

# CENTRAL SOMA

## Historic Context Statement & Historic Resource Survey



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**PLANNING**  
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# Chapter 1

## Project Description

### INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

The Central SoMa Plan (previously known as the Central Corridor Plan) is a planning effort associated with the construction of the Central Subway, a new municipal rail line designed to connect the Mission Bay and Chinatown neighborhoods. The southern portion of the Central Subway will run through the South of Market neighborhood along a route which follows the alignment of 4th Street. To take advantage of the enhanced transit connections, the Central SoMa Project will be accompanied by proposed changes to the allowable land uses and building heights in the planning area.

Most of the Central SoMa area has been previously examined by historic surveys and related documentation. These efforts, however, were undertaken over a 45-year period and large portions of the study area have changed dramatically since the first surveys were completed during the 1960s and 1970s. Much of the prior survey work was also conducted in an ad-hoc fashion based on varying priorities. Thus it is the goal of this study to examine the Central SoMa area holistically. This includes synthesizing all prior historic studies and preservation plans that touch on the study area. It also includes an analysis of previously designated historic resources—including conservation districts, landmark districts, and historic districts—and their relationship to previously undocumented buildings.

The two primary features of this study are the preparation of a historic context statement and a reconnaissance level historic survey. The historic context statement is geared to aid in the identification and evaluation of previously undocumented age-eligible buildings (more than 45 years old) located within the Central SoMa area. It includes a discussion of various property types, their significance, and the integrity thresholds necessary to register them as historic resources.

The context statement was used to inform the historic survey, which had as its primary goal the assignment of historic resource status codes to all buildings in the study area not previously documented. Specific attention was given to the identification of individual historic resources, as well as California Register eligible historic districts. In a few cases, the survey also re-evaluated some buildings for their potential to connect to existing historic districts or conservation areas. The assignment of historic resource status codes will significantly aid the Central SoMa planning process and will also bring greater transparency to property owners and other interested parties.

Preparation of the historic context statement and survey fieldwork were performed by San Francisco Planning Department preservation staff, all of whom meet the Secretary of the Interior Professional Qualifications Standards for Historic Preservation. Jonathan Lammers served as project manager, lead researcher and writer. Department staff member Susan Parks and student intern Avi Asherov also provided valuable survey and research assistance. Department oversight and review was provided by Preservation Coordinator Tim Frye. Additional review was provided by the Central SoMa Survey Advisory Group consisting of Mike Buhler, Executive Director of San Francisco Heritage; M.C. Canlas, historian and author of *SoMa Pilipinas*; Richard Johns, San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission; and Alice Light, Director of Community Planning for TODCO.

## CENTRAL SOMA PLAN AREA

The Central SoMa plan area encompasses 28 city blocks bounded by Market Street on the north, Townsend Street on the south, 2nd Street on the east, and 6th Street on the west. The boundaries were designed to capture buildings within two blocks east or west of Central Subway corridor. As previously mentioned, most of the study area has been previously examined by other historic surveys. Therefore the study area is much larger than the areas examined by the historic survey.



The southern and western portions of the study area are primarily characterized by light industrial buildings. Elsewhere, the age, scale and character of the building stock is more location specific. These areas are discussed below:

- The northern edge of the study area in proximity to Market and Mission streets displays a strong relationship with Downtown, both in terms of building heights, as well as architectural styles and ornamentation. This character is also maintained along New Montgomery Street at the northeastern corner of the study area, which has served as an extension of Downtown into the South of Market since the 19th century.
- The north-central portion of the study area is dominated by the Yerba Buena redevelopment area, encompassing parcels stretching from 2nd Street to 5th Street, primarily between Mission Street and Harrison Street. Several blocks were entirely redeveloped during from the 1970s through the 1990s. These



include the Moscone Convention Center, as well as the Metreon and Yerba Buena Gardens. Others blocks feature a mix of older buildings alongside newer construction.

- The south-central portion of the study area is bisected by Interstate 80, which runs in twin viaducts between Harrison and Bryant Streets. Prior to construction of the Interstate, the western on- and off-ramps for the Bay Bridge terminated at 5th Street. Properties located adjacent to the Interstate are primarily small- and mid-scale industrial buildings.
- The southeastern portion of the study area is characterized by mid- and large-scale industrial buildings, including many 19th and early 20th century warehouses which contribute to the South End Landmark District. This area also includes the previously identified South Park Historic District, a discrete residential development organized around an oval park.
- The southwestern portion of the study area is likewise characterized by mid- and large-scale industrial buildings and abuts several major transportation routes. This includes the Caltrain rail yard and passenger station at 4th and Townsend streets, as well as the off-ramps for Interstate 280 at 6th and Brannan streets.

## **CENTRAL SOMA HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY**

The Central SoMa Historic Resource Survey focused on parcels within the plan area that have not been examined in detail by prior historic studies. This included the Yerba Buena redevelopment area where few buildings more than 50 years old are located. The area with the greatest concentration of unsurveyed age-eligible buildings is located at the northwest corner of the study area, bounded by 5th, 6th, Market and Natoma streets. Another small cluster included the San Francisco Flower Mart, located in the southwest portion of the study area and confined to parcels bounded by 5th, 6th, Bryant and Brannan streets.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Survey Program**

The foundation of a successful preservation program is an understanding of the location, distribution, and significance of historic, cultural, and archeological resources, which can include buildings, sites, structures, objects, districts, or cultural landscapes. This understanding is achieved through the historic and cultural resource survey process. In addition to identifying important individual historic or cultural resources and eligible historic districts, a survey can help identify buildings that qualify for local or national preservation incentives and/or inform the development of neighborhood-specific design guidelines to protect neighborhood character.

To facilitate these and other preservation efforts, the Department has established the Comprehensive Citywide Cultural and Historical Resource Survey Program (Survey Program) to manage and conduct historic and cultural resource surveys. The Survey Program provides guidance for the development of neighborhood-specific historic context statements and large-scale surveys, in support of the Department's Area Plans and other local planning efforts. Survey evaluation informs the public, property owners, government officials, and those who do business in San Francisco, making environmental review more transparent.

### **Historic Context Statements**

A Historic Context Statement creates a framework for interpreting history by grouping information around a common theme, geographical area, and time period. Context statements are established evaluative tools for surveying historic and cultural resources in San Francisco, as well as throughout California and the nation. In its

instructions for documenting historic and cultural resources, the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) references the National Park Service's context based methodology: "The significance of a historical resource is best understood and judged in relation to historic context. A historic context consists of: a theme, pattern, or research topic; geographical area; and chronological period. The theme, pattern or research topic provides a basis for evaluating the significance of a resource when it is defined in relation to established criteria."

In June 2000, the former San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) adopted the OHP's Instructions for Recording Historical Resources (1995) as the methodology for documenting historic and cultural properties in San Francisco. Toward this end, several area-based and thematic-based context statements have been developed for use in San Francisco surveys by the Department, the Historic Preservation Commission, and various other public agencies and community organizations.

The content and organization of the context statement is consistent with federal, state, and local guidelines that have been adopted for developing historic contexts. Numerous National Park Service publications were consulted to inform the organization and evaluative frameworks for the context statement, including National Register Bulletin No. 15 "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," and Bulletin No. 16B "How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form."

## **Research & Prior Studies**

As mentioned previously, a substantial portion of the historical background information presented in this report represents a synthesis of previous studies, historic context statements and survey evaluations. These studies are discussed at length in Appendix A: Historic Context Methodology. The Appendix also includes a discussion of Article 10 Landmarks and Article 11 Conservation Districts in the plan area, as well all previously identified historic districts.

Individual building-specific research was conducted for a select group of properties by Department staff, or interns working under staff supervision. Typical building-specific research included San Francisco Assessor's Office research to determine original and successive property ownership, as well as the examination of historic building permits at the Department of Building Inspection. Other sources of information that were consulted included historic newspaper articles, city directories, and various photographic collections.

## **Fieldwork & Photography**

Field reconnaissance was conducted in July 2013 by Planning Department staff. This included walking streets in the study area and examining the extant building stock. Particular attention was given to blocks in or adjacent to areas that had previously been identified as California Register eligible historic districts, landmark districts or conservation districts. More intensive fieldwork was dedicated to buildings which had not been examined by prior historic studies. All of these properties were digitally photographed, including rear facades, if applicable. Their relationship to other, previously documented historic resources was also examined. Buildings which appeared individually eligible for historic designation were noted for additional research and follow-up by Department staff, as were buildings that appeared to qualify as potential contributors to existing historic or conservation districts.

## Chapter 2

# Historical Development in the Central SoMa Study Area

As discussed in the Methodology section, the Central SoMa study area has been the subject of numerous historic surveys, historic context statements and related documentation. Therefore, this study has not sought to duplicate previous research efforts, but rather synthesize the documentation with a specific focus on extant built resources. In this respect, the discussion of the area's pre-1906 development is relatively brief, as only a few buildings in the area survived or were reconstructed after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. Themes and events from the pre-1906 era which are discussed are those that proved most influential in guiding the area's reconstruction following the 1906 disaster, as well as themes that continue to influence development today.

Of all the prior historic studies, the most comprehensive is the *South of Market Historic Context Statement*. This report was commissioned by the San Francisco Planning Department and completed by Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting in association with Page & Turnbull, Inc. Much of the information which follows has been adapted from that study, with additional research used to illuminate specific themes or areas within the Central SoMa study area.<sup>1</sup>

### Development Prior to 1906

The three factors which have proved most influential in the development of the South of Market/Central SoMa area are its proximity to the waterfront, its railroad connections, and the unusual nature of its street grid. Combined, these factors created a neighborhood which functioned as a nexus for industry and transport, as well as the city's most densely populated residential area, home to a primarily working-class, immigrant labor force. These dynamics have their origins in the first decades following the Gold Rush, and continued to serve as primary forces shaping the neighborhood well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

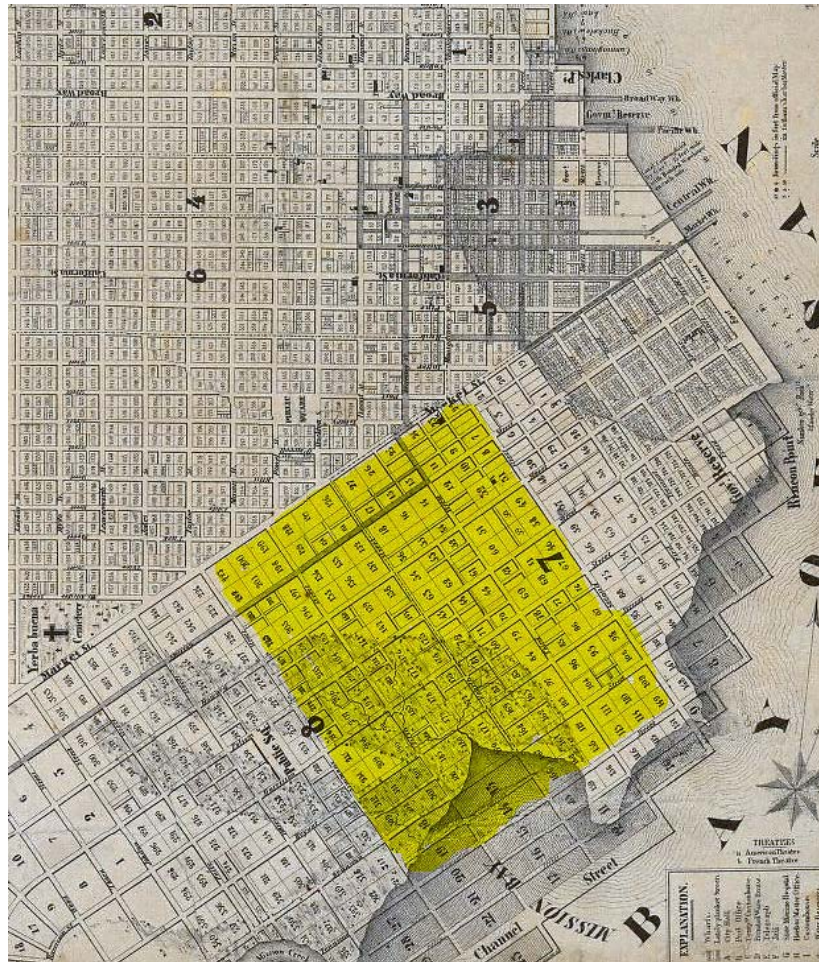
#### The 100 Vara Survey

In 1847, when California still remained Mexican territory, Irish immigrant Jasper O'Farrell was hired to create a new survey of San Francisco. O'Farrell laid out 120-foot-wide Market Street on a diagonal designed to connect the growing settlement at Yerba Buena Cove with Mission Dolores. On the north side of Market Street, O'Farrell laid out blocks which measured 50 varas on a side. (A vara is a Spanish unit of measurement that approximately corresponds to 33 inches.) South of Market Street, O'Farrell created the "100-Vara-Survey," with blocks that were twice as long and twice as wide as those to the north. These larger blocks were typically bisected by smaller streets and alleys.

The different sizes of the 50-vara and 100-vara blocks meant that the north-south streets of the two opposing grids did not align, hampering direct communication across Market Street. Initially, this was not as conspicuous as most of the surveyed area remained ungraded and existed only as "paper" streets and blocks marked by survey stakes. With the coming of the Gold Rush and subsequent development of the city, however, various attempts would be made to improve connection between areas north and south of Market Street.

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<sup>1</sup> In several instances the text from this study has been reproduced wholesale, or with minor edits. To enhance readability, these passages are footnoted but not contained in quotations.



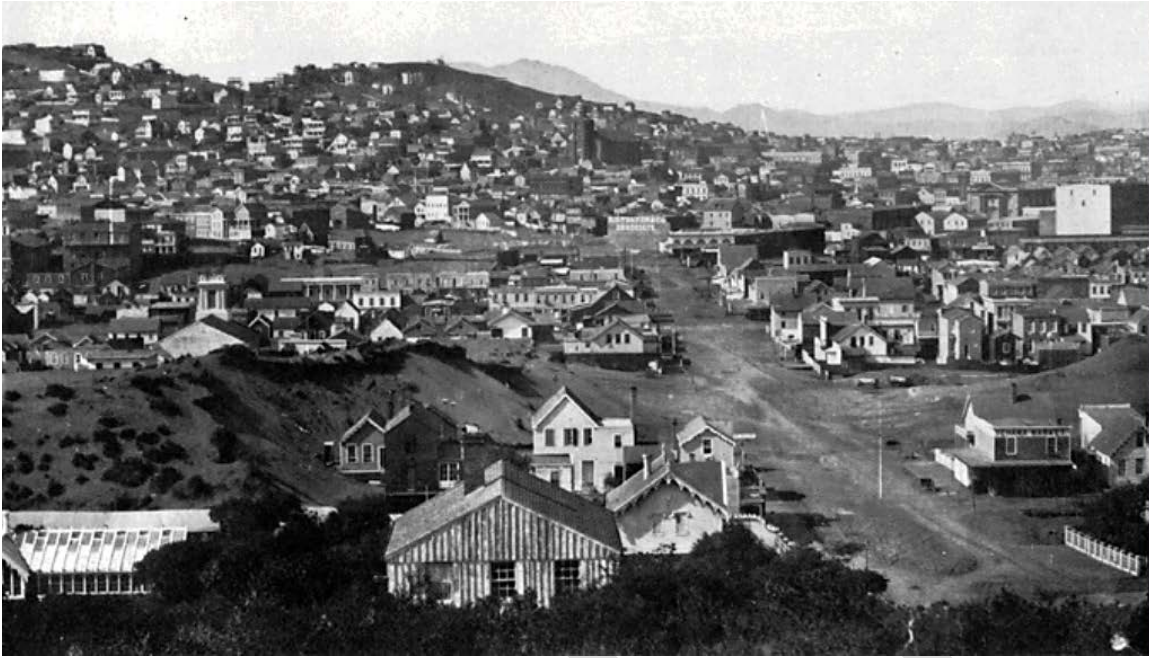
1852 Britton & Rey Map of San Francisco. The Central SoMa study area has been highlighted in yellow. Note that the southwest portion of the survey area was at that time marked by tidal marshes or submerged beneath Mission Bay. (David Rumsey Map Collection)

## Topography

As the Gold Rush began in earnest in 1849, much of the Central SoMa area consisted of tidal wetlands. In particular, the area south of what is today Folsom Street and west of 3rd Street either consisted of tidal marshland and creeks, or was actually submerged beneath the waters of Mission Bay. To the east was Rincon Hill, rising to more than 100 feet near the intersection of Second and Harrison streets. Toward the north end of the study area, what is today Mission Street marked the crown of an east-west dune ridge, while Market Street was covered by sand hills of varying heights. During the Gold Rush, the majority of development in the South of Market was concentrated in “Happy Valley,” located along the shoreline between Market and Mission streets, and “Pleasant Valley” to the south. Both of these areas were framed on the west by a ridge of sand dunes located east of what is today 2nd Street.<sup>2</sup> In time, the hills would be leveled and the soil used to fill in both Mission Bay and San Francisco Bay. But early in the city’s history, these natural topographic features exerted a considerable influence on land use and the development of transportation routes and other infrastructure.

<sup>2</sup> Brian Byrd, Jack Meyer, M.A., et. al., *Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for the Moscone Center Expansion, San Francisco California*, Planning Department Case No. 2013.0154E, (Davis, CA: Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., September 2013), 34.





View north from Rincon Hill, most likely from Harrison Street between 2nd and 3rd street, 1856.  
Note the large sand ridges that still dominated portions of the area. (FoundSF)

During the early 1850s, grading and filling activities began in earnest, particularly after adoption of the “Hoadley Grade” in 1853 which set the street grades for the area in order to facilitate adequate drainage.<sup>3</sup> During this period, Mission, Folsom and 3rd Street were the principal roads in the South of Market that were graded and planked, and in time 3rd Street would emerge as an important commercial corridor. Grading activities continued unabated for more than a decade, and by the 1860s many of the sand dunes in the area had been leveled and developed.

### Industrial Development

The large 100-vara blocks surveyed by O’Farrell proved conducive to industrial development. The streets were wider (30 varas wide) than north of Market (where they were 25 varas wide), making the transportation of goods via wagon and eventually train and truck much easier. While larger streets such as Mission, Howard and Folsom served as the primary thoroughfares, the 100-vara blocks were also interlaced by a network of smaller back streets and alleys such as Jessie, Tehama, Shipley, Perry and Bluxome streets, which provided light-traffic areas in which to load and unload goods.

As early as 1850, the South of Market was on its way to becoming San Francisco’s primary industrial district. Important pioneer foundries such as Union Iron Works, Vulcan Iron Works and Pacific Iron Works set up shop on the waterfront, which at that time—before major filling of San Francisco Bay occurred—was located along First Street. During the Gold Rush era, this compact industrial district served as the most productive industrial zone on the West Coast.<sup>4</sup>

Beginning in the mid-1850s, the production of wheat for export to Europe became increasingly lucrative, and vast quantities of wheat grown in the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys were shipped to San Francisco for storage prior

<sup>3</sup>Brian Byrd, Jack Meyer, M.A., et. al., *Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for the Moscone Center Expansion, San Francisco California*, Planning Department Case No. 2013.0154E, (Davis, CA: Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., September 2013), 39.

<sup>4</sup>Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 22.

to shipment overseas. Warehouse construction in the South of Market boomed, particularly adjacent to the waterfront in the vicinity of Bryant, Brannan, 1st, and 3rd Streets in an area that became known as the South End. The docks of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company were also adjacent at the foot of Brannan Street. At the time, 2nd Street near Townsend bordered the curving line of South Beach. However, this area would be filled in as warehouse construction boomed again following the construction of rail lines terminating near the waterfront in this area.



