



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Memo to the Planning Commission

HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2011

*Date:* February 17, 2011  
*Case No.:* 2007.1275EM  
*Project:* **2009 Housing Element Update**  
*Initiation Hearing*  
*Staff Contact:* Kearstin Dischinger – (415) 558-6284  
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*Reviewed by:* Sarah Dennis Phillips and Teresa Ojeada

*Recommendation:* **Initiate Adoption of the 2009 Housing Element Update; Schedule Adoption Hearing for March 24, 2011**

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### BACKGROUND

The Planning Department, in cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Housing and in consultation with a roundtable of other City agencies, has developed a third draft of the 2009 Update of the Housing Element of the General Plan. The third draft of the 2009 Housing Element hinges on the core ideas first developed in the document's early draft: prioritization of permanently affordable housing; recognition and preservation of neighborhood character; integration of planning for housing, jobs, transportation and infrastructure; and our City's role as sustainable model of development. The majority of its policies represent these core values that our citizens were able to converge upon. However, the valuable diversity of opinion in San Francisco means that not every policy in this document can represent consensus.

The 2009 update of the Housing Element is required by State Law, and includes Part 1: Data and Needs Analysis, which contains a description and analysis of San Francisco's population, household and employment trends, existing housing characteristics, and housing needs; Part 2: Objectives, Policies; and a series of Appendices including Implementing Programs, which sets forth actions to help address the City's needs. Additionally the Planning Department will be completing a full Environmental Impact Report on the 2009 Housing Element update.

The Department worked closely with community leaders, stakeholders, City agencies, and community members starting in September of 2008. Outreach included (see Appendix B for complete listing):

- Community Advisory Body (CAB) convened to assist staff on the development and refinement of a draft version of objectives, policies and implementation programs.
- Over a dozen stakeholder sessions: special interest housing groups and organizations.
- Over 30 public workshops and presentations throughout the City
- Staff hosted office hours
- Online and written survey
- Planning Director hosted two workshops

With this release, the Planning Department intends to work towards adoption of the Housing Element, including certification of an environmental impact report (EIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), in accordance with state housing element law. Because no final draft has been adopted by our local governing bodies, San Francisco is listed as “out of compliance” on HCD’s Housing Element Compliance Report, which impacts the City’s eligibility for state housing, community development and infrastructure funding programs. A timely adoption will confirm our continued dedication towards meeting the State of California’s objectives towards housing and community development, and will reinstate our eligibility for these funds.

## **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

This third draft represents a synthesis of the comments received on the first (June 2009) and second (July 2010) drafts released by the Planning Department, and addresses comments received from the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the state agency charged with administering state housing element law. Changes in this draft:

- Highlight the City’s continuing strategy to plan for growth through community plans, and to partner that growth with supportive infrastructure and other improvements. This practice directs development to areas well-served by transit, ensures “complete neighborhoods” and helps to relieve pressure on neighborhoods less able to accommodate growth. (Policy 1.2)
- Reiterate the Planning Department’s commitment to involving all stakeholders in the community planning process, from neighborhoods to Citywide and regional stakeholders. (Policy 1.4)
- Clarify support for housing projects along major transit lines that are consistent with current zoning and design guidelines. While this was not a universally supported policy, it is the land use counterpart to the City’s Transit First policy, and a critical factor in meeting our greenhouse gas reduction goals. (Policy 1.10)
- Further reinforce neighborhood character, with stated support for individual community efforts that support good planning principles, Department adoption of neighborhood-specific design standards, and zoning to ensure that new housing does not harm the prevailing character of existing neighborhoods. (Policies 11.2, 11.3 and 1.4)
- Emphasize processes that convey clear information early on to all parties involved in new development, from project sponsors to concerned neighbors. Examples of such process include the Department’s recently adopted Pre-Application Process and Preliminary Project Assessment requirements. (Policy 10.2)

## **REQUIRED COMMISSION ACTION**

Initiate amendments to the Housing Element of the General Plan, and adoption proceedings for the 2009 Housing Element Update.

## BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The project provides a community based vision for the City's housing future.
- The project is required by State law, with links to infrastructure and housing funds.
- The project supports sustainable growth in the City and the region.

