedestrians typically don’t use arcades for movement, only for accessing that immediate building, or if there is no choice.
The Downtown Plan included policies recognizing the need to humanize and reduce the scale of tall buildings…

**POLICY 16.1**
Conserve the traditional street to building relationship that characterizes downtown San Francisco.

**POLICY 16.2**
Provide setbacks above a building base to maintain the continuity of the predominant streetwalls along the street.

... many of which were not explicitly codified in the Planning Code.

We are learning from the past 25 years, and should adjust and strengthen these policies and their implementation.
A streetwall height of 50’ to 110’ defines comfortable “urban room.”

Towers that incorporate upper story setbacks to define a base element create a more humane and comfortable environment.
Sheer facades rising straight from the sidewalk edge without a horizontal break at the streetwall height create a vertiginous and inhuman scale, particularly when not interspersed with intervening lower scale buildings.
Goal:

Ensure that tall buildings establish a distinct base element that defines the street realm at a comfortable height not more than 1.25 times the width of the street.

Draft Control:

On major streets all buildings must create a distinct base element built up to the property line or setback line, that relates to the streetwall.

And…
Streetwall/Setbacks: General

Draft Control:

…such base element must

• be discernable from the tower form by any combination of upper level setbacks, projections, or other building features or articulations, and

• provide combined horizontal relief of at least 10’ for at least 60% of the lot width.

Recesses of the base are not sufficient base- or street-wall defining treatments.
Draft Control:

All buildings within the 2nd/New Montgomery Conservation District (2nd Street, South side of Howard Street bet 2nd and 1st, south side Mission between New Montgomery and 3rd) shall be built out to the sidewalk-abutting property line consistent with the historic buildings and buildings taller than 85’ shall maintain a streetwall height of 50-85 feet above which there must be a setback of at least 15 feet.
**Goal:**

Allow and encourage building projections that help define the pedestrian realm and streetwall.

**Draft Control:**

Amend Section 136 to permit overhead horizontal projections of a decorative character deeper than 1 foot at all levels of a building on major streets. (Currently permitted at the roof-level only).
Openness, Air and Sunlight

Existing Requirements (Section 132.1) for Separation of Towers

Upper story setbacks (up to 35’) are required from interior property lines and from center of streets.

However, due to street width here (82.5’), buildings can rise straight from sidewalk to top of building.

As buildings get even taller, there is concern that less sky would be visible from the ground.
**Goal:**

As buildings get taller than the current height limits (550’), openness to the sky from the ground should be preserved.

**Draft Controls:**

For buildings taller than 550’, the setback from the center line of a major street (82.5’ wide, e.g. Mission St) shall be increased from 35’ up to 70’.

The setback from interior property lines shall remain at 35’ for buildings taller than 550’.

For buildings immediately adjacent to the Transit Center or to sites where the height is lower, the setback from interior property lines may be waived.
Goal:

Provide flexibility and sufficient allowance for the building core needs of tall buildings (>550’), while ensuring that the buildings maintain elegant and slender proportions and profile.

Draft Control:

Do not limit the floorplate or dimensions for the lower tower of buildings taller than 550’, and require reductions of at least 25% in the average floorplate and average diagonal for the upper tower.
Open Space and Public Amenity
Public Open Space

Existing Code requires …

• on-site publicly-accessible open space for all non-residential uses.
• Downtown Park Fee ($2/square foot)

Issues:

• Lack of coordination to create larger, public spaces sited where most desirable; favors dispersed, smaller, privately-managed space on every individual site.
• Difficult for large buildings on constrained sites to provide open space.
• Over-production of plazas diminishes district character and the urban fabric.
• Downtown Park Fee does not provide sufficient funds for major new open space.
• Indoor public spaces challenging to create feel and function as public.
Public Open Space

Goals:

Provide flexibility and alternatives to meeting open space requirements that achieve District open space vision and coordination, and that enhance and improve access to planned public space, particularly the Transit Center Park.