View north from 2<sup>nd</sup> and Townsend streets, 1864. Note the curving shoreline of South Beach at center right. (San Francisco Public Library, AAB-5752)



Similar view from 2<sup>nd</sup> and Townsend streets, circa 1880s. Note the extensive filling that has occurred in the South Beach area. (U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

By the mid-1880s, dozens of warehouses had been constructed in the South End area to store import and export goods. Most were one or two-story brick buildings with load-bearing brick walls and heavy timber structural systems. Goods typically housed in these warehouses included coffee, sugar, rice, beans, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, liquor, candy, and manufactured goods. Several of these warehouses, rebuilt or repaired after the 1906 Earthquake, are today recognized as contributors to the locally designated South End Landmark District, which is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>5</sup>

While the most heavily industrialized areas were concentrated near the waterfront and railroad connections, smaller-scale manufacturing facilities were scattered throughout the South of Market where they often existed cheek-by-jowl with residential areas. For example, within the Central SoMa study area, the block bounded by 4th, 5th, Bryant and Harrison streets was, by the turn of the century, home to a basket manufacturer, candy factory, two cigar box factories, a wagon shop, several stables, and multiple shops associated with the West Coast Furniture Factory. Nevertheless, this same block also included rows of one- and two-story dwellings, flats and row houses, as well as a concentration of stores and saloons along 4th Street.

### Residential Development

Much of San Francisco's growth during the latter quarter of the nineteenth century can largely be attributed to the arrival of new immigrants, particularly after the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869. According to the 1880 census, four of every five San Franciscans were either foreign-born or of foreign parentage. The three largest immigrant groups during the post-Civil War era were the Irish, German, and Chinese. Irish immigrants and their children dominated the South of Market, comprising roughly half the population. However, many other nations were represented. An analysis of an 1880 census tract near the corner of 3rd and Mission streets showed that one quarter of

<sup>5</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 42.



the residents were born in countries that included England, Germany, Austria, Canada, Italy, Mexico, China, Sweden and Norway.<sup>6</sup> A few clusters of African Americans also lived in the South of Market during this period, primarily along Minna, Tehama and Natoma streets.<sup>7</sup>

By this time, the South of Market's reputation as an immigrant and working-class district was firmly established. Boarding houses and lodging houses grew up simultaneously with the industrial plants, shipping facilities and commercial buildings. These provided relatively inexpensive lodgings for the area's labor force, which consisted primarily of single males. During the 1870s, the neighborhood contained fully one-quarter of the boarding houses and one-half of the 655 lodging houses in San Francisco.<sup>8</sup> City directories from the 1870s noted that an unusually large number of small hotels and boarding houses had been constructed along Mission Street between 3rd and 9th streets, as well as along Market Street. Typically of wood-frame construction, the hotels usually featured ground floor commercial space, with a small entrance lobby for the hotel. While all of these lodging houses were destroyed during the 1906 disaster, their basic typology persisted. Lodging houses and small hotels were a significant aspect of post-1906 reconstruction South of Market, and many remain standing in the northwestern part of the Central SoMa study area.



View south toward Rincon Hill from the Nucleus Hotel, located at 3rd and Market Streets, circa 1870.  
Note the intense residential development along the streets and alleys South of Market.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

Generally speaking, these lodging houses supported an overtly transient workforce. As observed by Alvin Averbach in his study, *San Francisco's South of Market District, 1850-1950: The Emergence of a Skid Row*:

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<sup>6</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 30.

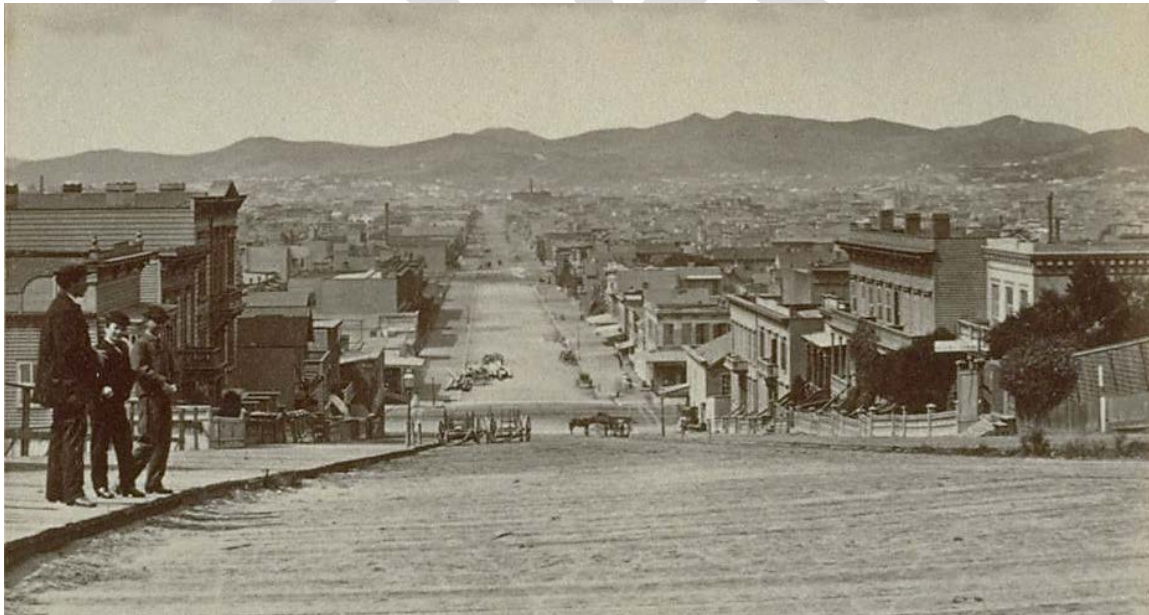
<sup>7</sup> Tim Kelley Consulting, The Alfred Williams Consultancy and VerPlanck Historic Preservation Consulting, *San Francisco African American Citywide Historic Context Statement: 1579-2014*, (San Francisco: January, 2015), 34.

<sup>8</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 42.

More interesting, in light of the seasonal and business cyclical movements of the unemployed, is the great mobility of South of Market residents between 1870 and 1900. In none of the five-year periods measured (1871-1876, 1880-1885, and 1890-1895) did more than 21 percent of South of Market residents stay at the same address. In each period 40-45 per cent moved elsewhere in the city, or sometimes in the same area, while 40 per cent perennially left the city or died. These figures suggest that moving about in search of jobs figured significantly in the residents' economic life and that it was an activity common to both the major immigrant groups and the class of hobo workers.<sup>9</sup>

It would be incorrect, however, to characterize residential development in the South of Market as being the exclusive domain of tenements and lodging houses. Prior to 1906, the South of Market was the city's densest residential neighborhood and included a great number of single-family dwellings, flats and row houses. During the 1870s, the area bounded by Mission, Folsom, 3rd and 4th streets was dominated by single-family residences, although Mission and Howard streets would largely be redeveloped with commercial buildings by the turn of the century.<sup>10</sup> As late as 1905, however, many residential enclaves remained. For example, within the Central SoMa study area, the block bounded by 3rd, 4th, Bryant and Harrison streets was almost exclusively residential, with mirrored rows of two-story dwellings and row houses along the interior of the block. Commercial operations fronted the numbered streets and typically provided services designed to serve the local residents.

During the 1850s and 1860s, residential development in the South of Market also included a few overtly affluent residential enclaves. Most prominent was a concentration of large homes along the upper slopes of Rincon Hill. The relatively mild climate, panoramic views, and proximity to downtown inspired several of San Francisco's early mercantile leaders to construct mansions with ample gardens along the crest of the hill. Rincon Hill remained San Francisco's most desirable address until construction of the Second Street Cut in 1869.



View southwest along Harrison Street from Rincon Hill, circa 1870s.

Note the overtly residential character of the area.

(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library, via Calisphere)

<sup>9</sup> Alvin Averbach, "San Francisco's South of Market District, 1850-1950: The Emergence of a Skid Row," *California Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Fall, 1973), 203.

<sup>10</sup> Brian Byrd, Jack Meyer, M.A., et. al., *Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for the Moscone Center Expansion, San Francisco California*, Planning Department Case No. 2013.0154E, (Davis, CA: Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., September 2013), 45.

Another residential enclaves designed to attract affluent residents was located at South Park on the southern slope of Rincon Hill. In 1852, Englishman George Gordon started purchasing lots between Bryant, Brannan, 2nd and 3rd Streets to construct a development arrayed around an oval garden 75 feet wide and 550 feet long. The garden was to be surrounded by luxurious townhouses in the manner of the residential “crescents” of London, New York, and Boston.<sup>11</sup> Streets and sidewalks at South Park were the first in the city to be paved. However, the ebbing of the Gold Rush fortunes slowed sales, and South Park was never built out as planned. Instead individuals constructed wood-frame single- and multi-family buildings, all of which were destroyed in 1906. However, the unusual street and lot pattern persists, as does the park, which was acquired by the city in 1897.

### Religious Institutions

Churches were very important to Irish immigrants, serving as a foundation for traditional Catholic and ethnic identity. St. Patrick’s parish, the oldest Catholic parish in the South of Market and third oldest in the city, was established in 1851 at a rented hall on the corner of 4th and Jessie streets. After the Civil War, the growing numbers of Irish Catholic parishioners led Father Peter J. Grey to purchase a lot on the north side of Mission Street, between 3rd and 4th streets. The new St. Patrick’s church was dedicated in 1872 and served a predominantly Irish immigrant population of approximately 30,000.<sup>12</sup> The church was intended to serve as the Irish national church of San Francisco, and indeed, the entire West Coast. St. Patrick’s was heavily damaged in the 1906 Earthquake and Fire and the existing church had to be reconstructed. It still stands at 756 Mission Street within the Central SoMa study area and is San Francisco Landmark No. 4. Adjacent is the church rectory, constructed in 1939.

Numerous other churches were also constructed in the South of Market, although most were not reconstructed after 1906. Within the Central SoMa study area, one church which was gutted by fire and reconstructed following the earthquake was St. Rose Church, located along Brannan Street between 4th and 5th streets. This building was documented by the Historic American Building Survey in the 1930s, and subsequently demolished in August 1940.



St. Rose Church, north side of Brannan between 4th and 5th streets, circa 1900.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

<sup>11</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 24.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid: 31.

## Railroad and Streetcar Development

Rail transport played a vital role in the development of the Central SoMa area. The earliest rail line to enter San Francisco was the San Francisco & San Jose Railway. Completed in the mid-1860s, the railroad built a spur from its terminus at Valencia and Market Street to the intersection of 4th and Bryant streets in what is today the Central SoMa study area. However, the dominant player in San Francisco's railroad development was the Central Pacific Railroad, otherwise known as "The Octopus," in recognition of its extensive influence in all areas of state and local government.

The Central Pacific Railroad was founded in 1863 by a group of Sacramento merchants subsequently known as the "Big Four" —Collis Huntington, Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins and Charles Crocker. In 1868, the State of California granted title to 192 acres of Mission Bay to the Central Pacific in exchange for an agreement to fill in the shallow tidal flats. In 1870, the Central Pacific purchased the San Francisco & San Jose Railroad, and by 1872 had completed construction of its freight and passenger terminals on filled ground at 3rd and Townsend streets. In time, spur railroad lines were constructed to connect to various warehouses and industrial plants. The curving rights-of-way for several of these spur lines persist in the southern portion of the Central SoMa study area, particularly in proximity to the current Caltrain station and rail yard, located one block west of the historic train station and freight depot.

Beginning in 1889, the network of Southern Pacific Railroad tracks was augmented by the tracks of the short-line State Belt Line Railroad. Built by the Port of San Francisco, the State Belt Line Railroad eventually evolved into a 67-mile network of tracks linking the piers to the warehouses of the South End, Northeast Waterfront, and eventually Fort Mason and the Presidio. The Belt Line Railway was instrumental in providing access between wharves and warehouses, and in unifying the northern and southern waterfront.



City Railroad "Montgomery, Mission & City Front" streetcar on New Montgomery Street near Market Street, 1876.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)



Electric trolley running south on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street between Mission and Howard streets, 1905.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

Streetcar transit was another critical feature of development in the South of Market. Initially these lines featured horse-drawn cars, although many were later converted to cable car or electric trolley service. By 1863, the North Beach and Mission Railroad was running lines down 1st, 4th, and Folsom streets; the Omnibus Railroad ran lines down 2nd, 3rd and Howard streets, while the Central Railroad ran a line down 6th Street.<sup>13</sup> A decade later, streetcar lines had been installed along every numbered street but 5th Street, with additional lines running out Mission,

<sup>13</sup> A. Gensoul, *Railroad Map of the City of San Francisco California, 1863*, (San Francisco: Britton & Co. Lithographers, 1863).



Folsom and Brannan streets.<sup>14</sup> The southern terminus for many of these lines was the growing Mission District, which in many ways functioned as a working class suburb of the South of Market.

By the turn of the century, many of the streetcar lines were operated by the Market Street Railway Company, which had been taken over by the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1893. The San Francisco and San Mateo Electric Railway also began operations along Harrison Street in 1892. By 1905, rail traffic ran on every major street in the Central SoMa area, making it arguably the most transit-rich neighborhood in San Francisco.



1873 Bancroft Company map of San Francisco.

Note the number of streetcar lines (dashed and solid lines) running through the Central SoMa study area.  
(David Rumsey Map Collection)

### Street Improvements

As previously discussed, the differing grids of the 50-Vara-Survey north of Market Street and the 100-Vara-Survey south of Market street resulted in awkward intersections that hampered north-south communication in the downtown area. As the city's commercial development began to move south toward Market Street during the 1860s, various efforts were made to break the logjam.

#### *The Second Street Cut*

Completed in 1869, the Second Street Cut was financed by private investors to improve access from Market Street to the Pacific Mail Wharf at 1st and Brannan streets. However, the cut was crudely blasted through the center of Rincon Hill, transforming what had been a semi-rural lane running up and over the top of the hill into a wide thoroughfare suitable for teams of horses operating at street grade. The cut physically damaged several properties and significantly

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<sup>14</sup> A. L. Bancroft, *Bancroft's Official Guide Map of City and County of San Francisco*, (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft, 1873).

impaired Rincon Hill's desirability as the last upper-class enclave South of Market. Many of the larger properties were subsequently converted into rooming houses or replaced by tenements.

#### *New Montgomery Street*

The development of New Montgomery Street represented the vision of two San Francisco capitalists, Asbury Harpending and banker William Ralston, to create an upscale office, banking, retail, and hospitality district along an extension of Montgomery Street across Market Street. Beginning around 1870, the men purchased all the land on either side of the proposed street and began demolishing buildings for redevelopment. However, Harpending and Ralston were unable to convince property owners south of Howard Street to sell, which halted development only two blocks south of Market Street. Nevertheless, several prominent buildings were constructed in the area, including the Palace Hotel, which replaced a Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum on the site. The Palace Hotel was completed in 1875 and then considered the most well-appointed hotel in the United States. While all of these buildings were destroyed by the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, subsequent reconstruction along New Montgomery—which included a new Palace Hotel—retained the essential character of the area as an upscale southerly extension of downtown into the South of Market.



The Grand and Palace hotels at the corner of Market and New Montgomery streets, circa 1890s.  
(R. J. Waters Album of San Francisco views, Bancroft Library via Calisphere)

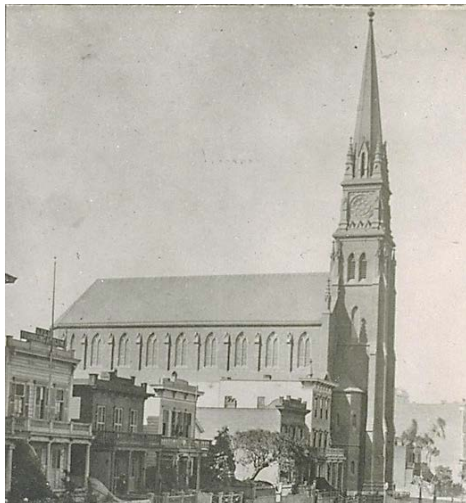
#### **Commercial Development**

The opening of New Montgomery Street also had a transformative effect on the surrounding area, which evolved from a generally low-rent industrial and residential character into a more intensive commercial, civic and entertainment zone. This redevelopment was concentrated on Market and Mission streets, between 1st and 5th streets, as well as along the intersecting numbered streets. Several of the most important buildings erected in this area during the 1870s included the U.S. Mint, which opened at 5th and Mission streets on November 5, 1874, and the Grand Opera House, which opened in 1876. The luxury hotels and Opera House, in turn, began to attract milliners, jewelers and other businesses that catered to the “carriage trade.” By the late 1870s, Mission Street between 2nd and



3rd streets had also begun to attract wholesale furniture, carpet, and bedding businesses, eventually earning it the nickname “the Wholesale District.”<sup>15</sup>

As commercial enterprises spread south from Market Street, many older residential and commercial buildings were replaced. This is amply demonstrated by a comparison of historic photographs of St. Patrick’s Church. During the 1870s, the church was largely surrounded by wood-frame single-family homes and flats. By 1905, though, the entire area had been almost entirely redeveloped with large brick masonry commercial, mixed-use and manufacturing buildings. During this period, the area also featured one of the highest concentrations of pawn brokers in the city, a phenomenon that reflected the transient working class demographics in the area.<sup>16</sup> The mixed-used character of the area that was established by the turn of the century also set the tone for reconstruction following the 1906 Earthquake.



View east along Mission Street to  
St. Patrick’s Church, likely circa 1875.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)



View east along Mission Street to  
St. Patrick’s Church, 1905.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

Elsewhere in the South of Market, commercial activity was generally located along the numbered streets. This included buildings devoted entirely to commercial enterprise, as well as mixed-use buildings with commercial uses on the ground floor. Typical of this development were corner groceries, saloons, dry goods stores, bakeries, butchers, shoemakers and general merchandise stores. Given the overwhelming numbers of single male laborers, houses of prostitution were also not uncommon. Shopkeepers often lived above their shops, and frequently belonged to the same ethnic group as their customers. In this sense, the South of Market neighborhood functioned much as a city unto itself.

One of the most prominent combinations of commercial and industrial uses was located at “newspaper angle,” centered on the intersection of Market and 3rd streets. It included many of the city’s earliest skyscrapers, including the 19-story Spreckels/Call Building (1896) on the southwest corner, the 7-story Hearst/Examiner building on the southeast corner (1898), and the 10-story DeYoung/Chronicle Building (1889) across the street at Market and Kearny streets. This central location facilitated the rapid distribution of newspapers throughout the city. It was also a prime commercial address, and a majority of these buildings featured rentable office space. All three buildings were gutted

<sup>15</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 37.

<sup>16</sup> Brian Byrd, Jack Meyer, M.A., et. al., *Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for the Moscone Center Expansion, San Francisco California*, Planning Department Case No. 2013.0154E, (Davis, CA: Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., September 2013), 46.

