

## **Central SoMa Draft Policy Document**

# **REVISED Large Site Land Use Controls**

**May 2014**

As described in the piece posted February 19<sup>th</sup>, the April 2013 Draft Plan proposes that the large site controls apply only to parcels larger than 20,000 square feet. Based on additional analysis and conversations with stakeholders, we are revising the Draft Plan proposal to increase the threshold for this control to 30,000 square feet. This change is based on the following analysis:

- With required upper story setbacks, the floor plate between 85-130 feet in height only reaches 20,000 square feet on a 30,000 square foot site, the size threshold generally considered to achieve economic attractiveness and functional viability for new mid-rise commercial construction.
- The shift to a 30,000 square foot threshold does not eliminate a substantial amount of potential job space. Of the nineteen potential development sites larger than 20,000 square feet, only four are between 20,000 and 30,000 square feet in size. Of those, two of them have odd-shaped lots that are poorly configured for office, in that they do not have any generally-rectangular lot area that is at least 20,000 square feet in size. The other two still maintain a high likelihood of being commercially developed.
- It is economically and physically challenging to produce a mixed use development (combined office and housing) on sites smaller than 30,000 square feet, given needs for vertical circulation cores, servicing and lobbies for both uses, along with a desire for ground floor retail or other active uses. While it is not the Plan's objective to ensure that every site can house both jobs and residential space, moving the threshold to 30,000 square feet meshes with this analysis as well.

The change in this requirement could result in a maximum of 500,000 square feet shifting from commercial space to residential space, out of the total of more than 9 million square feet of potential commercial space in the Plan Area. However, given the market conditions in this area, these sites may all still develop commercial space.