<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> <b>Initiate amendments to the Housing Element of the General Plan, , schedule an adoption Hearing for March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011.</b>
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### Attachments:

1. Resolution to initiate hearings on 2009 Housing Element
2. Draft 2009 Housing Element Part 1, Part 2, and Appendices  
<http://housingelement2009.sfplanning.org/>

SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**WHEREAS**, Section 4.105 of the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco mandates that the Planning Department shall periodically recommend to the Board of Supervisors for approval or rejection proposed amendments to the General Plan.

In compliance with State law, the San Francisco Planning Department is seeking to update the Housing Element of the General Plan;

The Planning Department, in cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Housing and in consultation with other City agencies, developed the 2009 Update of the Housing Element of the General Plan through a comprehensive community-based planning effort. The Department worked closely with community leaders, stakeholders, City agencies, and community members starting in September of 2008. A 15 member Community Advisory Body (CAB) was convened to assist staff on the development and refinement of a draft version of objectives, policies and implementation programs. The Department also hosted fourteen stakeholder sessions focusing on the needs and policy interests of special interest housing groups and organizations, and over 30 workshops, some in each supervisorial district of the City. The Planning Commission has hosted several informational hearings on the 2009 Housing Element update.

The proposed General Plan Amendment of the Housing Element is required by State Law, and will include *Part 1: Data and Needs Analysis*, which contains a description and analysis of San Francisco's population, household and employment trends; existing housing characteristics, and housing needs; *Part 2: Objectives, Policies and Implementation Programs*, which sets forth the policy framework to address the needs identified in Part 1; and a series of appendices. Additionally the Planning Department completed a full Environmental Impact Report on the 2009 Housing Element update, Overall, policies envisioned for the Housing Element would be consistent with the General Plan, especially the more detailed Area Plans. Staff recommends adoption of the draft Resolution of Intention to initiate proposed amendments to the General Plan, amending the Housing Element.

The Planning Commission will consider certification of the Housing Element Environmental Impact Report on or after 3/24/2011 prior to considering relevant amendments to the General Plan. It will also consider adopting California Environmental Quality Act Findings at that hearing.

Planning Code Section 101.1(b) establishes eight priority policies and is the basis by which differences between competing policies in the General Plan are resolved. The project is consistent with the eight priority policies, in that:

1. That existing neighborhood serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in or ownership of such businesses enhanced.

*The Housing Element includes policies that call for building and enhancing the existing contexts, including building housing near neighborhood commercial and encouraging neighborhood commercial services adequate to serve residents. A central goal of the Housing Element is to plan for housing to support our existing and future workforce.*

2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods.

*The Housing Element includes Objectives and policies that support the existing housing and neighborhood character, and aim to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhood. There are two objectives and 10 policies that address preserving the existing housing stock; there is also a separate Objective and 11 supporting policies that address neighborhood character.*

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced.

*A central goal of the Housing Element, and perhaps the most salient issue, is to preserve and enhance the City's affordable housing supply. Nearly every Objective and policy included in the Housing Element can be considered as addressing the Affordable Housing supply, but most clearly there are 3 Objectives that directly address affordable housing; and several Objectives and policies that intend to reduce the overall costs of housing construction, which results in greater affordability.*

4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking.

*The land use patterns and growth projections supported by the Housing Element update are the basis of current short and long term transportation planning for the City and County of San Francisco. Ultimately a continuation of the dense urban fabric will result in reduced regional transportation burdens and costs, including pollution, congestion, and increased infrastructure demands.*

5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced.

*The Plan would not adversely affect the industrial or service sectors.*

6. That the City achieves the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

*The Housing Element includes policies and implementation measures that encourage seismic sustainability of existing and new housing units.*

7. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

*The Plan would not have a negative effect on the preservation of landmarks and historic buildings. The Housing Element includes policies that recognize landmarks and historic buildings should be preserved.*

8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development.