Draft Controls:

Allow and encourage buildings to satisfy open space requirements through:

• direct connections to Transit Center Park

• paying in-lieu fee for public space improvements in District, specifically 2nd/Howard space and additional public vertical connections to Transit Center Park
City Park Connections
City Park Connections

Sky Bridge

Public Access

Transit Center Park

Distance: 15'-20' ≤ 30'
City Park Connections

**Draft Controls:**

Buildings adjacent to Transit Center are encouraged to partially satisfy open space requirements by providing a direct pedestrian connection to the Transit Center park.

The connection must be:

- at the park level.
- publicly accessible and connected to appropriate vertical circulation.
- minimize structure width if it crosses over Natoma or Minna Streets.
- meet other technical specifications
- be publicly accessible from sunrise to sunset, and at all times to residents if satisfying residential open space requirement.
- be clearly signed from a public way indicating public access to the Park.
2nd/Howard Parcels – Train Right-of-Way

- Parcels to be acquired for train construction
- Severely limited development potential due to train curvature below grade
- Loss of historic buildings (except removal and possible return of partial facades)
2nd/Howard: Public Space, park connection

- New public space
- Significant signature vertical connection to City Park
- Contextual consistency with historic district
- Retail or other uses
Example of public space with similar qualities:

MFO Park, Zurich
2nd/Howard: Public Space, park connection
Public Open Space

**Draft Control:**

Open space for non-residential uses for new buildings in the District may be satisfied by payment of in-lieu fee into a Fund to construct and improve public space at NE corner of 2nd/Howard and additional vertical connections to the Transit Center park.
**Indoor Public Open Space**

**Goal:**

Ensure that indoor open space is activated, feels public, can function independently of the building’s primary uses, and does not feel like an extension of the building’s private lobby.

**Draft Guidelines:**

Interior open space should…

- have a distinct street presence separate from the primary building entrance or lobby to emphasize the public identity and use of the space.

- be abutted by one or more permanent enclosed retail spaces that open directly onto such interior open space as well as from a public sidewalk, plaza, or other outdoor public space.

- be accessible through permeable building openings without the need to open doors, such as through sliding or folding panels that can be propped open.
Goal:

The general public should have the ability to enjoy and access the incredible views from the tallest building in the city and region, and such unparalleled unique regional amenity should not be confined to only a few privileged building tenants.

Draft Requirement:

Any building taller than 800 feet (i.e. Transit Tower) must have a facility of public accommodation at a level no lower than 650 feet above grade that provides the general public the opportunity for views of the cityscape and Bay. Such facilities may include observation decks, restaurants, bars, lobbies, or any space accessible to members of the general public which does not require an appointment or membership, but which may charge a nominal fee for entrance.
**Goal:**

Ensure that new development enhances the pedestrian network and reduces the scale of large blocks by maintaining and improving public access along existing alleys and creating new connections where none exist on long blocks and congested locations.

**Draft Requirements:**

A new public mid-block pedestrian pathway shall be required on Block 3721 connecting Howard and Natoma Streets between First and Second Streets.

Elim Alley (varies 6’ to 12’ wide) may be built over, but should be improved through development for public pedestrian use and circulation.
Mid-block Connections

Mid-block pathways must be at sidewalk grade and open to public passage. They need not be open to the sky, but must be at least 25’ in height, 15’ in width, open to at all times, and lined with lobbies or active uses.

They are encouraged to be open to the air at both ends, such as an arcade or galleria, and not require opening of doors.
Shaw Alley is a key link in the pedestrian network feeding the Transit Center. It connects to Ecker to the north and a planned mid-block crossing of Mission Street.

The current proposal and requirement of the adjacent project at 535 Mission is to improve the alley and seek temporary – lunchtime – vehicular closure.

**Draft Proposal:**

Close Shaw Alley permanently to vehicles and design it as a pedestrian-only space for thru-connection to the Transit Center as well as open space.
Historic Resources
Historic Survey was...