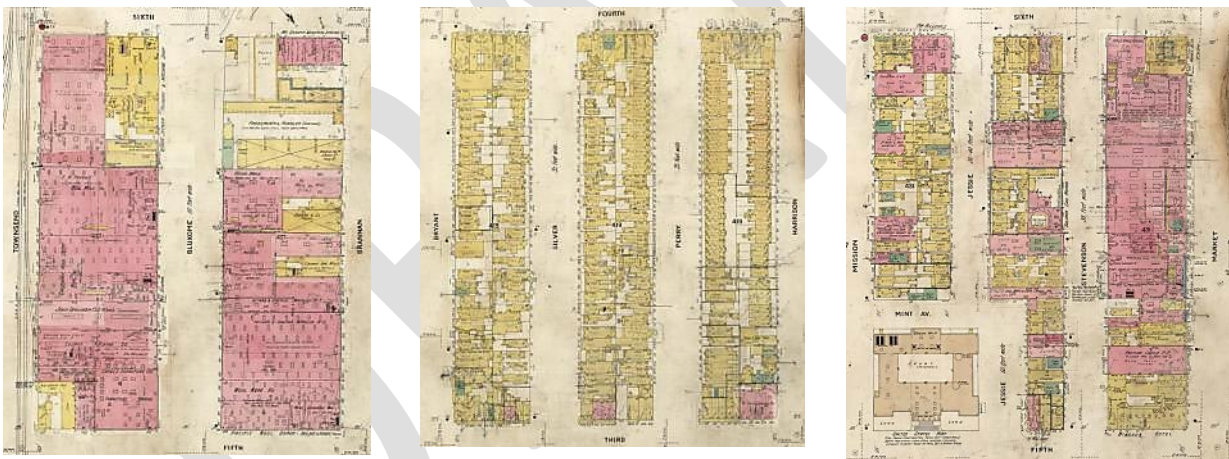
by fire in 1906, although the Call and Chronicle buildings were rehabilitated. The original Hearst building was demolished and reconstructed in 1909.

### Open Space

Other than the privately-financed South Park, the Central SoMa area—indeed the entire South of Market—was developed with almost no provision for open space. The 1854 Map of San Francisco shows a public square reserved on a portion of the block bounded by Folsom, 6th, Harrison, and 7th streets. A smaller portion of this reservation eventually became a park known as Columbia Square, but it was converted into a surface parking lot and school site in 1953. As a result of land swap agreement, Columbia Square reopened as Victoria Manalo Draves Park in 2006. South Park, originally a private reserve for adjacent property owners, became a public park in 1897. The fence that surrounded the park was taken down and the park was opened to all residents.

### 1905: A Snapshot in Time

By 1905, the South of Market was essentially built out and very urban in terms of its population, its mix of industry and residential uses, and its cosmopolitan population. Sanborn Map Company fire insurance maps issued in 1905 show that the Central SoMa study area featured three fairly distinct zones of activity: industrial at the south end adjacent to the waterfront and railroads, residential at the center, and commercial at the north end adjacent to Market Street. Commercial and mixed-use development also dominated properties directly fronting the numbered streets.



1905 Sanborn maps of the various blocks in the South of Market. At left is the block bounded by Townsend, Brannan, 5th and 6th streets at the south end of the study area. Note the large concentration of brick warehouses. At center is the block bounded by Harrison, Bryant, 3rd and 4th streets in the central portion of the study area, which consisted almost entirely of wood frame dwellings. At right is the block bounded by Market, Mission, 5th and 6th streets at the north end of the study area. Note the many brick commercial buildings along Market Street. The U.S. Mint is at lower left.

The blocks along Market and Mission streets were overwhelmingly commercial and included many large brick office buildings and department stores, including the Emporium and Hale Brothers. Moving south, between Mission and Howard streets, the commercial strip leaked into a neighborhood that featured a mix of wood frame residences and brick or wood frame light industrial buildings that included laundries, bakeries, paint stores and plumbing shops. Further south, the area between Howard and Bryant streets was overwhelmingly residential, most frequently featuring two- to three- story wood frame dwellings and flats, although numerous light industrial facilities were scattered throughout the area, particularly stables, carpentry shops and storage facilities.

South of Bryant Street, the neighborhood became increasingly industrial, with a heavy concentration of lumber yards, planing mills, freight sheds foundries and soda works. This industrial development culminated in an almost solid wall of brick warehouses running between Brannan and Townsend Streets in the vicinity of the Southern Pacific Railroad yards and shipping terminal.

Less than a year after the 1905 maps were published, the entire South of Market neighborhood would be consumed by fire in the wake of the 1906 Earthquake. Nevertheless, many of the land use patterns established prior to 1906 would reassert themselves during reconstruction.

DRAFT

## Fire and Reconstruction (1906 – 1936)

On April 18, 1906, a massive earthquake struck San Francisco. Most buildings in the city remained standing—although structures located on filled ground suffered the greatest damage. Within hours, however, overturned stoves, toppled chimneys and ruptured gas lines produced scores of fires that quickly spread unchecked throughout the city. Damaged water mains made firefighting extraordinarily difficult, and by the following day all of downtown and the South of Market had been consumed by flames. The numerous fires eventually merged, burning for three days and destroying some 28,000 buildings. An estimated 3,000 or more people perished in the disaster, and approximately 250,000 people—more than half of the entire 1906 population of San Francisco—were left homeless by the disaster.



The Winchester Hotel burning at 3rd and Stevenson Streets, April 18, 1906. (California State Library)

Within the Central SoMa study area, only a handful of buildings remained standing, most of them steel-framed structures. These included the Aronson Building on the corner of 3rd and Mission; the Call Building at 3rd and Market; the Atlas Building at 602-606 Mission Street; the California Casket Company Building at 943 Mission Street; the Kamm Building at 715-719 Market Street; the Waldorf lodging house at 24-26 5<sup>th</sup> Street; and St. Patrick's Church. The most prominent building that survived intact was the U.S. Mint, which had thick stone and brick walls, cast iron fire shutters, internal fire suppression reservoirs, and a committed workforce that valiantly extinguished any fire that entered the building.<sup>17</sup> A narrow belt of warehouses along Townsend Street in the South End was also spared because fire crews were able to pump salt water from Mission Channel to extinguish the fires.

One of the most remarkable buildings to survive the fire was the J.W. Burdette building at 90-92 2nd Street, built in 1905. According to contemporary newspaper accounts, all of the surrounding buildings were gutted by fire, but the small brick masonry building emerged from the conflagration with all of its windows intact and the interior completely untouched.<sup>18</sup> Charles Corey, proprietor of a saloon on the ground floor of the building, stated that all of the glassware and fixtures were undamaged, and that the clock remained running. The building was partially

<sup>17</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 47.

<sup>18</sup> "Burdette's Building is Intact Amid Ruins," *The San Francisco Call*, June 18, 1906, 3.



shielded from the flames by the adjacent eleven-story Atlas Building. It also benefited from a strong foundation. A twelve-story building was originally planned for the site, but only a two-story building was erected. The Burdette building remains standing in the Central SoMa area and is a contributor to the New Montgomery-Mission-2nd Street Conservation District. The building is also included in the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission's Landmark Designation Work Program.



The Thumler Rutherford building burning at 2nd and Mission streets, 1906. The J.W. Burdette Building is at lower right. (U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)



A view of the J.W. Burdette and Atlas buildings, May 1906. The property remains remarkably intact today. (U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

### Refugee Camps

Thousands of South of Market residents were left homeless by the disaster, many setting up ad hoc refugee camps at parks or vacant lots in the undestroyed portions of the city. Officials realized that the refugee camps needed management to ensure proper sanitation and housing standards, resulting in the creation of the San Francisco Relief and Red Cross Funds Corporation (Relief Corporation) in July 1906. Concerned that the rainy season would arrive before the refugees were re-housed, the Relief Corporation hired union carpenters to construct thousands of small redwood and fir "refugee cottages," many of them in public parks. Two refugee camps were established South of Market: Columbia Square (Camp No. 24) and South Park (Camp No. 28). At South Park, the Relief Corporation erected fourteen two-story barracks, each housing eight apartments. By October 1906, these apartments provided housing for 648 displaced residents.<sup>19</sup>



Howard and 4th streets, 1906. (U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)



Refugee barracks at South Park. (U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

<sup>19</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 48.

### Early Recovery

The process of recovery from the disaster required enormous effort, both physical and financial. There was the pressing need to demolish ruined structures and remove debris; to settle insurance claims and resolve land titles; and to acquire new building permits and secure building materials and labor. Most important was the will to financially commit financial resources to a city so clearly in danger of being struck by another catastrophic Earthquake.

Rebuilding of the city began within weeks of the 1906 disaster. The early focus of reconstruction was the downtown commercial district, which was entirely rebuilt and modernized within the first few years. Recovery in many parts of South of Market was somewhat slower. An important factor which initially slowed reconstruction was the potential extension of requirements for fireproof construction. Prior to 1906, the only parts of South of Market included within the fire limits included the northern portion of the Central SoMa study area bounded by Market, Howard, 2nd, and 5th streets. This area, which historically served as an extension of downtown, was rapidly reconstructed.



View west along Mission Street between 2nd and 3rd streets, 1907.  
Note the rapid pace of reconstruction. (California Historical Society)

Elsewhere, many of the larger pre-quake industrial and commercial buildings in the South of Market had been built of brick masonry due to functional requirements and insurance regulations. But the vast majority of the residential and light industrial buildings were built of wood. As a result, some property owners hoped to discourage the reconstruction of frame dwellings in the South of Market by advocating for the extension of the fire limits to encompass the entire district. In the summer of 1906, the Board of Supervisors heard testimony in support of and in opposition to the extension of the fire limits. The extension was generally supported by large business owners and opposed by small property holders who lacked the funds to reconstruct their buildings in more expensive materials. Ultimately, the Board of Supervisors decided not to extend the fire limits into the South of Market and settled instead



on a blanket prohibition against flammable roofing materials. But the uncertainty over the fate of the neighborhood led many homeowners to sell out to industrialists and investors.<sup>20</sup>

The areas that were reconstructed most rapidly were those closest to Market Street, where the mandate for fireproof construction had already been established. The pace of recovery along Howard Street, in particular, was noted by the local press. Only a year after the disaster, the *San Francisco Call* noted:

It can be said of Howard Street, confidently, that no thoroughfare in the devastated section approaches it in rapidity of reconstruction, and in the care and comfort with which its merchants are able to transact business .... The old Howard Street was in a state of transition. Formerly largely devoted to residences and small manufacturing, it was slowly advancing to the business position which its many advantages appeared to have in store for it. Now the residences have vanished, and a total change in the aspect of the street is apparent .... Beyond Third Street, Howard promises to be a new hotel section, as its accessibility offers a grand field for the hotel-keeper. There are several completed and building. The new St. Katharyn and Royal, on the corners of Fourth and Howard streets, rank with the best hotel buildings in the state, and there are others which are quite notable. The trend of the wholesale business of the city, having completed the absorption of Mission and intersecting streets, is settling strongly toward the southern section of the city. Howard Street is feeling the impulse.<sup>21</sup>

A map produced by the *San Francisco Call* in April 1908 gives some indication of the massive scale of rebuilding, and shows that reconstruction in the Central SoMa study area largely kept pace with that in other areas of the city. In addition to areas near Market, Mission and Howard streets, the blocks reconstructed most quickly included those bounded by Folsom, Perry, 3rd and 4th streets. In total, the Central SoMa study area today includes approximately 125 extant properties constructed during the first two years of recovery, and 160 properties constructed during the five years between 1906 and 1910.



Detail of a 1908 map published in the *San Francisco Call* showing buildings reconstructed since the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. The Central SoMa study area is highlighted in yellow.

<sup>20</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 50.

<sup>21</sup> "Remarkable Building Activities in Progress on Howard Street," *San Francisco Call*, July 20, 1907, 8.

While streets such as Howard Street underwent a dramatic transformation during reconstruction, there was also a strong impulse in other areas to rebuild what had existed before the disaster. In many cases, this was a natural outgrowth of property ownership and location. Along Market Street, the same mix of department stores, office buildings, theaters and shops that existed prior to 1906 was duplicated in the rebuilding. South Park remained a primarily residential enclave. The industrial areas adjacent to the railroad were also reconstructed along previous lines.

### Industrial Redevelopment

By 1909, it was clear that industrial development was going to be the primary guiding force in the reconstruction of much of the area. Headlines in the December 11, 1909 issue of the *San Francisco Call* declared that the “South of Market Steadily Advances Along Industrial Lines.” The two primary zones of industrial activity described in the article were at the eastern end of the neighborhood adjacent to the waterfront, and the southern end adjacent to the railroad terminals. The South End warehouse and manufacturing district was rebuilt almost immediately following the 1906 Earthquake. Many of the new buildings were erected on the foundations of the warehouses that had stood on the same sites prior to 1906, and took advantage of the Belt Line Railway and Southern Pacific Railroad spurs that crisscrossed the neighborhood. Another concentration of warehouses was built in the block bounded by Bluxome, Townsend, 5th and 6th streets, which has been identified as part of the Bluxome and Townsend historic district.



View east on Townsend Street from 5th Street, 1924.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

The edges of Rincon Hill were also rapidly redeveloped for industrial uses. In February 1910, the *San Francisco Call* noted that large portions of Rincon Hill were being leveled for the construction of warehouses:

Owners of elevated lots have been excavating and cutting down their holdings to a depth that makes them immediately available for warehouse sites or for manufacturing uses or wholesaling .... Ledges have been cut down at considerable cost, because the owners have come to the conclusion that the time has arrived when their lots will be in demand with the enlargement of terminal facilities in the neighborhood and the increasing pressure for more ground space. The general scheme involved is of such size that it becomes a subject of more than neighborhood interest. In fact it involves ... the reduction of all the territory from East Street to Third, southward from Howard, to a level that will be available for the uses of railroads, of heavy teaming and for warehousing on a great scale .... Real estate men say that the smaller streets of the region will be for the homes of people who are employed in the industrial pursuits of that part of the city and that all the main streets will be covered from one end to the other within the limit of some western boundary, possibly beyond Third Street, with high cost industrial structures that will give employment to thousands.<sup>22</sup>



1906 view south from Howard Street down 2nd Street toward Rincon Hill. Almost all of the hill visible in this image was leveled for industrial use during reconstruction. (California Historical Society)

Unlike much of the contemporary wood-frame residential construction, most industrial construction of the 1910s and 1920s in the South of Market was executed in brick masonry, reinforced concrete or steel frame. One building in the study area, 365-371 5th Street, was built in 1925 and clad with cast concrete imitation stone. While concrete and masonry construction was more expensive, it was also more durable and less susceptible to fire damage. The 1920s also marked the first use of zoning restrictions in San Francisco. Beginning in 1921, zoning maps show that most of the Central SoMa study area was designated for light industrial use. Market Street was zoned commercial, and the

<sup>22</sup> "Rincon Hill Fast Disappearing – Warehouse Sites Being Prepared," *San Francisco Call*, February 19, 1910, 15.



area south of Brannan Street was zoned for heavy industry. The industrial zoning districts were largely designed to protect uses by influential manufacturers. A study of zoning in San Francisco between 1914 and 1928 states that:

San Francisco, at the request of large manufacturers, also used zoning to protect industrial land uses in factory districts. This new policy reflected a significant change both in the scale of manufacturing and in the ability of workers, due to higher wages and greatly improved transportation modes, to travel much farther from their homes to their jobs. The twin forms of zoning for residential and for industrial protection suggest a pattern of racial and class discrimination in zoning implementation. Zoning laws were primarily designed to reinforce existing patterns of wealth, status and power.<sup>23</sup>

### Residential Reconstruction

In the aftermath of the 1906 Earthquake, the most profound change in the South of Market was the lack of residential reconstruction. Between 1900 and 1910, the population of the area bounded by Market, Bryant, the Embarcadero and 11th streets plunged from 62,000 to 24,000.<sup>24</sup> Whether by design or happenstance, the fact remains that most of the neighborhood's former residents never returned. There are several plausible reasons for this shift. One is that many displaced residents, having begun to establish themselves in neighborhoods outside the burned districts, were not necessarily eager to return to the South of Market. As discussed above, it was clear from an early date that the district was going to be reconstructed with an industrial emphasis, and persons with families or a desire to live in a less noisy and polluted environment had no real incentive to return. As early as 1909 the lack of residential construction attracted the notice of the *San Francisco Call*, which reported the South of Market Improvement Association was laboring "to bring back the population to the district."<sup>25</sup>

Those who did return to the neighborhood were largely men whose occupations tied them to manufacturing and the industrial waterfront. They were also joined by thousands of skilled and unskilled laborers who had arrived in San Francisco seeking work during reconstruction. The same 1909 article discussed above mentions that, "The multiplication of stores warehouse and manufactories ensures occupation near at home for an army of men."<sup>26</sup> Immigrants employed in the service industries downtown also returned to the area. Thus the large numbers of residential hotels and lodging houses that had characterized portions of the South of Market prior to the Earthquake once again emerged as an important residential typology. In 1907 alone, 58 hotels and 80 lodging houses were erected in the South of Market, most along



The Hotel Norden on Howard Street between 3rd and 4th streets. Completed in October 1906, this was the first permanent apartment house constructed south of Market (California State Library via Calisphere)

<sup>23</sup> Marc A. Weiss, "The real estate industry and the politics of zoning in San Francisco, 1914-1928," *Planning Perspectives*, 3 (1988), 320.

<sup>24</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, "A History of the California Historical Society's New Mission Street Neighborhood," *California History* (Winter 195/1996), 388.

<sup>25</sup> "Sites for Homes South of Market," *San Francisco Call*, February 19, 1910, 15.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

Howard, Folsom and 3rd streets.<sup>27</sup> Residential hotel construction was also a prominent feature along 4<sup>th</sup> Street. In 1912 the San Francisco Call observed that: “The main cause of the extensive hotel construction is the growth of industries in the South of Market district and the demand for accommodations for working men. Fourth Street is in easy walking distance of all the big factories and warehouses along Third, Second and First streets and the wholesale district extending down to the waterfront.”<sup>28</sup>

Within the Central SoMa study area, the construction of flats and single-family dwellings was less common, and mainly concentrated along the narrower interior block alleys such as Tehama, Clementina, Shipley, Clara and Ritch streets. Most were built early in the area’s reconstruction, likely by owners who simply wished to regain what they had lost. But as the area became more industrial, residential construction of smaller-scale residential buildings virtually ended. Other than larger apartments and lodging houses, very few flats and single-family dwellings were constructed after 1915.<sup>29</sup> It is worth noting that many buildings in the South of Market have subsided several feet since their construction as a result of having been constructed on filled ground. Within the Central SoMa study area, these include several residential properties located along the 200 block of Clara and Shipley streets.<sup>30</sup>

Residential buildings constructed during this period fall into three major categories: large three-to six-story wood-frame, brick masonry or reinforced concrete apartment buildings and residential hotels; wood-frame multi-family flats; and smaller wood-frame, single-family dwellings and cottages. The apartment houses and hotels were most often designed with Classical Revival styles influences, most frequently characterized by a heavy roofline featuring a modillion cornice. Classical details were also frequently incorporated into “Edwardian” flats and cottages—so named because their construction corresponded with the Edwardian period in England.



South on 3rd Street from Howard Street, 1920. All of the large buildings are residential hotels.  
This entire area was redeveloped as part of the Yerba Buena Center project (U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

<sup>27</sup> Brian Byrd, Jack Meyer, M.A., et. al., *Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for the Moscone Center Expansion, San Francisco California*, Planning Department Case No. 2013.0154E, (Davis, CA: Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., September 2013), 48.

<sup>28</sup> “Fourth Street is Looming Up Large,” *San Francisco Call* Real Estate and Financial Section, November 9, 1912, 9.

<sup>29</sup> San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, *Report on the Redevelopment Plan for the Yerba Buena Center Approved Redevelopment Project Area D-1*, (San Francisco: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, 1965), 1.