*The Housing Element will not have an impact on open space and related sunlight issues. Individual buildings reviewed according to procedures described in Planning Code Section 295 are evaluated to identify the impacts of projects and buildings. Project permits can't be approved if the impacts are found to be significant.*

The Housing Element was developed in coordination with existing General Plan policies. Analysis of applicable General Plan Objectives and Policies has determined that the proposed action is, on balance, consistent with the General Plan as it is proposed to be amended. The proposed actions offer a compelling articulation and implementation of many of the concepts outlined in the General Plan, especially the Commerce and Industry Element, Recreation and Open Space Element, Transportation Element, and numerous Area Plans. Below are specific policies and objectives that support the proposed actions.

NOTE: General Plan Elements are in CAPITAL ITALICS

General Plan Objectives are in CAPITAL LETTERS  
General Plan Policies are in Arial standard font  
Key Polices and Objectives are **Bolded**

**COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ELEMENT**

**POLICY 6.1** Ensure and encourage the retention and provision of neighborhood-serving goods and services in the city's neighborhood commercial districts, while recognizing and encouraging diversity among the districts.

**POLICY 6.3** Preserve and promote the mixed commercial-residential character in neighborhood commercial districts. Strike a balance between the preservation of existing affordable housing and needed expansion of commercial activity.

**POLICY 6.4** Encourage the location of neighborhood shopping areas throughout the city so that essential retail goods and personal services are accessible to all residents.

**POLICY 6.6** Adopt specific zoning districts, which conform to a generalized neighborhood commercial land use and density plan.

**RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

**OBJECTIVE 4** PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION AND THE ENJOYMENT OF OPEN SPACE IN EVERY SAN FRANCISCO NEIGHBORHOOD.

**POLICY 4.6** Assure the provision of adequate public open space to serve new residential development.

**TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT**

**OBJECTIVE 2** USE THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AS A MEANS FOR GUIDING DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT.

**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.

**OBJECTIVE 3** ASSURE THAT NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO NEEDED SERVICES AND A FOCUS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES.

**BALBOA PARK AREA PLAN**

**OBJECTIVE 4.2** STRENGTHEN THE OCEAN AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT BY PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF HOUSING.

**OBJECTIVE 4.3** ESTABLISH AN ACTIVE, MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD AROUND THE TRANSIT STATION THAT EMPHASIZES THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING.

**OBJECTIVE 4.4** CONSIDER HOUSING AS A PRIMARY COMPONENT TO ANY DEVELOPMENT ON THE RESERVOIR.

**OBJECTIVE 4.5** PROVIDE INCREASED HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AFFORDABLE TO A MIX OF HOUSEHOLDS AT VARYING INCOME LEVELS.

**OBJECTIVE 4.6** ENHANCE AND PRESERVE THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

**BAYVIEW AREA PLAN**

OBJECTIVE 5 PRESERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

OBJECTIVE 6 ENCOURAGE THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW AFFORDABLE AND MARKET RATE HOUSING AT LOCATIONS AND DENSITY LEVELS THAT ENHANCE THE OVERALL RESIDENTIAL QUALITY OF BAYVIEW HUNTERS POINT.

**CENTRAL WATERFRONT AREA PLAN**

OBJECTIVE 1.1 ENCOURAGE THE TRANSITION OF PORTIONS OF THE CENTRAL WATERFRONT TO A MORE MIXED-USE CHARACTER, WHILE PROTECTING THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S CORE OF PDR USES AS WELL AS THE HISTORIC DOGPATCH NEIGHBORHOOD

OBJECTIVE 1.2 IN AREAS OF THE CENTRAL WATERFRONT WHERE HOUSING AND MIXED-USE IS ENCOURAGED, MAXIMIZE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL IN KEEPING WITH NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

OBJECTIVE 2.1 ENSURE THAT A SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF NEW HOUSING CREATED IN THE CENTRAL WATERFRONT IS AFFORDABLE TO PEOPLE WITH A WIDE RANGE OF INCOMES

**CHINATOWN AREA PLAN**

OBJECTIVE 3 STABILIZE AND WHERE POSSIBLE INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING

OBJECTIVE 4 PRESERVE THE URBAN ROLE OF CHINATOWN AS A RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD.

**DOWNTOWN PLAN**

OBJECTIVE 7 EXPAND THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING IN AND ADJACENT TO DOWNTOWN.

OBJECTIVE 8 PROTECT RESIDENTIAL USES IN AND ADJACENT TO DOWNTOWN FROM ENCROACHMENT BY COMMERCIAL USES.