• completed in July

• posted on web site in July:
  o Context Statement
  o Building Survey Forms

• adopted by Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board on August 20th (except for consultant recommendations, which are being evaluated by staff and proposals will be included as part of Plan)
Areas of Examination for Potential District Expansion

New Montgomery, Mission and Second Streets
California Register Eligible Historic District
Howard Street between 1st and 2nd Streets

South side of Howard Street
Mission Street between New Montgomery and 3rd Streets

South side of Mission Street
56 individually significant buildings including those listed or determined eligible.
Existing Article 11 Category Designations
Proposed District and Article 11 Category Designations
Potential Article 10 Landmarks

Existing and Proposed Article 10 Designations

Proposed
Existing
Potential Article 10 Landmarks

Marine Fireman’s Union Building
(240 2nd Street, Built 1957)

Planters Hotel
(606 Folsom, Built 1907)

Phillips Building
(234 1st Street, Built 1929)
Expansion of New Montgomery-2nd St Conservation District

- Article 11 Rating of individual buildings (Category 1-5) in expanded district

Protection of individual resources not in Conservation District

- Article 11 Rating (Category 1-5) and/or Article 10 Landmark Designation

Other considerations:

- Ability of building owners of rated buildings to sell Transferable Development Rights (TDR)
- Further design guidelines within Conservation District
- Potential adjustment of height limits
Sustainability
District Plan Sustainability Objectives

• Support (and were possible exceed) existing City environmental, sustainability and climate change objectives

• Pursue *district-level* sustainability programs and objectives that require higher-level coordination and district-scale planning

• Require and enable low impact, high performance development within the Transit Center development area
Areas of District Plan Focus

- Transportation
- District energy and renewables
- Storm water
- Urban Forest
- Green Building
SF Climate Action Plan Citywide Goal:

Reduce CO2 emissions from transportation by 963,000 tons annually by getting:

- 9,325 solo drivers to walk to work,
- 9,325 to bicycle to work,
- 16,800 to carpool or vanpool, and
- 105,350 to switch to transit.
**Goal:**

Build on strong existing parking controls and update controls to reflect broader transportation modes and increased densities.

**Existing Downtown (C-3) Controls:**

Auto Parking:
- No minimum requirements
- Maximum limits on residential and non-residential parking
- Required short-term pricing

Bicycles:
- Residential Bicycle Parking minimums
- Showers and Lockers in Commercial Buildings
- Some Bicycle Parking for Commercial Buildings
- Car-Sharing Parking for Residential Buildings
- Transit Impact Development Fee (TIDF)
- Required Participation in Transportation Demand Management Association (TMA)
Issues:

• TDM/TMA requirements and procedures adopted in 1988 need to be updated and do not reflect full range of modes (e.g. bicycling, car sharing) and programs.

• Bicycle parking requirements for employees are very low: maximum of 12 spaces for buildings larger than 25,000 gsf. (12 spaces for up to 2,000 employees in 500,000 gsf office building).

• No requirement for car sharing parking spaces in non-residential buildings downtown, existing parking lots used by car sharing being eliminated.

• Current low maximum parking limits would still lead to large garages for very large buildings as proposed in the Plan.

• Substantially increased densities adding significant demands on transit system.
Draft Policies and Controls:

• Fund effort to update TDM/TMA requirements and include bicycling, car sharing, parking cash-out, etc.

• Amend Sec. 166 to require car-sharing spaces in non-residential garages

• Amend Sec. 155.4 to increase number of required on-site secure bicycle parking spaces for commercial buildings to accommodate 5% of all on-site employees bicycling to work (i.e. 1 space for every 6,000 gsf of office space).

• Additional transit and traffic mitigations fees

• Off-street parking impact fee to discourage parking and mitigate impacts

• Consider requiring Conditional Use for garages larger than 100 spaces and setting absolute maximum cap on number of parking spaces in district
...and

Complete and adopt the proposed comprehensive Streetscape and Circulation Plan that facilitates increased pedestrian, transit, and bicycling volumes and movements.
Energy

SF Climate Action Plan Citywide Goal:

Reduce 400,000 tons of CO2 annually through energy efficiency and to displace 3,000 tons of CO2 annually through development of renewable energy and co-generation resources by 2009.
Transit Center District Plan Strategies:

• Consideration of creation of highly efficient district energy network (providing heating, cooling and power)

• Promote / require use of renewable energy technology within the district (ground source, PV, wind)

• Highly energy efficient buildings
Goal:

Take advantage of balanced dense mixed-use development in the Transit Center District and Transbay Redevelopment Area to create efficient shared district energy and heating system that captures and uses waste heat from generation and buildings.