<sup>30</sup> Carol S. Prentice, ed., *1906 San Francisco Earthquake Centennial Field Guides: Field Trips Associated with the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference, 18-23 April 2006*, (Boulder, CO: The Geological Society of America, Inc., 2006), 8-10.

Residential hotels were frequently located on large corner lots, with additional concentrations found on narrower mid-block parcels, particularly along Mission, Howard, and 3rd through 7th streets. As late as 1927, this area counted the densest population in San Francisco.<sup>31</sup> Mixed-use lodging houses were also common in the same area. Even as early as 1913, Sanborn maps describe these buildings as having “cheap lodgings.”<sup>32</sup> One of the largest surviving examples of a lodging house is the former Central Hotel at 576-586 3rd Street, constructed in 1907 and designed by architects Sutton & Weeks. It was found individually eligible for the California Register by the South of Market Historic Resources Survey. Based on census records and other studies, residents of the hotels and boarding houses tended to be single male seasonal workers or elderly, while the cottages and flats more often housed families and their boarders. Most of the residential hotels that once lined 3rd, 4th, 5<sup>th</sup> Mission and Howard streets have since been demolished as part of the Yerba Buena Center redevelopment.

### **Residential Demographics & Ethnic Communities**

Census records indicate that the population of the South of Market during reconstruction remained largely white, single, male, and predominantly American-born. These characteristics did not change significantly until the Second World War. Restrictive immigration laws passed during the early twentieth century drastically reduced the number of immigrants to the United States, allowing the proportion of American-born residents to gradually increase. Families were also conspicuously absent; observers reported during the first decades of the twentieth century that fewer women and children were visible on the neighborhood’s streets than in any other residential or commercial district of the city. A sampling of the 1920 U.S. Census reveals that a census tract location in the vicinity of 3rd and Mission streets contained fifteen residential hotels. Of their occupants, 98 percent were male and 70 percent were single—although none of the married men lived with their wives.<sup>33</sup>

#### *Greeks*

Despite restrictions on immigration, several distinct ethnic communities were present in the Central SoMa study area. The Greek immigrant community was one of the largest and most conspicuous, growing rapidly prior to the First World War as Greeks escaped their war-torn and poverty-stricken homeland. The nexus of the South of Market Greek enclave was centered in the vicinity of 3rd and Folsom streets, where many of their coffee shops, short order restaurants, and other businesses were located. For a while, the presence of so many Greek businesses gave the area the name “Greek Town.” A cornerstone of the Greek community was the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church at 335 7th Street (just outside the Central SoMa plan area), which was originally constructed in 1903 and rebuilt after the earthquake.

#### *Japanese*

Although traditionally identified with the more well-known Japantown neighborhood in the Western Addition, South Park was actually a predominantly Japanese enclave from the 1910s through the 1930s. The primary catalyst for Japanese settlement in the area was its proximity to Piers 30-32, which were used by Japanese steamship companies. After debarkation, travelers and newly arrived immigrants would arrive at places such as the Eimoto Hotel at 22 South Park Street (today the Madrid Hotel), described as “a first stop in the United States for many Japanese residents.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Alvin Averbach, “San Francisco’s South of Market District, 1850-1950: The Emergence of a Skid Row,” *California Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Fall, 1973), 205.

<sup>32</sup> 1913-1915 Sanborn map series, sheet 138.

<sup>33</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 58.

<sup>34</sup> The Japantown Task Force, Inc., *Images of America San Francisco’s Japantown*, (San Francisco: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 19.





Japanese enclave at South Park circa 1930.

The Omiya Hotel (second from left) at 104 South Park later became the Gran Oriente Filipino.

(*Images of America – San Francisco's Japantown*)

City directories reveal a large number of Japanese residents and businesses around South Park starting about 1910. By 1916, the Japanese character of the area was so well established that S. Nakahara applied for a permit from the Park Commission to erect two Japanese tori gates in the park—both remnants of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. However, anti-Japanese sentiment in San Francisco was strong and opponents prevented the gates from being installed. Indeed, in 1913 California had enacted the Alien Land Law, which prevented Asian immigrants—especially Japanese immigrants—from owning agricultural land.

By the 1920s, prominent Japanese establishments at South Park included the Higoyo Hotel, Biwako Baths, the Hotel Bo-Chow and the Omiya Hotel.<sup>35</sup> In the early 1930s, however, the Japanese steamship lines began arriving at piers located north of the Ferry Building—a development that coincided with severe restrictions on Japanese immigration. As a result, nearly all of the Japanese businesses at South Park relocated to Japantown in the Western Addition.<sup>36</sup>

Japanese residents were also strongly associated with the development of the California Flower Market, originally located at 5th and Howard streets and later relocated to 6th and Bryant streets. During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, San Francisco consumed more flowers per capita than any other U.S. city.<sup>37</sup> It was also a major exporter of flowers. In 1915, boxes of chrysanthemums were consigned to the American Railway Express, heralding the beginning of the shipped flower industry.<sup>38</sup> The San Francisco flower industry included the Japanese-owned California Flower Market Corporation, the Italian-owned San Francisco Flower Growers Association, and the Chinese-owned Peninsula Flower Growers Association. As restrictions on Asian immigration and land-ownership intensified—including the federal Immigration Act of 1924—the Japanese and Chinese growers partnered with the Italians to lease common space for flower wholesaling. This included creating a new legal entity, California Flower Growers, Inc., so that one corporation could be signatory to the lease, as well as to avoid restrictions under the Alien Land Law. Located at 171

<sup>35</sup> Ibid: 18.

<sup>36</sup> “Japantown Atlas – San Francisco: Chinatown and South Park” <http://japantownatlas.com/map-sanfrancisco.html> retrieved 3 January 2013.

<sup>37</sup> Gary Kawaguchi, *Living with Flowers: The California Flower Market History*, (San Francisco: California Flower Market, Inc., 1993), X.

<sup>38</sup> Timothy F. Keegan, “San Francisco—City of Flowers,” *The Argonaut*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Winter 2013), 38-39.

Howard Street, the new market began operations in March, 1924. The building, which is no longer extant, provided over 20,000 square feet of floor space, with each organization operating separately under a shared roof.<sup>39</sup> According to a history of the California Flower Market:

Though they shared the floor space, they operated as independently as possible. Autonomy was important to the individual growers who didn't want to have to answer to anyone in their own operations .... There is no doubt that if there had been some way to stay physically separate and prosper, they would have done so. But the path was clear. Convenience for the retailers and control by growers was primary, and to that end, all parties were willing to bury their differences as deeply as possible and manage competition so that it didn't interfere unduly with the Market.<sup>40</sup>



Building used by the California Flower Market at the northeast corner of 5th and Howard streets, circa 1924.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

The primary source of income for the Market was the rental of counter space for selling flowers. This arrangement proved profitable for the California Flower Market and growers alike. Many were able to purchase additional land and equipment, and by 1929 Japanese flower growers produced 70 percent of the greenhouse flowers in Northern California—the most successful enterprise managed by Japanese in the United States.<sup>41</sup> During the Depression, the shareholders of the market raised the assessment for vendors and used the funds to purchase a lot at 5th and Brannan Streets in 1936. This would eventually emerge as a new home for the Market, and is discussed in greater detail in the following section of this report.

### *Filipinos*

Filipino immigrants have had a longstanding presence in the South of Market. During the 1910s, the first Filipino enclave in the city, known as “Manilatown,” had begun to coalesce along Kearny Street between Pine and Pacific streets. This location, which marked the eastern edge of Chinatown, was not accidental. Racial discrimination and restrictive covenants meant that Filipinos tended to live in proximity to existing ethnic Asian enclaves. By the 1920s, Filipino immigrants had also begun to settle in the South Park area alongside the Japanese.

<sup>39</sup> Amy Stewart, *Flower Confidential: The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful*, (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2007), 70-71.

<sup>40</sup> Gary Kawaguchi, *Living with Flowers: The California Flower Market History*, (San Francisco: California Flower Market, Inc., 1993), 43.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid: 48.

As the Japanese moved out of South Park, several properties were acquired by Filipino owners. Most prominent among these is the former Omiya Hotel at 104-106 South Park Street, purchased by the Gran Oriente Filipino Masonic Lodge during the 1930s.<sup>42</sup> Originally, the 24-room hotel served as a meeting place and boarding house for members who worked in San Francisco and for farm workers from the Central Valley who visited on weekends. With funds provided by membership dues, the Gran Oriente Filipino also purchased two residential flats buildings, 41-43 South Park Street and 45-49 South Park Street. In 1951, the group also constructed the Gran Oriente Filipino Masonic Temple behind the building at 45-49 South Park Street.<sup>43</sup>

Despite the purchases at South Park, it does not appear that any ethnic enclave akin to Manilatown developed during the 1940s and 1950s in the South of Market. Nevertheless, Filipinos did begin to make up an increasingly larger segment of the congregations at two of the neighborhood's most prominent Catholic churches: Saint Patrick's Church and Saint Joseph's Church. During the late 1960s, the Filipino population South of Market would grow exponentially, such that Filipinos became the single largest ethnic group in the neighborhood. Today the South Park properties, along with Saint Patrick's and St. Joseph's Church, have the longest-standing associations with the Filipino community South of Market.

#### *African Americans*

While skilled jobs were essentially closed to African Americans during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the acute need for labor during reconstruction of the city, as well as labor shortages during World War I, encouraged the formation of a modest African American community in the South of Market. Railroad workers were an important facet of this population, including stewards, cooks and porters who lived in proximity to the Southern Pacific depot. This included a number of African American porters who lived at the Pullman Hotel at 236 Townsend Street (extant).<sup>44</sup>



The former Pullman Hotel at 236 Townsend Street.  
(San Francisco Planning Department)

Others presumably worked in manufacturing or as laborers and lived in the neighborhood's numerous residential motels. Maritime work would also emerge as another avenue of employment, particularly after the 1934 Waterfront Strike when the International Longshoreman's Association opened the union to African Americans and ensured that

<sup>42</sup> Filipino American National Society, Manilatown Heritage Foundation and the Pin@y Educational Partnerships, *Images of America Filipinos in San Francisco*, (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 19.

<sup>43</sup> Christina Dikas, Page & Turnbull, "South Park Historic District," California Department of Parks and Recreation District Record, 2009, 17.

<sup>44</sup> Tim Kelley Consulting, The Alfred Williams Consultancy and VerPlanck Historic Preservation Consulting, *San Francisco African American Citywide Historic Context Statement: 1579-2014*, (San Francisco: January, 2015), 34.



the workers received equal wages. By 1940, Census returns indicate that the South of Market contained approximately 250 African American residents, nearly two-thirds of whom were men, concentrated between the waterfront and 3rd Street, or in a relatively narrow area bounded by Howard, Harrison, 3rd and 11th streets.<sup>45</sup> By far, however, most African Americans living in San Francisco at this time resided in the Western Addition.

### Commercial Reconstruction

As mentioned previously, the areas within the Central SoMa that were reconstructed most rapidly included the areas close to Market Street, where the mandate for fireproof construction had already been established, as well as the South End warehouse district. The commercial properties near Market Street were typically mid-scale buildings, most frequently built using steel frame, brick masonry or reinforced concrete construction. These included hotels (invariably with commercial ground floors), office buildings and department stores. Among these were some of the city's best known buildings, including the reconstructed Palace Hotel and the Emporium department store.



View south along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from Market Street, 1915.

(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

Several theaters were also constructed along Market Street within the Central SoMa study area, including the Portola Theater along Stevenson Street between 3rd and 4th streets, and the Pantages Theater and Empress Theater (later the St. Francis Theater) along Market Street between 5th and 6th streets. The latter marked the eastern end of San Francisco's emerging theater district, concentrated along Market Street between 5th and 9th streets. In time, the flashy marquees and brilliant neon signs affixed to the many theaters in this area would become known as San Francisco's Great "White Way." In 2013, both the former Pantages and Empress theaters were demolished.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid: 36-38.



Further away from Market Street, commercial uses were largely confined to frontages along the numbered streets. Of these, 3rd Street comprised the primary north-south commercial corridor and was solidly lined with businesses all the way from Market Street until it met the South End warehouses near the Southern Pacific Railroad station at Townsend Street. Most commercial buildings were brick masonry or wood-frame structures, one- to three-stories in height. The one-story buildings were frequently divided into multiple storefronts, while taller buildings typically featured residential uses on the upper floors. This is especially true of residential hotels, which typically featured a commercial ground floor. During this period, storefronts typically featured a plate glass system with tiled or paneled bulkheads and a multi-lite transom.



Commercial and mixed-use buildings lining the east side of 3rd Street between Verona Place and Folsom Street, 1919.

This area was redeveloped by the Yerba Buena Center project.

(San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAB-5761)

### Transit Infrastructure

Streetcar and railroad tracks were among the earliest infrastructure reconstructed after the 1906 Earthquake—not least of which because the tracks were frequently used to haul away debris. As it had been before the disaster, the wealth of streetcar tracks South of Market made it arguably the city's most transit-rich neighborhood. By 1911, streetcar lines ran east-west on Mission, Howard, Folsom, Harrison, Bryant and Brannan streets, as well as north-south on every numbered street in the South of Market except 7th Street.

The principal railroad yards included those of the Southern Pacific running down Townsend and King streets, with an extension that ran east along King Street before dividing into spurs accessing piers 36, 42 and 44, as well as the Belt Line railroad running along the Embarcadero. The Southern Pacific had constructed a temporary passenger station and freight depot following the earthquake, and in 1917 built an expansive new Mission Revival style station at 3rd and Townsend streets. By this time, the Southern Pacific was no longer the sole railroad South of Market. By the turn of the century the Western Pacific Railroad had a terminal located between 8th, 9th, Bryant and Brannan

streets, while the Santa Fe Railroad had constructed a massive rail yard and numerous warehouses along 3rd Street south of Mission Channel.



Southern Pacific station at 3rd and Townsend streets, 1940.  
(San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAD-6016)

### Civic Infrastructure

Several public facilities were constructed in the Central SoMa area during this period. As might be expected after the 1906 disaster, fire-fighting facilities were the most numerous—and the first to be constructed. In 1909 the San Francisco Fire Department began construction of Pump Station No. 1 at 698 2nd Street as part of the Auxiliary Water Supply System (AWSS). The AWSS incorporated a network of cisterns, reservoirs and fire boats, as well as two emergency pumping stations: Pump Station No. 1, and Pump Station No. 2 along Van Ness Avenue at Fort Mason. According to a 1913 Sanborn map, Pump Station No. 1 featured two multi-stage turbine pumps, each capable of delivering 2,700 gallons of fresh or salt water per minute. The station was designed by consulting engineer, Tom W. Ransom, and is listed on the National Register.

Several neighborhood fire houses were also constructed. Most of these were wood frame or brick masonry buildings constructed soon after the 1906 disaster.<sup>46</sup> These included San Francisco Fire Department Engine No. 4, located in a brick masonry building at 676 Howard Street. The station was rebuilt in 1957, but in 2012 was closed and demolished for construction of an expansion of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.<sup>47</sup> Less than half a block away was the headquarters of the Underwriter's Fire Patrol at 147 Natoma Street (extant). The Underwriters' Fire Patrol was founded in San Francisco 1875 as a private fire-fighting company with its own firehouses, alarm systems and firemen specifically trained to salvage materials. They were engaged by insurance companies to help reduce both premiums and settlements. The Underwriters Fire Patrol was incorporated into the San Francisco Fire Department in 1943.

<sup>46</sup> "New Fire Buildings are Recommended," *San Francisco Call*, September 23, 1913, page 14.

<sup>47</sup> A new fire station will be constructed at 935 Folsom Street, replacing a 1923 laundry built for the Hotel Owners Laundry Association.

Also nearby was San Francisco Fire Department Engine No. 17 at 422 Jessie Street (later addressed as 34 Mint Street). According to the 1913 Sanborn map this was a two-story-over-basement wood frame fire house that included one steam-powered hose wagon and eleven firefighters. In 1919, this building was replaced by a Renaissance Revival style firehouse (demolished circa 1968). Five years later, the site of the older building was redeveloped with a new, 8-story reinforced concrete warehouse for the Hale Brothers. As part of the warehouse construction, space for Fire Truck Company No. 1 was incorporated into the first floor of the building.



"Old and new headquarters" for San Francisco Fire Department Engine No. 17 on Mint Street, 1919.  
(San Francisco Public Library, AAE-1161)



San Francisco Fire Department Engine No. 35, photographed in 1937.  
(San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAD-8165)

Further south within the Central SoMa, San Francisco Fire Department Engine No. 35 was constructed at 38 Bluxome Street. A 1937 newspaper article mentions that the "structure was built in 1906, to serve the Fire Department only until a permanent house could be provided." This station featured enhanced firefighting capabilities including a steamer hose wagon, a truck and a monitor battery, as well as a hose tower. The original building was replaced in 1939 by a new fire station and is today occupied by San Francisco Fire Engine No. 8.

Other public buildings include the Spanish Colonial Revival style Southern Police Station, constructed at 360 4th Street in 1925 (extant), which replaced an earlier wood-frame Mission Revival style police station located on the same site. While it was under construction, the police station operated for a time at 821 Howard Street, which remains extant. Portions of the ornamental wings of the Southern Police Station were removed prior to the 1970s and it was eventually converted into a senior center. However, the building remains one of the finest examples of Spanish Colonial Revival design in the entire South of Market and has been found eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.





Two view of the Southern Police Station at 350 4<sup>th</sup> Street. At left is the Mission Revival style station constructed circa 1907. At right is the new Spanish Colonial Revival station which replaced the original station in 1925.  
(Jessie Brown Cook Collection, U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

A short distance away from the police station was the Mission Revival style Lincoln School at 824 Harrison Street (no longer extant), the only public school located within the Central SoMa study area at that time. Along with the police stations, Engine No. 17 and the Southern Pacific train station, the new Lincoln School demonstrated a growing preference for Hispanic influenced architecture in California's public buildings during the early 20th century. This style was also applied in a more restrained fashion to some commercial and industrial buildings in the South of Market—most often through the use of red clay tile accents.



The Lincoln School at 824 Harrison Street, 1914.  
(Jessie Brown Cook Collection, U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

The Lincoln School was demolished in the 1960s, although recently, the new Bessie Carmichael School/Filipino Education Center was constructed on the lot and is again the only public school building in the South of Market. St. Patrick's Church also operated a grammar school on the northeast corner of 5th and Clementina streets. This school was demolished in 1965, although its gymnasium, constructed in 1948, remains extant at 360-368 Clementina Street.

A few utility and communication infrastructure facilities were also constructed in the study area. These included the Jessie Street substation located between 3rd, 4th, Jessie and Stevenson streets. Originally built in 1881 and enlarged



several times, the station was rebuilt in 1907 under the direction of architect Louis Polk. In 1924, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) Station T was constructed at 465 Stevenson Street. This reinforced concrete building includes a 220 foot tall brick exhaust stack and was used to produce steam for space heating, domestic hot water and industrial processes. In 1977 an addition was made along its east façade. The facility remains in operation by NRG Thermal, and serves approximately 170 buildings in the downtown area.<sup>48</sup> During this post-1906 period PG&E also operated a cable storage yard (and later a warehouse) at the southeast corner of Howard Street and 5th Street, as well as an adjacent warehouse at the southeast corner of Tehama Street and 5th Street. By 1913, the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company was operating a facility at 835-839 Howard Street, which remains extant. During the 1920s, the company constructed San Francisco's first significant skyscraper at 140 New Montgomery Street, discussed below.