**MARKET AND OCTAVIA AREA PLAN**

OBJECTIVE 1.1 CREATE A LAND USE PLAN THAT EMBRACES THE MARKET AND OCTAVIA NEIGHBORHOOD'S POTENTIAL AS A MIXED-USE URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 ENCOURAGE URBAN FORM THAT REINFORCES THE PLAN AREA'S UNIQUE PLACE IN THE CITY'S LARGER URBAN FORM AND STRENGTHENS ITS PHYSICAL FABRIC AND CHARACTER.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 ENCOURAGE CONSTRUCTION OF RESIDENTIAL INFILL THROUGHOUT THE PLAN AREA.

OBJECTIVE 2.3 PRESERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING SOUND HOUSING STOCK.

**MISSION AREA PLAN**

OBJECTIVE 2.1 ENSURE THAT A SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF NEW HOUSING CREATED IN THE MISSION IS AFFORDABLE TO PEOPLE WITH A WIDE RANGE OF INCOMES

**RINCON HILL AREA PLAN**

**OBJECTIVE 1.1 ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A UNIQUE DYNAMIC, MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD CLOSE TO DOWNTOWN, WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE CITY'S HOUSING SUPPLY.**

**OBJECTIVE 1.2 MAXIMIZE HOUSING IN RINCON HILL TO CAPITALIZE ON RINCON HILL'S CENTRAL LOCATION ADJACENT TO DOWNTOWN EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSIT SERVICE, WHILE STILL RETAINING THE DISTRICT'S LIVABILITY.**

**SHOWPLACE/POTERO HILL AREA PLAN**

**OBJECTIVE 2.1 ENSURE THAT A SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF NEW HOUSING CREATED IN THE SHOWPLACE / POTRERO IS AFFORDABLE TO PEOPLE WITH A WIDE RANGE OF INCOMES**

**OBJECTIVE 2.2 RETAIN AND IMPROVE EXISTING HOUSING AFFORDABLE TO PEOPLE OF ALL INCOMES**

**OBJECTIVE 2.4 LOWER THE COST OF THE PRODUCTION OF HOUSING**

**SOMA AREA PLAN**

**OBJECTIVE 2 PRESERVE EXISTING HOUSING.**

**OBJECTIVE 3 ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HOUSING, PARTICULARLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING.**

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that pursuant to Planning Code Section 340, the Planning Commission adopts a Resolution of Intention to initiate amendments to the General Plan of the City and County of San Francisco, in order to update the Housing Element of the General Plan.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that pursuant to Planning Code Section 306.3, the Planning Commission authorizes the Department to provide appropriate notice for a public hearing to consider the above referenced General Plan amendment in a draft ordinance approved as to form by the City Attorney contained in **Exhibit M-3**, as though fully set forth herein, to be considered at a publicly noticed hearing on or after 3/24/2011.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the City Planning Commission on \_\_\_\_\_, 2011.

Linda Avery  
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED:



## **Attachment 2. Draft 3 2009 Housing Element**

**Please go to the Housing Element Website:**

<http://housingelement2009.sfplanning.org/>

### **Part One: Data Needs Analysis**

[http://housingelement2009.sfplanning.org/docs/Housing\\_Element\\_PartI\\_Data\\_Needs\\_As\\_smt\\_DRAFT3.pdf](http://housingelement2009.sfplanning.org/docs/Housing_Element_PartI_Data_Needs_As_smt_DRAFT3.pdf)

### **Part Two: Objectives and Policies**

[http://housingelement2009.sfplanning.org/docs/Housing\\_Element\\_PartII\\_Objectives\\_and\\_Policies\\_DRAFT3.pdf](http://housingelement2009.sfplanning.org/docs/Housing_Element_PartII_Objectives_and_Policies_DRAFT3.pdf)

### **Appendices:**

[http://housingelement2009.sfplanning.org/docs/Housing\\_Element\\_PartI\\_Data\\_Needs\\_As\\_smt\\_DRAFT3.pdf](http://housingelement2009.sfplanning.org/docs/Housing_Element_PartI_Data_Needs_As_smt_DRAFT3.pdf)