Draft Policies:

• Pursue a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) system for the plan area and the Transbay Redevelopment area (Zone 1).

• Require new buildings to be designed to plug into such a system.

• Find suitable sites for generation facilities in the district.
Energy: District CHP
Energy-Efficiency Comparisons

**Standard Power Plant**

- 100% Fuel Input
- 60% "Waste" heat rejected to environment
- 40% Useful energy produced for electricity

**District Energy/Combined Heat and Power Plant**

- 100% Fuel Input
- 20% "Waste" heat rejected to environment
- 40% Useful energy produced for heating and/or cooling via district energy system
- 40% Useful energy produced for electricity
Requirements for a district energy system

- High load density (floor area, no. of stories and total number of buildings)
- Diversity of building types with different demand profiles
- 5000 hours /yr minimum heating or cooling
Energy: District CHP

Very dense and balanced mixed land uses in Plan Area + Transbay Redevelopment Area:

- Over 6,000,000 gsf office space and retail
- Over 3,500 housing units
**Draft Requirement:**

All major development must demonstrate that proposed heating and cooling systems have been designed in accordance with the following order of diminishing preference:

- connection to existing CHP distribution networks
- site-wide CHP powered by renewable energy
- gas-fired CHP or hydrogen fuel cells, both accompanied by renewables
- communal heating and cooling powered by renewable energy
- gas fired communal heating and cooling.
Location of Plants:
- Dispersed in multiple sites as network
- Phased according to development
- Basements of major new buildings
- Public sites with space or without current development program

Distribution:
- Major street and utility work already included in Transit Center, streetscape, development projects
Water

Citywide Storm Water guidelines:

Capture and treat 80% or more of annual storm water runoff volumes
Transit Center District Goals:

Reduce volume and speed of stormwater runoff

Reduce potable water use

Transit Center District Measures:

• Low-Impact Design ("LID") for streetscape and open space improvements
  • Bio-retention planters
  • Permeable paving
  • Street trees

• Building rainwater harvesting

• Green roofs and walls
LID techniques also help mitigation climate change impacts.
Urban Forest

**SF Climate Action Plan Citywide Goal:**
Plant and maintain 25,000 new trees in San Francisco by 2012, offsetting 2,500,000 pounds of CO2 annually.
Transit Center District Measures:

- Major tree planting on streets in tandem with sidewalk and public space enhancements
  - “Living Streets” – Beale, Main, Spear double rows of trees
  - Street trees on all streets
SF Climate Action Plan Goal:

Ensure that all new commercial and residential buildings in San Francisco eventually meet LEED Gold Standard.
## San Francisco Green Building Ordinance
Adopted 2008

### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED CERTIFICATION LEVELS

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Project in the Plan area automatically achieve minimum 5 points (7%) due to *location* and *existing city planning requirements*

- Site selection
- Development density
- Public transit accessibility
- Bicycle storage requirements
- Parking standards
**Goal:**

Ensure that major buildings are low-impact and high performance (with regards to energy, water, materials, construction) not accounting for the given inherent factors of location, density and existing city parking controls.

**Draft Policy:**

Require all major buildings in the Plan Area to achieve the minimum LEED levels established in the SF Green Building Ordinance without accounting for the given points based on location, density, and City parking standards.
Repeat of this presentation:

Thursday October 9th

Transbay Redevelopment Area
Citizen’s Advisory Committee Meeting
5:30pm
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
Future Workshops

Workshop #4

Fall (November)

Topics:
Financial Plan/Public Benefits

Refinements of Plan Ideas

Draft Plan for Public Review document to be published by end of year
Please Sign In

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Thank You

Comments?