### The 1920s Boom Years

Reconstruction proceeded in several distinct periods, beginning with the initial flurry of building activity between 1906 and 1913. This was followed by a recession during the First World War, but by the early 1920s, construction rebounded along with the nation-wide real estate boom. In fact, the pace of construction during the 1920s almost matched that of the initial period of reconstruction. An analysis of extant properties in the Central SoMa study area shows that approximately 280 buildings were constructed between 1906 and 1915, while approximately 230 properties were built between 1920 and 1929. Along many principal streets, the 1920s marked a complete build out.



West on Howard Street from 3rd Street, 1922.

This area was entirely redeveloped as part of the Yerba Buena Center project.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

The construction boom of the 1920s also encompassed a fair amount of redevelopment, as many properties that were built expediently during the first years of reconstruction were replaced with more substantial structures. As well, sites that had been used as lumber and storage yards for construction materials were less essential and presented ripe opportunities for redevelopment. Portions of Rincon Hill also continued to be cut down for development, such that by the 1930s the only areas yet to be removed in the Central SoMa area were located along Hawthorne Street between

<sup>48</sup> NRG Thermal, San Francisco System Profile, accessed 25 June, 2014 from <http://www.nrgthermal.com/centers/sanfran/syssf.htm>

Folsom and Harrison streets. A substantial portion of new construction during the 1920s was also associated with the advent of the private automobile, as stables, blacksmith shops and harness shops were replaced by gas stations, auto repair shops and parking garages. These included a new parking garage for the Pickwick Hotel, completed in 1927. Perhaps the largest garage in the Central SoMa area was the 4th Street Garage, located on the southeast corner of 4th and Harrison streets. The building was constructed in 1912 for the Pacific Sightseeing Company, which operated a fleet of tour buses. The 1913 Sanborn map also shows that the building incorporated an auto sales showroom and an auto repair shop. Truck sales showrooms were also opened in the neighborhood, including the Republic Truck showroom located at 534-548 4th Street, which operated during the 1920s in a building shared with the Thiebaut Brothers box factory.



4th Street just south of Harrison Street, circa 1925. Note the large 4th Street Garage and auto repair shop at right. This building remains standing, although most of the properties in this image are no longer extant.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)

Architectural styles were also in transition during this period. Along with the popularity of Hispanic-influenced designs, the advent of Art Deco and Gothic Revival architecture—sometimes in combination—rapidly gained influence during the 1920s. The most prominent example of Art Deco style architecture in the Central SoMa area is the Pacific Telephone Building at 140 New Montgomery Street. Designed by architect Timothy Pflueger and completed in 1925, the 26-story office building was then the tallest building in San Francisco. Art Deco designs were also adopted for many industrial buildings, largely because the simple, rigid structural systems of the buildings meshed easily with the bold geometry of the style. Two good examples of Art Deco industrial design include a pair of semi-identical buildings at 355 and 361 Brannan Street, completed in 1928.



355 and 361 Brannan Street, completed in 1928 (Google Maps)

Gothic Revival style architecture was more frequently applied to commercial buildings. Two excellent examples of the style were both constructed at the intersection of 5th and Mission streets. These include the Pickwick Hotel at 898 Mission Street (1923), and the San Francisco Chronicle building at 901 Mission Street (1924), since altered. Unlike the Chronicle's previous building at 690 Market Street, which had functioned primarily as an office tower, the new Chronicle building was devoted entirely to the production and printing of the newspaper. Over the coming decades, the Chronicle would become the largest newspaper in northern California, as well as the 12<sup>th</sup> largest newspaper in the United States.<sup>49</sup> Of interest, both the Pacific Telephone and Chronicle buildings show clear influence of Eliel Saarinen's highly influential design for the Chicago Tribune Tower, drawn in 1922.



San Francisco Chronicle building, 1924. The building exterior was remodeled during the 1960s.  
(San Francisco Architectural Heritage)

<sup>49</sup> Carl Nolte, "An Independent Voice for the Western U.S.," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 7, 1999.

## The Great Depression

The collapse of the Stock Market in October 1929 heralded a worldwide depression that lasted a decade. The long-term implications of the crash were not felt immediately however, as the stock market continued to enjoy brief rallies into mid-1930. By the end of 1931, however, most private new construction in San Francisco ground to a halt. Real estate investors attempted to attract new industrial construction, highlighting the fact that South of Market adjoined the railroad yards of three transcontinental railroads, as well as transoceanic shipping facilities. Despite these efforts, an analysis of construction dates for the Central SoMa study area shows that approximately 30 extant buildings were constructed between 1930 and 1939. Most of these are light industrial buildings, and many were designed with Art Deco influences.

The economic collapse affected broad sectors of society, but working-class residents, such as those who lived South of Market, disproportionately felt the impacts. With many local businesses either closed or running on a reduced workforce, workers found themselves competing for increasingly scarce agricultural work, particularly after the arrival of large numbers of Dust Bowl migrants from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas in the Central Valley and other farming regions. One review of the history of the South of Market states that: "On Howard Street, the men spent most of their time on the street, looking at the blackboards advertising work, drinking, or pitching pennies on the sidewalk. The Howard Street area became known as the 'slave market' due to the extraordinary exploitation and suffering that migratory and unskilled workers were subject to."<sup>50</sup>



Howard Street "Skid Road," 1937.  
(Dorothea Lange, Library of Congress)

Although the New Deal work relief programs of the 1930s created work for some, a large percentage of residents in the South of Market were older and a portion were already crippled by a lifetime of hard work, poor nutrition and

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<sup>50</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*, (San Francisco, Glide Publications, 1974), 38.



alcohol use. Although some turned to religious missions for assistance, others avoided them because a free meal usually came with a sermon. State and federal relief programs were often of little use either, rejecting many of the older and less healthy individuals as being “unemployable.” Within the Central SoMa, some of the religious missions and relief centers that were established included the St. Vincent De Paul Center at 239 Minna Street; the Salvation Army Industrial Store at 820 Howard Street; the Victorious Gospel Mission at 740 Harrison Street; the Trinity Full Gospel Mission at 365 3rd Street; and the San Francisco Gospel Mission at 727 Folsom Street. All of these locations were subsequently demolished by the Yerba Buena Center redevelopment.



Salvation Army “preaching to the crowd,” 1939.  
(Dorothea Lange, Library of Congress)

Some long-term local residents of the area remembered the neighborhood as being an intimate and enjoyable place to live, in spite of the challenges posed by poverty and underemployment. Peter Mendelsohn, a merchant seaman who later opposed the Redevelopment Agency’s efforts to bulldoze his neighborhood for the Yerba Buena Center, recalled that, “Life along Third Street was the happiest in the City. All the gambling was on Third Street, and there were houses of prostitution above Breen’s Restaurant—people came from all over to eat at Breen’s. This life lasted until 1937, when the city closed all the gambling joints... The men were floaters; 40% were seamen, stewards, engineers and deck-hands; the rest waiters, maintenance men, and part-time longshoremen”<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless, the cheap saloons, gambling halls, and other vices attracted alcoholics and others on the margins of society. Middle-class San Franciscans decried the sight of clusters of men drinking on street corners or hanging around in front of gambling halls and saloons in an area that popularly came to be known as “Skid Road.” As observed by Alvin Averbach, who prefers the descriptive term “hobohemia” rather than skid road:

The later derogatory usage of “skid row” by the city’s larger community to describe a hobohemia forced into decline by economic developments naively ignores the crucial role that the hobo work force played in the economy as a whole. It is not surprising, however, that denizens of hobohemia

<sup>51</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, “A History of the California Historical Society’s New Mission Street Neighborhood,” *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 388.

were unable to command respect from the larger community, even in the period between 1905 and 1920 when many jobs were held by men following a hobo way of life. The face they presented to other segments of the urban population was not that of a roving, exploited proletariat following seasonal work at sea or in the California and western hinterlands and constantly forced to move in search of new, poorly-paid work. Rather, when the community at large encountered the single, unattached workers who made up the "homeless," hotel-residing population, they saw them between jobs as they tried to live on whatever money they had been able to make the previous season. The suburban commuters from the peninsula, for example, who hurried from the Southern Pacific Station at Townsend and Third streets down Third and Fourth streets bypassing the cheaper restaurants to breakfast on the block nearest Market Street were regularly panhandled .... Similar observations were made by the many thousands of people who worked South of Market and lived elsewhere in the city and by those who passed through the area on railways that were running along nearly every street.<sup>52</sup>

### San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge Construction

During the Great Depression, two of the largest projects providing employment were the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Throughout the 1920s, business leaders had waged a campaign to build a bridge from San Francisco to Oakland, and by 1931 Congressional authorization had been granted to use Yerba Buena Island—then administered by the U.S. Navy—as part of the route. Actual construction of the bridge began in 1933.



Construction of the Bay Bridge approach, 1935. View is east from near 2nd Street.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library via Calisphere)

In the Central SoMa study area, the alignment of the bridge approach consisted of a large concrete viaduct located between Perry and Stillman streets. Hundreds of properties were demolished along the right-of-way, which extended from on- and off-ramps at 5th Street to the bridge landing at Rincon Hill. Additional portions of Rincon Hill were

<sup>52</sup> Alvin Averbach, "San Francisco's South of Market District, 1850-1950: The Emergence of a Skid Row," *California Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Fall, 1973), 206-207.

also graded at this time. During this period vehicle traffic in the South of Market was already considerable. A 1934 traffic study indicates that traffic was heaviest along Mission, Howard, 3rd and 4th streets. Mission Street carried an average of 10,000 to 15,000 vehicles per day, while the others averaged 5,000 to 10,000 vehicles per day.<sup>54</sup>

Completion of the Bay Bridge in November 1936 strongly influenced the character of the Central SoMa study area. In addition to the demolition of hundreds of buildings, the viaduct physically divided the area into two sections. In time, this division would result in perceptible changes in land use, with the northern portion of the Central SoMa becoming increasingly commercial due to its proximity to downtown, whereas the area south of the viaduct remained predominantly industrial. Originally, the open lots flanking the bridge viaduct were landscaped with lawns and trees, although these were removed during the 1950s with the construction of the Highway 50 (now Interstate 80) elevated freeway.

### **The 1934 Waterfront Strike**

While the Bay Bridge was under construction, San Francisco was for a time paralyzed by the 1934 Waterfront Strike, which remains one of the most important events in the history of San Francisco and the American labor movement. It began as an effort by the International Longshoremen's Association, or ILA, to replace the corrupt and degrading daily "shape-up" with union hiring halls, and to raise wages from 85 cents to \$1 an hour.

The South of Market served as one of the principal battlegrounds of the 1934 Waterfront Strike. Although largely confined to The Embarcadero and adjoining Rincon Hill district, the sporadic fighting that erupted between striking longshoremen and the San Francisco Police Department did spread west into the South End warehouse district, where some of the most notable confrontations occurred. On July 2, 1934, Albert Boynton, Director of the private Industrial Association (IA), announced that the Port of San Francisco would be reopened, by force if necessary. The following day, with police protection, the IA began sending trucks loaded with coffee from Pier 38 to Atlas Drayage, located in the Garcia & Maggini Warehouse at 128 King Street. Within minutes of leaving Pier 38, workers began to throw bricks and bottles at the police, who responded with batons and tear gas. The crowd of workers was too large to subdue, and the strikers began throwing the tear gas back at the police. The battle continued on unabated before moving west along Townsend Street, as far west as 4th Street.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> California Division of Highways, "Highway Transportation Survey of 1934 City and County of San Francisco [map]," California State Printing Office, 1935.

<sup>55</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 62.



Police battling strikers near the intersection of Townsend and Stanford streets, adjacent to San Francisco Fire Department Pump Station No. 1. (San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAD-5204)

On July 5, the ship owners tried to break the strike by hiring scabs to transfer cargo from the ships to warehouses in the South End, and as a result, a riot exploded along The Embarcadero and up Rincon Hill where some of the longshoremen had been squatting in tin shacks. Called “The Battle of Rincon Hill” by the newspapers and “Bloody Thursday” by the maritime workers, the conflict left two men dead—a longshoreman and a member of the Marine Cooks and Stewards—and over 100 strikers injured.<sup>56</sup> The governor responded to the riots by calling in the National Guard, which protected the strikebreakers with machine guns and tanks. The maritime unions asked all unions in the city to respond by declaring a general strike. They responded and the great San Francisco General Strike essentially paralyzed San Francisco for several days. The same month, the ship owners, shocked by the violence and level of support for the workers, agreed to arbitration and endorsed most of the demands of the maritime unions.

#### *Labor Halls*

During the 1934 strike, at least two labor halls were located in the Central SoMa study area. These include the Pile Driver, Bridge and Structural Iron Workers No. 77 hall at 457 Bryant Street. Constructed in 1909 by the union as a mixed-use building, city directories from the 1920s indicate the building was also used by the Labor Carpenter’s Union No. 22, and the Warehouse and Cereal Workers No. 38. This property is among the oldest extant union halls in San Francisco and is currently recognized as individually eligible for the California Register. Nearby was the Brotherhood of Teamsters Hall at 536 Bryant Street. Although a prior historic survey dated its construction to circa 1925, this study indicates it was constructed no later than 1913, and the building continued to be occupied by the Teamsters through at least 1966. The building remains extant, but the façade has been altered and only the ground floor rustication remains.

<sup>56</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 63.





Pile Driver, Bridge and Structural Iron Workers  
No. 77 union hall at 457 Bryant Street.  
(San Francisco Planning Department)



Teamsters gathered in front of the Brotherhood of  
Teamsters Hall at 536 Bryant Street, July 1934.  
Arrow added by author.  
(Francisco Public Library Photo Collection, AAD-5176)

### WPA Projects and Municipal Improvements

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was an ambitious New Deal federal agency created to help alleviate unemployment during the Great Depression. The WPA's work program in San Francisco began in 1935, employing more than 21,000 persons who had previously been on the unemployed relief rolls.<sup>57</sup> The scope of the WPA's work in San Francisco was expansive and included street grading and sidewalk improvements, construction of municipal facilities, adult educational programs, health and engineering surveys, childcare services, public art projects and numerous improvements to parks and recreational facilities. Between 1935 and 1939, the WPA in San Francisco distributed more than \$22 million in wages and made nearly \$30 million in permanent improvements to public facilities.

The W.P.A.'s main offices in San Francisco were located in the Central SoMa area at 49 4th Street (building no longer extant). In 1937, the building was also the focus of a sit-in strike by W.P.A. workers protesting cuts in relief appropriations.<sup>58</sup> There were two W.P.A. projects located in the Central SoMa area, both relatively limited in scope. These included various renovations to the Southern Police Station at 360 4th Street, completed in 1936. Numerous fire houses were also modernized between 1935 and 1938, including the Engine No. 17 station at 34 Mint Street. This work included new heating and plumbing systems in many of the fire houses.<sup>59</sup>

The modernization program was much needed at the time. Many of the fire houses were "temporary" stations constructed soon after the 1906 disaster. These included Engine No. 35 located at 38 Bluxome Street. Newspaper articles from 1937 describes the building as a "... ramshackle, barn-like structure ... Floors of the building are so rough and warped it has been impossible even to cover them with linoleum ... condemned as 'entirely inadequate' by the Central Council of Civic Club's committee on firehouses."<sup>60</sup> A photo accompanying the article shows the buildings old hay loft still standing in the station above a modern gasoline-powered fire truck. The article appears to have garnered attention, as a new reinforced concrete station was constructed in 1939. Two stories tall and featuring

<sup>57</sup> William Mooser, Jr., Branch Manager, *Report on Progress of the Works Program in San Francisco*, (San Francisco: Works Progress Administration, 1938), 3.

<sup>58</sup> San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, news copy notes for images AAF-0594 and AAF-0595.

<sup>59</sup> Clyde Healy, *San Francisco Improved – Report of Clyde E. Healy Assistant City Engineer – City of San Francisco and Coordinator of W.P.A. Projects Period October 10, 1935 to August 31, 1939*, (San Francisco, 1939), 19-20; 70-73.

<sup>60</sup> News copy accompanies images AAD-8161 and AAD-8165 (9/1/1937) in the San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection.

three large vehicle bays, the building was designed with Art Deco and Streamline Moderne influences. It remains extant and was determined as being individually eligible for the California Register by the South of Market Historic Resources Survey.



Interior of Engine Company 35 fire station showing old hay loft above a modern fire truck, 1937.  
(San Francisco Public Library, AAD-8162)



The new Engine Company 35 fire station at 38 Bluxome Street, 1939.  
(San Francisco Public Library, AAD-8163)

## Property Types & Registration Requirements (1906-1936)

The thirty years between 1906 and 1936 encompassed a dramatic period of reconstruction in the Central SoMa study area, as well as San Francisco as a whole. The three principal property types which characterized reconstruction in the study area are industrial, residential and commercial buildings. Other property types, including public assembly properties (theaters, churches, post offices, etc.), and institutional properties (fire stations schools, etc.) are exceedingly rare and should be evaluated individually on a case-by-case basis. More detailed information regarding property types in the South of Market is also available in the *South of Market Area Historic Context Statement*, pages 84 through 100.<sup>61</sup>

### INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS: CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

Typologies: Common industrial typologies include one- and two-story industrial buildings with open floor plates designed to accommodate a variety of industrial uses. A common variant is a predominately one-story building with a two-story office wing at the street frontage. Industrial lofts are multi-story buildings which contain offices and/or retail space on the first floor and multiple floors of unpartitioned space above. Warehouses are similar to lofts in that they typically feature two or more floors of unpartitioned space. However, they typically feature limited fenestration.



Industrial style building at 444 Natoma Street (1907)



Industrial loft at 539 Bryant Street (1912)



Industrial building at 963 Harrison Street (1927)



Art Deco style building at 224 Townsend Street (1935)

<sup>61</sup> A copy of the context statement is available here: <http://www.sf-planning.org/modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=372>



**Form and Scale:** Typically one to four stories in height, with two stories being most common. Flat or bow truss roofs are most common. Most buildings would have originally featured at least one, if not several, large entrances for the loading or unloading of materials.

**Framing and Cladding:** Brick masonry or reinforced concrete designs are most common. Some older industrial buildings may also feature heavy timber framing, frequently clad with brick.

**Fenestration:** Most production facilities featured numerous window openings for lighting and ventilation, while warehouses would have had limited fenestration. Original windows would have most commonly incorporated industrial steel-sash multi-lite sashes. Before circa 1915, double-hung wood-sashes were also used, but are less common.

**Common Styles:** Industrial construction during this period was dominated by either industrial or Classical Revival influenced designs. Industrial designs are characterized by a simple, utilitarian façade with no ornament save for the pattern of window and door openings. Classical Revival influenced designs are typified by the use of a roofline cornice, often in combination with Classical motifs such as applied shield, cartouche and swag ornaments. The use of pilasters to delineate structural bays is not uncommon. During the 1920s and 1930s the Art Deco style proved to be particularly adaptable to industrial designs, as it was easily realized in concrete through the use of simple geometric patterns (chevrons, fluting) typically concentrated on structural piers and near the roofline. Other styles that are much less common include simplified variants of the Mission Revival style, characterized by a rounded element at the roofline, and Mediterranean Revival designs—usually characterized by the use of red clay tiles at the roofline.

**Distribution:** East of 5th Street industrial buildings are most common south of Clara and Harrison streets. West of 5th Street they are common everywhere south of Market Street. The largest industrial buildings are located between Bryant and Townsend streets.

## RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS: CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

**Typologies:** Residential hotels, almost always with a commercial ground floor; larger apartment buildings with units sharing a common entrance; multi-unit flats with each floor comprising a single residential unit (“Romeo flats” typically feature two narrow units on each floor divided by a center stair); single-family dwellings.<sup>62</sup>



Residential hotel at 201-209 6th Street (1907)



Rare example of a single-family dwelling at 453 Minna Street (1906)

<sup>62</sup> A more complete discussion of industrial typologies may be found in the *South of Market Historic Context Statement* prepared in 2009 by Page & Turnbull, pages 84-89.





Classical Revival style flats at  
439-441 Tehama Street (1906)



Central Hotel Lodging House at 566-586 3rd Street (1907)

**Form and Scale:** Typically two to four stories in height, usually with a raised basement level. Flat roofs are most common.

**Framing and Cladding:** Wood-frame or brick masonry is most common for residential hotels. For flats and single-family dwellings, wood frame construction is near universal. Before circa 1915, flush tongue-in-groove wood siding is most common, with wood rustic channel siding commonly used on the secondary facades. Wood shingle cladding is also possible. Larger hotels and apartments, especially those built after circa 1915, frequently feature reinforced concrete or steel frame construction along with smooth stucco cladding.

**Fenestration:** Nearly all residential buildings would have originally incorporated double-hung wood sash windows.

**Common Styles:** Residential construction during this period was dominated by Classical Revival influenced designs, often referred to as the “Edwardian style” because of its correspondence with that period of the British monarchy (1901-1910). Classical Revival influenced designs are typified by the use of a roofline cornice, frequently with brackets, modillions and egg-and-dart molding; and the use of Classical motifs such as applied shield, cartouche and swag ornaments. Some residential buildings are also utilitarian in design, but may incorporate a simple cornice. Other styles that are much less common include simplified variants of the Mission Revival style, typified by a rounded element at the roofline, and simplified versions of the Craftsman style.

**Distribution:** Residential hotels are most common in the northwestern section of Central SoMa study area, particularly in proximity to Mission and Howard streets west of 5th Street. They may also be found in scattered locations—typically on corners—south of Harrison Street. Residential flats are not common in the Central SoMa study area. Most were built in the first few years after the 1906 Earthquake, although a few later infill examples exist. They are overwhelmingly located along side streets and alleys, such as Clara and Shipley streets. Examples that retain architectural integrity include 274-276 Clara Street (1906) and 271 Clara Street (1907). Single-family dwellings are extremely rare in the Central SoMa study area. Most are simple wood frame structures, sometimes incorporating mild Classical Revival design influences. One of the most unusual buildings within the study area is 453 Minna Street (1906), built on a narrow 20-foot wide lot. Its design is extremely restrained, featuring wood rustic channel siding and a simple cornice.

## COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS: CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

Typologies: Pure commercial buildings include department stores, office buildings and banking facilities—most frequently located in proximity to Market Street. Commercial uses elsewhere are typically associated with ground floor storefronts in association with residential hotels or manufacturing facilities.<sup>63</sup>



704 Bryant Street (1914)



Neoclassical commercial building at 66 Mint Street (1916)



Mediterranean Revival style commercial building at  
508-514 4th Street (1925)



Pacific Building at 801 Market Street (1907)

Form and Scale: Commercial buildings in proximity to the central business district are typically four or more stories in height. Elsewhere, commercial buildings are typically one- to three-stories in height. Flat roofs are most common.

Framing and Cladding: Steel-frame or reinforced concrete construction is most common for larger commercial buildings, although brick masonry was also frequently used. These buildings are most commonly clad with smooth stucco. Smaller commercial buildings are typically brick masonry or reinforced concrete structures.

<sup>63</sup> A more complete discussion of industrial typologies may be found in the *South of Market Historic Context Statement* prepared in 2009 by Page & Turnbull, pages 96-97.

**Fenestration:** Most commercial building employed wood and plate glass storefront systems with divided transoms. Multi-story buildings would typically have incorporated double-hung wood windows on the upper floors, although casement and pivot window systems were also used.

**Common Styles:** Commercial construction during this period was dominated by Classical Revival influenced designs, typified by the use of a roofline cornice, frequently with brackets, modillions and egg-and-dart molding; and the use of Classical motifs such as applied shield, cartouche and swag ornaments. During the 1920s, Mediterranean Revival designs came into vogue, usually typified by the use of red clay tile at the roofline. The Art Deco style was also used for commercial buildings during the 1920s and 1930s, most frequently for larger-scale commercial buildings.

**Distribution:** Within the Central SoMa study area, exclusively commercial property types tend to be concentrated close to the central business district, particularly along Market and Mission streets between 2nd and 4th streets. Elsewhere in the study area, commercial uses are scattered and most commonly found on the ground floor of residential hotels or apartment buildings, or in combination with light industrial facilities such as paint shops.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The table below discusses the significance of properties from this era according to criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources.

National/ California Register	Significance	Discussion
A/1	Events	<p><b>Industrial Properties:</b> Industrial buildings from this period may be significant for their associations with the theme of industrial development, which was a key theme in the South of Market during this period. Groups of industrial properties appear better able to convey these patterns than individual structures. Evaluators should consider the potential presence of historic districts that illustrate this criterion, though some properties may also qualify individually for their associations with prominent firms or advances in manufacturing methods. Individual resources may also be found significant for their architectural merits or association with prominent individuals (see below).</p> <p><b>Residential Properties:</b> Residential hotels and lodging houses are key facets of reconstruction in the South of Market and are significant for their associations with social and labor history tied to the industrialization of the neighborhood. They are also more likely to qualify as individual resources versus other typologies. Flats and single-family dwellings may also be significant for similar associations, although groups of these residences appear better able to convey these patterns.</p> <p><b>Commercial Properties:</b> Commercial buildings from this period may be significant for their associations with post-Earthquake reconstruction, or for their association with a significant business or enterprise. They may also be significant for their association with the establishment of commercial corridors and patterns of commercial development. In this regard, evaluators should consider the potential presence of historic districts that illustrate this criterion. Many commercial buildings in the study area were also mixed use, either as commercial storefronts within larger</p>

		residential buildings, or as commercial storefronts associated with manufacturing or distribution facilities. Purely commercial buildings are not common, and may be more likely to qualify as individual resources, particularly when their significance is also tied to their architectural merit (see below).
B/2	Persons	Buildings from this period may be significant for their association with persons important to history. If this is the case, however, the building should be the best or only remaining property capable of representing that person's achievements or reasons for being significant.
C/3	Architecture/ Design	Buildings from this period may be significant for their architecture, as expressed by intact stylistic features, forms or construction methods. Buildings may also qualify as the work of a master architect or prominent builder. Individual resources qualified under these criteria should be good examples of types and/or styles, and retain most of their original features. Rare or unique forms should also be given strong consideration for individual listing.
D/4	Information Potential	Buildings, ruins or subsurface remains may be significant for their potential to provide information about local construction methods and materials. However, such examples would be extremely rare.

## INTEGRITY

In order to be eligible for listing in the local, state, or national historic registers, properties from this period must retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance in association with development during this period. While most buildings undergo change over time, alterations should not significantly change the essential historic character of the buildings. The aspects of integrity deemed most important for this period are design, materials, workmanship and feeling. Buildings qualified as individual resources at the state or national level should retain most of their original features.

### Minimum Eligibility Requirements

- Clear example of architecture from this period (most likely Classical Revival, Mission Revival, Mediterranean Revival or Industrial style)
- Retains original form and roofline
- Substantially retains the original pattern of windows and doors
- Retains most of its original ornamentation, if applicable. (The retention of entry, window and/or roofline ornamentation should be considered most important)
- Replacement of doors and windows is acceptable as long as they conform to the original door/window pattern and the size of the openings
- Retention of the original cladding is crucial, but not absolute (see other integrity considerations)

### Other Integrity Considerations

- Rear additions that have respected the scale of the original building generally are not a strong detriment to integrity. However, additions that compromise a building's form and scale greatly diminish integrity.
- The replacement of the original cladding is a severe detriment to integrity. Typically, it is only acceptable as long as nearly all other character-defining features are retained.
- The retention of original windows greatly enhances integrity of materials. However, far more important is the retention of the original of pattern of windows, and that any replacement windows(s) are located within the original frame openings.
- A building altered into a later style has lost association with this period, but may be significantly associated with the period during which it was altered—so long as it displays the character-defining features of that era.



**Special Considerations for Commercial Properties:**

Commercial buildings from this period that retain their original storefront configurations are generally rare, as storefronts are “the feature most commonly altered in a historic commercial building.”<sup>64</sup> These alterations typically occurred as store owners sought to update their entrances and display windows (and sometimes the entire facade) according to the popular tastes of the day. Thus, in multi-story commercial buildings, storefront alterations are often not as severe an impact as long as they are subordinate to the overall character of the building. Similarly, storefront alterations that demonstrate evolving commercial design patterns associated with a subsequent historically significant context may also gain significance in their own right. Buildings that have been altered entirely into a new style have lost architectural association with their original construction, but may be significantly associated with the period during which the alteration occurred.

**Special Considerations for Industrial Properties:** Industrial buildings are often modified to adapt to changing methods of production and distribution. Therefore, some discretion is warranted when considering integrity. Nevertheless, the property must retain the essential physical features that made up its historic character.

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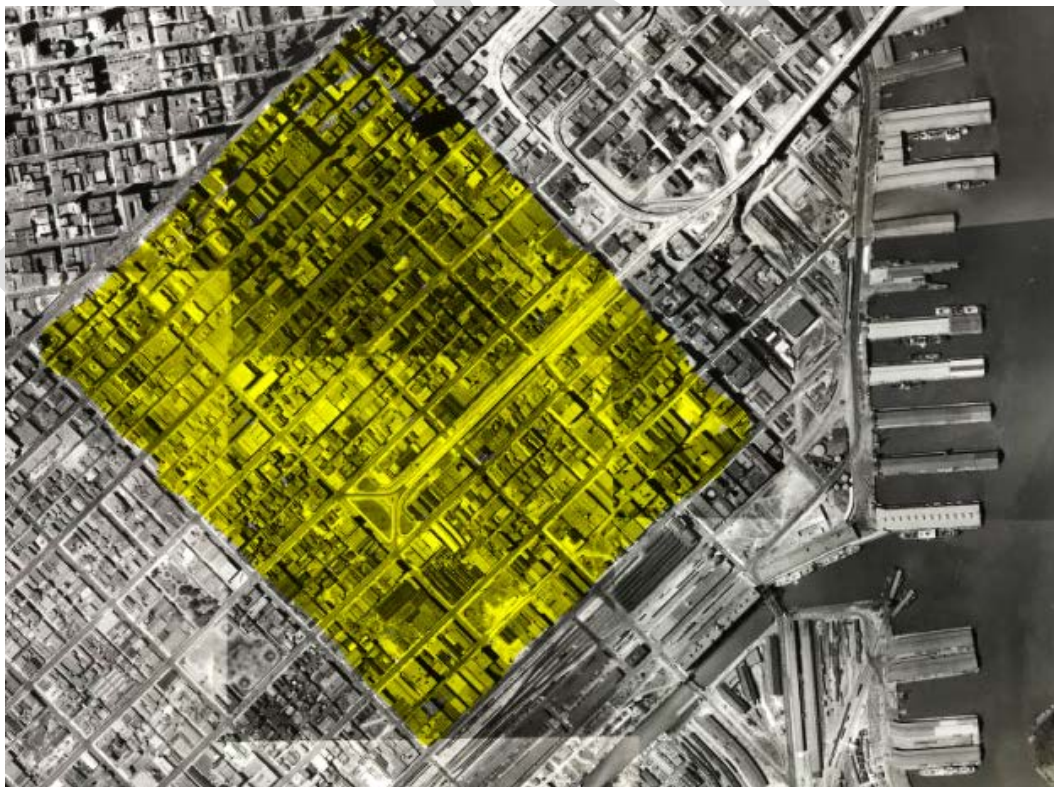
<sup>64</sup> National Park Service, “Storefronts,” retrieved 27 August 2013 from: [http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/incentives/avoiding\\_2.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/incentives/avoiding_2.htm)

## The End of the Depression through Redevelopment (1937-1973)

By the end of the 1930s, a host of federal programs had helped ease unemployment, while also fostering a raft of physical improvements throughout San Francisco. Nevertheless, the South of Market—in particular the “skid road” areas along Howard, Folsom and intersecting streets, remained one of the most impoverished sections of the city. With the advent of World War II, though, the need for war workers and soldiers absorbed many of the unemployed. Throughout the war years, the neighborhood hummed with activity, and likewise played host to a new—and increasingly non-white—population of migrants and semi-skilled laborers.

During the post-war years, the area experienced a punctuated burst of light industrial infill. However, the 1950s also marked the dawn of the freeway era, and within a short period manufacturing steadily moved from the urban core to suburban locations. Industrial operations were also depressed in tandem with changes in shipping. For much of its history, the South of Market’s economic fortunes had been tied to the nexus of railroads and wharves. But by midcentury the amount of freight handled by the Port of San Francisco began a decline that would end in a precipitous drop off following the embrace of container shipping facilities.

Increasingly, portions of the South of Market were characterized as blighted, with underutilized manufacturing facilities and a population primarily composed of the poor, elderly, immigrant and indigent. These conditions proved ripe for redevelopment forces, which would seek to extend the central business district deeper into the South of Market—largely through the wholesale demolition and redevelopment of existing properties. This process took decades to play out, but ultimately would result in the most extensive reshaping of the area’s physical and social fabric since the 1906 Earthquake and Fire.



Composite 1938 aerial photograph with the Central SoMa Plan area highlighted.

Note the Bay Bridge on- and off-ramps terminating at 5th Street.

(Harrison Ryker via the David Rumsey Map Collection)

## Depression Era Remodeling

Although the last years of the 1930s marked a period of slow recovery from the depths of the Great Depression, new construction continued to be restrained. Commercial property owners, however, often sought to update their buildings by making over storefronts—or even the entire façade. This was supported by Title I of the National Housing Act (NHA) of 1934, which was designed to stimulate the building industry and consumer spending. The “Modernization Credit Plan” provided government-insured, low-interest private loans for the modernization of existing storefronts. The plan was strongly supported by building material manufacturers as well as a “Modernize Main Street” public relations campaign. By the fall of 1934, the FHA and its partners had produced 60 booklets, brochures, and related materials promoting the modernization effort. Although initially developed as a temporary program, the Modernization Credit Plan would be renewed in 1943.<sup>65</sup>

As discussed in the *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, Historic Context Statement, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement*, San Francisco embraced the new program almost immediately:

San Francisco architects and merchant associations played active roles in promoting the local “Modernize Main Street Campaign.” Beginning in Fall 1935, unemployed architects photographed key commercial corridors and prepared before and after sketches, demonstrating possible modernization schemes for individual buildings. Merchant associations hosted meetings to present these before and after slide shows of modernized storefronts. Merchants were canvassed in over 20 retail districts, with a particular focus on Market Street and Union Square. The aggressive marketing and merchant outreach worked. San Francisco’s FHA office reported over \$15,000,000 in insured loans between October 1935 and May 1936. Extant examples of modernized storefronts are scattered across San Francisco and provide a visible connection to the past and the economic programs promoted by the New Deal.<sup>66</sup>

In conjunction with the program, manufacturers increasingly developed new products in order to stimulate a market for fashionable, modern storefront facades. In turn, these new building materials helped inform the development of a new style commonly referred to as Streamline Moderne, which combined European Modernism and the Art Deco movement. Promoted by manufacturers and architects alike, Streamline Modern designs would become increasingly popular during the late 1930s, and remained a strong architectural influence through the 1950s.

Another impetus for modernization was the 1939-1940 Golden Gate International Exposition held at Treasure Island. In preparation for this World’s Fair, property owners were encouraged to modernize their buildings as part of the “Shine for ‘39” program. This included the remodeling of the former Claus Spreckels/San Francisco Call building at 703 Market Street. Originally constructed in 1896 and rehabilitated following the 1906 Earthquake, the Call Building was remodeled in 1938 by architect Albert Roller as the Streamline Moderne style Central Tower. The number of building stories was increased, although removal of the building’s dome resulted in a reduction of height from 315 feet to 298 feet.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Mary Brown, *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, Historic Context Statement, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: San Francisco City and County Planning Department, January 12, 2011), 53.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid: 54.

<sup>67</sup> “Central Tower, Wikipedia, accessed 12 September 2012 from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central\\_Tower\\_\(San\\_Francisco\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Tower_(San_Francisco)).





Left: The Claus Spreckels/ San Francisco Call Building as shown in 1897. (U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library)  
 Right: The remodeled Claus Spreckels/ San Francisco Call Building ca. 1950. (San Francisco Public Library, AAB-6544)

Similar remodeling efforts were undertaken at the Atlas Building at 602-606 Mission Street, as well as the National Dollar Store at 929-931 Market Street. Originally, the National Dollar store was comprised of two structures, both constructed in 1907. 929 Market Street was designed by architects Myers & O'Brien as a four-story, brick masonry commercial building with a one-story storage area at the rear facing Stevenson Street. 931 Market Street was designed by architect Albert Pissis and was originally a two-story, brick masonry commercial building with a saloon and pool hall. In 1939, the two buildings were connected internally and their façades were unified with Art Deco influences by architect Otto A. Deichmann. The rear facades of both buildings, however, continue to be clad with brick, including intricate roofline corbelling and a large infilled arch at the rear of 929 Market Street.



929-931 Market Street. Two 1907 buildings unified by an Art Deco façade in 1939. (San Francisco Planning Department)



The rear of 929 Market Street (at right) and 931 Market Street (at left). Both retain their original brick cladding. (San Francisco Planning Department)



## World War II

As with other neighborhoods in the city, very little was built in the South of Market during the 1940s, mostly due to wartime building restrictions. Five months after the U.S. entered World War II, a federal War Production Board construction order halted all non-essential private development in order to concentrate resources toward the war effort.<sup>70</sup> An analysis of construction dates within the Central SoMa area reveals that there are only 14 extant properties constructed between 1940 and 1945. In some cases, these new buildings included additions to existing industrial plants. Examples include 457 Minna Street, constructed in 1944 as an addition to the Kingwell Brothers' California Brass Works—a brass foundry complex of three interconnected buildings, all of which remain extant.

While the Second World War may not have dramatically influenced the built environment, it did result in transformative demographic changes in the Bay Area. With its many war plants, shipyards and military bases, the San Francisco Bay region earned the reputation as the "Arsenal of Democracy." War workers lured by the prospect of relatively well-paying jobs inundated San Francisco, Oakland, Richmond, South San Francisco, and other industrial communities ringing the Bay. The Bracero program initiated in 1942 also brought thousands of Mexican agricultural workers to Northern California. In 1940, only five percent of the population living in the South of Market was designated as non-white, but by 1950 that figure had nearly tripled to fourteen percent.<sup>71</sup> This included a number of African American residents who had arrived in San Francisco as war workers. By 1970, a census tract bounded by Harrison, Townsend, 3rd and 11th streets was more than 40 percent African American.<sup>72</sup>

## Post-War Infill and New Construction

Although prior historic studies of the South of Market have characterized the post-war period as one of stasis, an analysis of construction dates shows that the Central SoMa area—at least initially—experienced a fairly sustained period of infill. There are today approximately 120 buildings located in the study area that were constructed during the period, and fully a quarter were built between 1954 and 1958. A sampling of ten properties constructed during the mid-1950s shows that light industrial buildings comprised much of the new construction. Some represented the replacement of under-utilized facilities, such as scrap metal yards and pipe yards. Others represented the replacement of older, wood-framed facilities with new concrete construction. Two buildings also replaced former gas stations and repair shops. Some of the 1950s industrial development likely also resulted from the construction of the new James Lick Skyway, discussed below. Construction of the freeway required the demolition of hundreds of buildings in the South of Market, forcing many business owners to relocate. Cleared areas adjacent to the freeway also offered new building sites. Of the ten properties discussed above, three were constructed near, or directly adjacent to the freeway.

By contrast, it appears that almost no new residential buildings were constructed in the Central SoMa area, almost certainly because of the neighborhood's industrial character—as well as the noise and pollution of the new freeway. In fact, residential buildings were so undesirable by this time that several of the new light industrial buildings replaced older flats. Commercial construction was likewise scant. One of the most prominent examples includes a former drug wholesale building constructed in 1947 at 250 4th Street and today used as Olivet University.

Among the largest new developments in the Central SoMa area was the new San Francisco Flower Terminal at 6th and Brannan streets. Popularly known as the San Francisco Flower Mart, the nearly three acre facility was designed by master architect, Mario Ciampi, and included two principal warehouses, as well as a large mall with multiple

<sup>70</sup> Mason C. Doan, *American Housing Production, 1880-2000: A Concise History* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1997), 49.

<sup>71</sup> Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting and Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2009), 66.

<sup>72</sup> Tim Kelley Consulting, The Alfred Williams Consultancy and VerPlanck Historic Preservation Consulting, *San Francisco African American Citywide Historic Context Statement: 1579-2014*, (San Francisco: January, 2015), 74.

storefronts. The new facility opened in September 1956 with San Francisco mayor, George Christopher, presiding at the ceremonies. It was then the largest wholesale flower terminal in the United States and remains one of only four wholesale flower terminals in the United States.<sup>73</sup> It is also one of the few such flower terminals in the world.<sup>74</sup>

According to Gary Kawaguchi's history of the Flower Market, the new complex was designed to preserve maximum autonomy for the growers and vendors who used the space:

It placed the California Flower Market and the San Francisco Flower Growers side by side, with the peninsula Flower Growers in the rear property, which they owned. The wholesale houses would be in a row facing the two markets ... The architectural plan was a way for all parties to share the space, yet be as autonomous as they possibly could be, a situation which they had grown accustomed to. Buildings for the three markets were discrete; wholesale houses had individual storefronts. Although one California Flower Market Director had a vision of social and cultural pluralism ... the dream was not to be realized because it was not practicable or probable, considering their stubborn independence, different ways of doing business and past conflicts. The design has proven to be serviceable with the main drawback being the lack of parking space, an increasing problem which has plagued the market since opening day.<sup>75</sup>



San Francisco Flower Terminal at 6<sup>th</sup> and Brannan streets.  
(Google Maps)

The new complex replaced a former pipe yard, auto truck yard and scrap metal works that had been leased by the U.S. Navy during World War II. During the transition from their old facility to the new complex, the flower terminal briefly occupied the American Can Building at Folsom and 12th streets. The old Flower Market building located at 5th and Howard streets was razed for a parking lot, and remained vacant until 2008 when the Intercontinental Hotel was completed. In 1983, the Flower Market expanded through the purchase of 548 5th Street, a large warehouse originally constructed in 1925.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Ken Garcia, "Scent of Cash Wafts Over Flower Mart," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 4, 2000.

<sup>74</sup> "San Francisco Flower Market," San Francisco City College student film, 1977. Accessed 4 September 2013 from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xk-SJwnnHPg>

<sup>75</sup> Gary Kawaguchi, *Living with Flowers: The California Flower Market History*, (San Francisco: California Flower Market, Inc., 1993), 68.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid: 79.

### Architectural Transitions & Midcentury Remodeling

As discussed previously, the federal government's "Modernize Main Street" program had a lasting influence in the embrace of modern architecture and the development of the Streamline Moderne style. During the 1930s through the 1950s, Streamline Moderne designs were used for both commercial and industrial buildings. One of the more conspicuous examples of Streamline Moderne design in the Central SoMa study area is the A. Carlisle & Company printing and lithography building at 645 Harrison Street, completed in 1948. Designed by architect, Herman C. Baumann, the building features a central vertical shaft inset with glass blocks to break up continuous ribbons of horizontal windows.



The newly-completed A. Carlisle & Company building at 645 Harrison Street, 1948.

The building is an outstanding example of Streamline Moderne design.

(San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAB-4044)

Another prominent example of Moderne architecture is the Marine Fireman's Union hall at 240 2nd Street (1957). Designed by architect John Gloe, the building features murals by Lucienne Bloch and her husband Stephen Poe Dimitroff. As part of the Transit Center District Plan historic survey, the building was found eligible for the National Register for its associations with San Francisco's labor movement, as well as its architecture.

International style and Midcentury Modern design influences were also used during this period. These influences are apparent in new construction, as well as remodeling efforts. Prominent examples of Midcentury remodeling efforts—which were principally concentrated along Market Street—include the Kamm/Morris Plan Company Building at 715-719 Market Street, directly adjacent to the Spreckels/Call Building. The Kamm/Morris Plan Company Building was designed by architects Bliss & Faville in 1905 and remodeled in 1940. During the 1950s, it was remodeled again with Art Moderne influences by Hurt, Trudell & Berger.

Nearby, the former Pantages Theater at 935-939 Market Street, which had been converted to a Kress department store, was remodeled in 1956 with International style design influences. On a larger scale, the 15-story David Hewes Building at 1 6th Street—originally built in 1908 as a steel-frame tower with a brick curtain wall—was re-clad with green spandrel panels and restyled as a Midcentury Modern office tower. Portions of the new spandrel panel cladding have begun to fail, exposing areas of the original brick cladding. Other examples of remodeling efforts

include the former Pacific Gas & Electric building at 881-889 Howard Street, later used as the Emporium warehouse and today used as a retail outlet for the Burlington Coat Factory. Originally built in 1920, the building was remodeled with Streamline Moderne influences—including glass block window walls, circa 1950.



Two views of the David Hewes Building at 6th and Market streets.

At left, the building circa 1910. At right, the building in 2013.

(Postcard, private collection; San Francisco Planning Department)



The former Pantages Theater was remodeled during the 1950s with International style design influences.

At left, the building circa 1920s. At right, the building circa 2010. It was demolished in 2013.

(San Francisco Public Library Photo Collection and Google Maps)

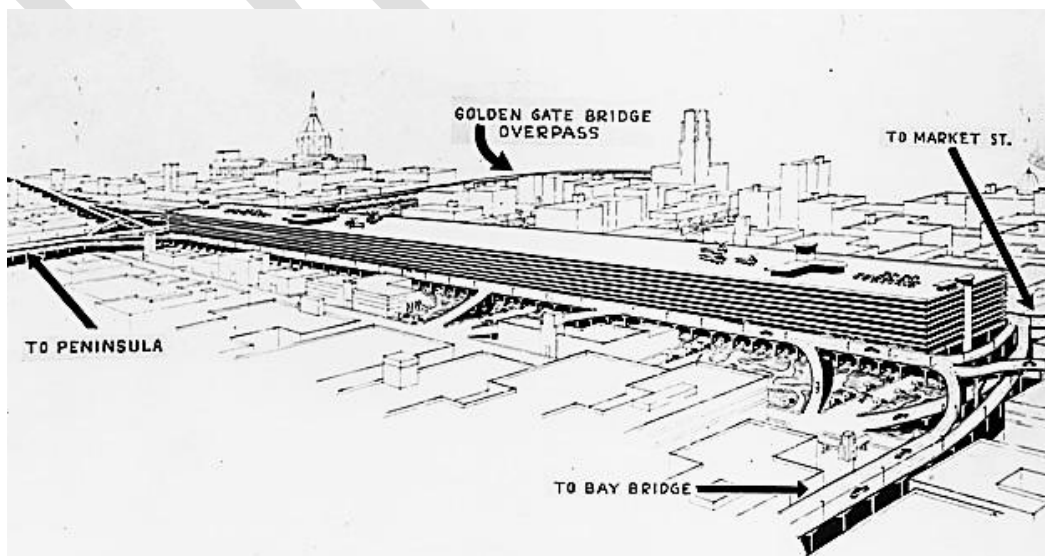




The former Pacific Gas & Electric building at 5<sup>th</sup> and Howard was remodeled ca. 1950s with Moderne influences. At left, the building in 1925. At right, the building circa 2010.  
(U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library and Google Maps)

### Highway Construction and Suburban Migration

During the post-war era, the popularity of the private automobile led to increasing congestion on city streets. These pressures were particularly evident in the Central SoMa adjacent to the on- and off-ramps for the Bay Bridge at 5th Street, where traffic frequently backed up for blocks. Parking was also in great demand. By 1938, aerial photos indicate that approximately 25 parking lots and garages were already extant in the study area. Most were concentrated along Mission, Minna, Howard and Tehama streets in relative proximity to the central business district. South of Folsom Street, many of these vehicle lots were dedicated to trucking uses rather than automobiles. Nevertheless, parking pressures appear to have been acute. As early as 1941, the San Francisco News-Call Bulletin had published a rendering of a proposed 15,000 space parking garage located adjacent to the north side of the Bay Bridge viaduct. A similar idea was proposed again in 1947, when a consulting engineer provided a sketch of a five-block-long, nine-story garage to be located in the area bounded by Minna, Natoma, 3rd and 8th streets.



1947 sketch of a proposed nine-story parking garage in the South of Market.  
(San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAK-0348)



Heavy traffic on Harrison Street between 5th and 6th streets, 1944. (San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAB-4036)



MUNI buses along Townsend Street adjacent to the Southern Pacific train station, 1951. (San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAD-6022)

Putting further stress on the city's streets was the conversion of streetcar lines to bus service, which began soon after the Second World War. With the increase in traffic came a concurrent demand for better roads—particularly improvements to major arterials. These included Bayshore Boulevard, which was absorbed into the Highway 101 freeway during the 1950s. During this same period, Highway 101 was connected to the Bay Bridge via the James Lick Skyway, which consisted of elevated concrete viaducts that are part of today's Interstate 80. This resulted in the demolition of hundreds of additional buildings in the South of Market and further divided the neighborhood—although in the Central SoMa area freeway construction only directly affected the area between 5th and 6th streets.

While travel times were greatly reduced, freeway construction also led to a huge out-migration from the city as thousands of San Franciscans, as well as many businesses, began to relocate to the suburbs. Manufacturing and production facilities, in particular, retreated from the urban core to areas in the East Bay or down the San Francisco Peninsula. Within a relatively short period San Francisco ceased to be the industrial center of the Bay Area. During the 1950s, the number of San Franciscans employed as laborers declined 18 percent, while the number of craftsmen and foremen fell 20 percent. During the 1960s, these professions would experience another decline of nearly 20 percent.<sup>77</sup> By the 1970s the city would count only twelve percent of regional manufacturing jobs and only a quarter of its wholesaling industries. Although some industries remained vibrant, particularly food processing, automotive repair, and warehousing, the future of manufacturing was clearly in the suburbs and, increasingly, overseas.

At the same time, the number of white collar employees in San Francisco grew steadily in tandem with the growth of banking and financial services, insurance, real estate, and other professional services. Many of these jobs were created in San Francisco's Financial District, which steadily began to expand into areas at the edge of Chinatown, North Beach, and the South of Market. Between 1960 and 1972, some 23 new high rise office towers were constructed, encompassing nearly 12 million square feet.<sup>78</sup>

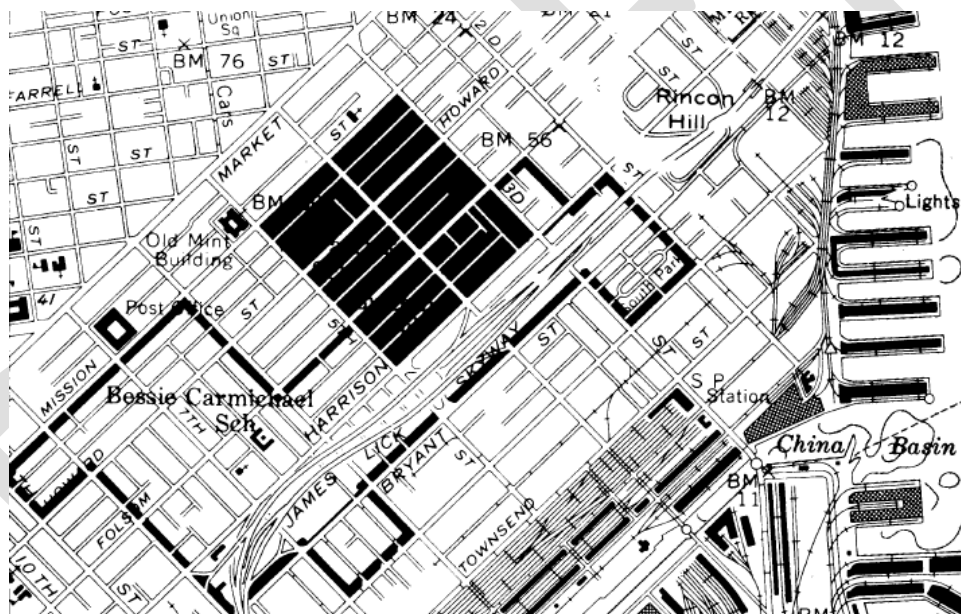
<sup>77</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*, (San Francisco, Glide Publications, 1974), 31.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*: 31.

## Yerba Buena Center Redevelopment

Given its proximity to downtown, its aging building stock and impoverished demographics, the South of Market was among the first areas in San Francisco targeted for redevelopment. In 1953, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA) announced plans for Redevelopment Area D-1, which encompassed more than 18 “blighted” blocks at the heart of the neighborhood in the an roughly bounded by 2nd Street on the east, 8th Street on the west, Mission and Folsom streets on the north, and Bryant Street on the south. Although officially sponsored by the SFRA, redevelopment was also championed by influential members of the private sector, who foresaw a lucrative opportunity to extend downtown commercial uses into the South of Market.

The redevelopment area proposed in the initial plan, however, was relatively removed from the central business district, and in 1954 a new “San Francisco Prosperity Plan” was put forth by the influential real estate magnate, Benjamin Swig. The details of the Prosperity Plan, prepared by local architect John Carl Warnecke, ultimately called for the clearance of six blocks bounded by 3rd, 5th, Mission and Harrison streets for the construction of a convention center, high-rise office buildings, a transportation terminal, a luxury hotel and shopping center, a football stadium, and a parking garage for 16,000 cars.<sup>79</sup> In many respects, Swig’s proposal was quite similar to the 19th century plans of Asbury Harpending and William Ralston to create an upscale office, banking, retail, and hospitality district through the creation of New Montgomery Street.



Map showing the original boundaries of Redevelopment Area D-1 (dashed black lines), superimposed with the “Prosperity Plan” area promoted by Benjamin Swig (dark black area). (Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*, p.25)

Swig’s plan was opposed by San Francisco’s Planning Director, Paul Opperman, who stated that much of the Prosperity Plan area was not blighted, and that redevelopment should be left to the private market. The plan also drew little support from the federal urban renewal agency, and as a consequence, Swig withdrew his plan.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, Swig’s basic idea proved extremely durable. Over the coming decades, practically every aspect of his plan—save for construction of an athletic stadium—would be realized. As related by Chester Hartman, author of *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*, “although Swig’s specific plan was not adopted, it

<sup>79</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*, (San Francisco, Glide Publications, 1974), 39-41.

<sup>80</sup> San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Paolo Polledri, ed., *Visionary San Francisco*, (Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1990), 129.

did set the course for succeeding plans for South of Market redevelopment: to begin renewal in the area closest to the central business district, irrespective of “blight” conditions; to rely primarily on the bulldozer approach to renewal; and to construct in the area a massive conventions-sports-office center.”<sup>81</sup>

As early as August 1959, a new three-story, 1,083-car parking garage was completed by the Parking Authority on the block bounded by 4th, 5th, Mission and Minna streets. Prior to construction, the block included several furniture warehouses, stores, two parking lots and three residential hotels. During the 1960s, two additional floors were added to the parking garage, significantly increasing its parking capacity.



View southwest along Mission Street during construction of the new 5th and Mission parking garage, 1958.  
(San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAK-0360)

Around the same time, the basic tenets of Swig’s Prosperity Plan were reinvigorated by the Blyth-Zellerbach Committee, formed in 1956 by stockbroker Charles Blyth and paper magnate J. D. Zellerbach. Initially the Committee had focused on redevelopment of the city’s Produce Market, donating \$50,000 to the City Planning Department for studies which informed the Golden Gateway project.<sup>82</sup> In 1959, the Blyth-Zellerbach Committee created the San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal Association (SPUR) to generate support for urban renewal in the South of Market.

1959 also marked the year that M. Justin Hermann, formerly the administrator of the San Francisco Regional Office of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, was appointed Executive Director of the SFRA by mayor George Christopher. A skilled and politically savvy administrator, during Hermann’s tenure at the SFRA staffing levels would grow from 60 to more than 450 persons. Hermann also understood how to muster the considerable resources available to the SFRA. As related by Chester Hartman:

Redevelopment agencies are semi-autonomous bodies with vast amounts of independent legal, financial and technical powers and resources. They are in many ways independent from general municipal governments ..... They have access to massive sums of federal funds ... and develop direct relationships with federal funding agencies, which often bypass mayors and local legislatures. They can issue their own bonds. They have and freely use the power of eminent domain. Indeed a key element in the urban renewal development process is the power to assemble

<sup>81</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*, (San Francisco, Glide Publications, 1974), 42.

<sup>82</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*, (San Francisco, Glide Publications, 1974), 35.



large sites by taking land, with compensation—from individual owners, or by purchasing the land, with the taking power lurking in the background to create “willing” sellers.<sup>83</sup>

By 1961, the SFRA had received approval for a \$600,000 grant from the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency to conduct planning studies for what became known as the Yerba Buena Center redevelopment. Among other items, the grant application outlined the total removal of residential buildings, the removal of commercial buildings deemed beyond unsalvageable, the realignment of streets, and assembling parcels to encourage new investment.<sup>84</sup> By this time, the original redevelopment area had been entirely refocused on the blocks bounded by Market, 2nd, 5th and Harrison streets, encompassing a total of 87 acres. These boundaries omitted nearly all of the original D-1 project boundaries, but were essentially the same as those initially proposed by Benjamin Swig’s “Prosperity Plan.” Some of the owners of property adjacent to redevelopment area included the Hearst Corporation, the San Francisco Chronicle, Standard Oil, the Emporium, United California Bank, Pacific Telephone and Telegraph and Benjamin Swig.<sup>85</sup>

In 1961, Pacific Telephone and Telegraph announced construction of a new headquarters building at 666 Folsom Street, as well as an annex at 40 Hawthorne Street. Designed by the architect John Carl Warnecke and completed in 1964, the Brutalist style buildings were found eligible for the California Register by the Transit Center District historic survey. Benjamin Swig also commissioned architect Mario Gaidano to design an office building at 633 Folsom Street, constructed in 1966 as headquarters for the Pacific Telephone marketing department. Other early redevelopment plans were never realized. These included architects Mario Ciampi and Allyn Martin’s vision of redeveloping the Old Mint site as “Gold Plaza,” an urban park with landscaping and pools surrounded by modern office towers. As part of the redevelopment, the Mint would be demolished—although its columns would be preserved as a centerpiece of the park.<sup>86</sup> The plan aroused considerable opposition, which led to the Mint being designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1961.



Plans presented by architects Mario Ciampi and Allyn Martin in February 1958 for redevelopment of the area around the Old Mint. Only the Mint’s columns would be left standing as part of a proposed park. (San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, AAD-3402)

<sup>83</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*, (San Francisco, Glide Publications, 1974), 46.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*: 76.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> “Mint to Park to College to Museum: The Checkered Past of a Landmark,” *Newsletter of the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society*, July-September, 2013 (Vol. 25, No. 3), 10.

In addition to its proximity to the Financial District, the large 100-vara blocks of the South of Market were thought to be ideally suited for large-scale corporate projects. The only impediment was that thousands of people already lived there, including many of San Francisco's most economically vulnerable residents. As related by Alan Averbach, by the 1950s the population living South of Market remained impoverished, but was stable. In fact, Howard Street—which during the Depression had frequently been characterized as the main street of “skid row,” was not even included in the initial D-1 redevelopment area boundary.

On the whole, the proposed Yerba Buena Center's boundaries encompassed a rather sedentary community in comparison to its widely traveling earlier inhabitants. The rounds of drink, travel, and experience characterizing what, in retrospect, were boom times for the pre-Depression hobo, had shrunk now to the smaller circuits of the neighborhood, the hotel, the room. South of Market was no longer the setting of massive, visible economic distress, as it had been in the Depression, but the center of the less visible poverty of minorities, the retired, the disabled, and the outcast ... It was the residents' great misfortune, so it turned out, to live atop a gold mine. South of Market land offered enormous potential for profits to whomever could make the land available and the terms attractive enough for corporations to invest in building there.<sup>87</sup>

Planning studies undertaken for the Yerba Buena Center in 1963 show that the Yerba Buena Center redevelopment area was then home to “a large number of elderly and near elderly, many with limited incomes ... drawn to the area by the inexpensive living accommodations.”<sup>88</sup> In total, the area counted 253 families and 3,165 single individuals. Of these, 94 percent were male and nearly 45 percent were over the age of 61. Economically, 41 percent of the residents were shown as regularly employed, while 25 percent received retirement income and another 25 percent received public assistance. In total, fully 70 percent of residents reported income of under \$300 a month.<sup>89</sup> Racial demographics showed that the area was then 87 percent white and 8 percent African American—although nearly half of the 253 families were African American. The study concluded that the population mix was “indicative of serious social maladjustment.”<sup>90</sup>



Two views of Howard Street between 3rd and 4th streets. At left, men on “Skid Road,” 1956. At right, residential hotels and small businesses, 1966. This area today includes the Moscone Center, Metreon, and Yerba Buena Gardens. (San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection)

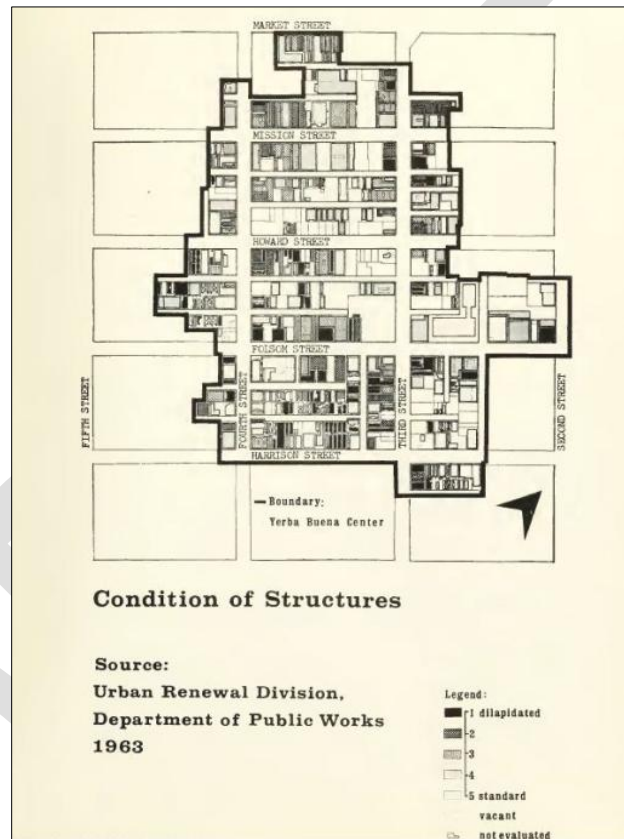
<sup>87</sup> Alvin Averbach, “San Francisco’s South of Market District, 1850-1950: The Emergence of a Skid Row,” *California Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Fall, 1973), 218.

<sup>88</sup> San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, *Report on the Redevelopment Plan Yerba Buena Center Redevelopment Project Area D-1*, (San Francisco: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, December 1965), 16.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid: 14.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid: 14.

These redevelopment studies also showed that the area was home to some 560 business firms. These included 104 manufacturers, 144 retailers, and 187 service firms.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, considerable effort was made to describe the business conditions as “blighted.” Indications of blight could include such subjectively defined characteristics as “inadequate subdivision of lots as to their shape and size” as well as “lack of proper utilization of the land” (e.g., small-scale development).<sup>92</sup> The commercial business mix was also described as having a “skid road” character, although the residential hotels, diners, pawn shops, liquor stores, barbershops and other small businesses in the area were well-suited to serving the old and infirm workingmen who lived there.



1963 “blight map” showing the Yerba Buena Center redevelopment area.  
From the SFRA *Report on the Redevelopment Plan Yerba Buena Center Redevelopment Project Area D-1*, page 12.

Initially, the announced Yerba Buena Center plans called only for “spot clearance” of commercial properties that could not be rehabilitated. But by 1965 plans showed that of the approximately 400 buildings in the area, only 15 percent of were to be retained, while the central blocks would be totally razed, save for St. Patrick’s Church.<sup>93</sup> By this time, however, demolitions were already becoming common in the area, encouraged in part by stepped up code enforcement. According to a 1965 SFRA report, forty percent of the project area was said to consist of “unimproved

<sup>91</sup> Ibid: 11-12.

<sup>92</sup> San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, *Report on the Redevelopment Plan Yerba Buena Center Redevelopment Project Area D-1*, ( San Francisco: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, December 1965), 8-9

<sup>93</sup> San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, *Report on the Redevelopment Plan Yerba Buena Center Redevelopment Project Area D-1*, ( San Francisco: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, December 1965), 12; 78.

lots and vacant lots created by fires or demolitions, the latter frequently caused by code enforcement actions. These are generally used as surface parking lots on an interim basis, often crudely improved.”<sup>94</sup> This assessment is borne out in part by comparisons of aerial photographs taken in 1956 and 1968, showing a dramatic increase in the number of surface parking lots. This was particularly evident along Howard and Tehama streets between 3rd and 4th streets, as well as along 3rd Street between Folsom and Howard streets.

The SFRA had hired outside consultants to develop the Yerba Buena Center plan, and the City Planning Commission was only able to review its details when the final plan was submitted. By this time, heavy lobbying of the Planning Commission—which included many influential members of the city’s business elite—virtually assured approval of the plan in 1966. In December that year the SFRA signed a loan and grant contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and then began the lengthy process of condemning property, evicting residents, and demolishing buildings. While promises had been made to find new housing for area residents, it soon became evident that not only had the SFRA greatly underestimated the availability of replacement housing, but that the SFRA and HUD also had no formal relocation plan.

In 1969, the Tenants and Owners in Opposition to Redevelopment (TOOR) organization, chaired by George Woolf and Peter Mendelsohn, formed to seek a more favorable outcome for neighborhood residents. This included petition drives, organized protests and other measures that would help prevent displacement of elderly members living in the neighborhood and provide them with decent replacement housing in the South of Market. As related by Chester Hartman, “Those opposed to the Yerba Buena Center see it as the ultimate example of the horrors of urban redevelopment: the conscious destruction of an entire community and the attempt to remove its population from the downtown area, and perhaps from the city altogether—to make room for bigger business.”<sup>95</sup>

In 1970, a federal judge granted an injunction cutting off federal funds for the redevelopment until acceptable plans for relocation could be concluded. California Governor Edmund Brown, Sr. was also asked to help negotiate a suitable outcome. In response to these complaints, the SFRA in 1970-1971 developed the Clementina Towers, two 13-story residential buildings for seniors located west of 4th Street between Tehama and Clementina Streets. Nevertheless, their 276 units only provided a fraction of the necessary housing. Ultimately, TOOR and the SFRA signed an agreement in 1973 guaranteeing replacement housing for displaced residents. This included four sites in the Yerba Buena Center where housing would be built using funds generated by the City Hotel Tax. By this time however, wholesale demolitions had already leveled large swaths of the redevelopment area’s central blocks. In total, it has been estimated that 4,000 people and 700 businesses were ultimately displaced.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid: 9.

<sup>95</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*, (San Francisco, Glide Publications, 1974), 39-41.

<sup>96</sup> Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, Prepared for the City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, (San Francisco, 2009), 69.





Circa 1975 view of the Yerba Buena Center redevelopment area between 3rd, 4th, Mission and Folsom streets. St. Patrick's Church is located at center left.  
(Amy Neches, SFRA, *San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center*, 2009)

### Filipinos and "Central City"

One outcome of the stalled redevelopment process was uncertainty about the future direction of the area, resulting in rents remaining very low during the 1960s through the 1980s. Cheap rents attracted immigrants and other marginalized groups, resulting in palpable demographic shifts in portions of the South of Market. As described in the *San Francisco Filipino Heritage – Addendum to the South of Market Historic Context Statement*, the establishment of Filipino ethnic enclave in the area was the result of a combination of factors that included inexpensive housing, proximity to both the waterfront and service industry jobs downtown, two Catholic parishes, and an established multi-ethnic population. Likewise, many Filipinos relocated to the South of Market as the Financial District expanded to the north and west—resulting in the demolition of numerous businesses and residential hotels along Kearny and adjacent streets in Manilatown.

The Filipino community's most dramatic period of growth followed the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, which allowed 20,000 people from each Asian country to enter the United States each year, and for family members of Asians who were already citizens to enter the country.<sup>97</sup> During this period, the South of Market frequently served as a first-stop for new Filipino immigrants. As more immigrants arrived, many joined family members or relatives already living in the neighborhood, while others were attracted by the growing number of Filipino establishments in what came to be known as "Central City."<sup>98</sup> The post-1965 era also marks the period when most of the resources today associated with Filipino culture and heritage in the South of Market were established. These included new businesses, social and educational programs, and cultural festivals.

<sup>97</sup> Ronald Takaki, *In the Heart of Filipino America*, (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1994), 110.

<sup>98</sup> Filipino American National Society, Manilatown Heritage Foundation and the Pin@y Educational Partnerships, *Images of America Filipinos in San Francisco*, (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 28.



The Gran Oriente Filipino Masonic Temple, constructed in 1951 at 95 Jack London Alley.  
(San Francisco Planning Department)

Many Filipino families at that time lived in the residential enclaves found along streets such as Natoma, Tehama, Russ and Minna streets. According to Don Marcos, Executive Director of the South of Market Employment Center, the Filipino population in the neighborhood was concentrated between Market, Brannan, 3rd and 8th streets during the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>99</sup> Rudy Delphino, whose family moved to the South of Market from the North Beach area, states that “we wanted to go where there were people we knew, so we just followed along.”<sup>100</sup>

In time, various organizations focused on immigrant services were established, including the Filipino-American Council of San Francisco (1969); the Mission Hiring Hall (1971); the Sandigan Newcomer Service Center (1972); The Filipino-American (Fil-Am) Senior Citizens Center (1972); the South of Market Health Center (1973); and the West Bay Pilipino Multi-Services Corporation, established by Ed de la Cruz (1977). Part of these organizing activities also included the establishment of the Pilipina Organizing Committee (POC) by Tony Grafilo in 1972. Along with TOOR, the POC undertook efforts to mitigate the economic hardships and displacement caused by redevelopment.<sup>101</sup> Most of these organizations were headquartered west of 6th Street outside the Central SoMa study area.

Perhaps the most important Filipino-related organization operating within the Central SoMa study area is the Filipino Education Center (FEC). The FEC opened on May 1, 1972 at 390 4th Street (soon after moving to 824 Harrison Street) with contributions from the San Francisco Unified School District and the State of California. It provided classroom education to non-English speaking children from kindergarten through twelfth grade. A mid-1970s description of the school stated that the “program is based on the regular school curriculum, with emphasis on developing oral and written English proficiency. In addition to this, the Center also assesses the educational, health and social services needs of the child and his family and provides appropriate referral services.”<sup>102</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Page & Turnbull, *San Francisco Filipino Heritage – Addendum to the South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco, Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2013), 20.

<sup>100</sup> FoundSF, “South of Market, [http://foundsf.org/index.php?title=SOUTH\\_OF\\_MARKET](http://foundsf.org/index.php?title=SOUTH_OF_MARKET) retrieved 30 November 2012.

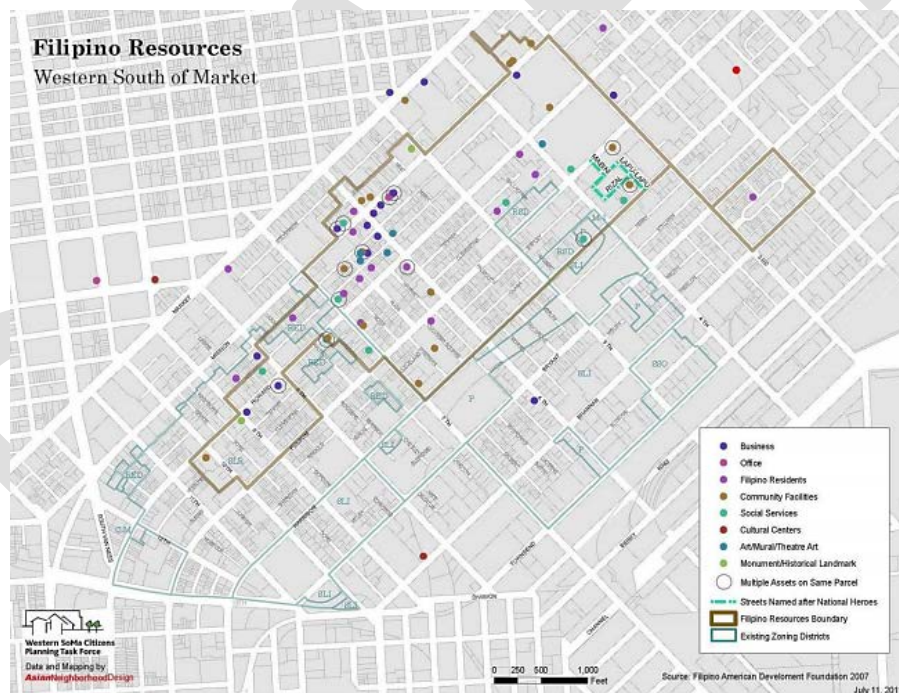
<sup>101</sup> Page & Turnbull, *San Francisco Filipino Heritage – Addendum to the South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco, Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2013), 27.

<sup>102</sup> Rodolfo I. Necesito, *The Filipino Guide to San Francisco*, (San Francisco, Technomedia, 1977), 17.

In 2004, the Bessie Carmichael School/FEC was rebuilt as a K-5 campus at a new location adjacent to Columbia Square at 375 7th Street.<sup>103</sup> At the same time, the old Filipino Education Center at 824 Harrison Street became home to Bessie Carmichael School's middle school grades. Today, the K-5 and middle school facilities are the only public schools located South of Market.<sup>104</sup>

Other identifiably Filipino establishments in the Central SoMa study area include the Mint Mall, a mixed-use building at 953 Mission Street that was purchased by the Nocon family in the 1970s. Since that time, the apartments have largely been occupied by newly-arrived Filipino families, while the ground floor commercial space has provided a home for numerous organizations serving the Filipino community. These included the West Bay Pilipino Multi-Service Center, the South of Market Employment Center, Bayanihan Community Center, the Pilipino AIDS Project, and Bindlestiff Theater.<sup>105</sup> Arkipelago Books was also established in the lower level of the Mint Mall in 1998.<sup>106</sup>

In 2011, a Filipino Social Heritage Special Use District was proposed for the South of Market neighborhood by the Western SoMA Citizens Planning Task Force. As stated in the proposal, *Recognizing, Protecting and Memorializing South of Market Filipino Social Heritage Neighborhood Resources*, the special use district "highlights the long-standing cultural institutions in the neighborhood as they have served as places of worship, for community services, for arts expression, and as sites for cultural activities."<sup>107</sup> The district embraces areas from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to 11<sup>th</sup> Street, largely between Mission and Harrison streets, and contains a number of businesses, social service organizations, murals and residences associated with the Filipino community.



Map of the proposed Filipino Social Heritage Special Use District  
(Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force)

<sup>103</sup> Bayanihan Community Center, "Filipino Education Center and the Filipinos in South of Market," [http://www.bayanihancc.org/Galing\\_Bata/gb-fec.html](http://www.bayanihancc.org/Galing_Bata/gb-fec.html) retrieved 24 May 2012.

<sup>104</sup> "Filipino Education Center," [http://www.bayanihancc.org/Galing\\_Bata/gb-galing\\_bata.html](http://www.bayanihancc.org/Galing_Bata/gb-galing_bata.html) (retrieved 26 October 2012)

<sup>105</sup> Bernadette Sy, Filipino American Development Foundation, et. al., "SoMa Pilipinas Ethnotour – Exploring Filipino Heritage in the Neighborhoods of the South of Market," undated (circa 2011) brochure, 20.

<sup>106</sup> Page & Turnbull, *San Francisco Filipino Heritage – Addendum to the South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco, Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2013), 26.

<sup>107</sup> Western SoMA Citizens Planning Task Force, *Recognizing, Protecting and Memorializing South of Market Filipino Social Heritage Neighborhood Resources*, July 13, 2011, 1.



Although several businesses have closed since the special use district was proposed in 2011, a number of Filipino-related organizations and institutions remain active in the Central SoMa Plan Area. They include the following:

- Bessie Carmichael School Filipino Education Center, 824 Harrison Street
- Bindlestiff Studio, 185 6<sup>th</sup> Street
- Filipino American Arts Exposition, 965 Mission Street
- Filipino American Jazz Festival, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
- Filipino American Counseling & Treatment Team (South of Market Mental Health Services), 760 Harrison Street
- Filipino Senior Citizens Club, 83 6<sup>th</sup> Street
- Flores de Mayo celebration, Bessie Carmichael School
- Gran Oriente Filipino Lodge, 104 South Park
- Gran Oriente Masonic Temple, 95 Jack London Alley
- Lipi Ni Lapu Lapu mural (north side of San Lorenzo Ruiz Center), 50 Rizal Street
- Manila Market, 987-989 Mission Street
- Mint Mall Building and associated Filipino businesses, 953-957 Mission Street
- Parol Lantern Festival
- Pilipino Senior Resource Center, 953 Mission Street
- Pistahan Festival
- Saint Patrick's Church, 756 Mission Street
- San Francisco Filipino Cultural Center, 814 Mission Street
- San Lorenzo Ruiz Center (formerly Dimsalang House), 50 Rizal Street
- Street names associated with Filipinos (Bonifacio, Lapu-Lapu, Mabini, Rizal and Tandang Sora streets)
- Yerba Buena Gardens Child Development Center, 790 Folsom Street

To date the city has not adopted formal procedures for recognizing social and cultural heritage resources, although a potential methodology is discussed in the Recommendations section at the end of this report.

### **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Communities**

While the proposed redevelopment of the South of Market progressed through the courts, other groups on the margins of mainstream society, such as artists, activists and sexual minorities increasingly moved into the area. The lack of a significant residential population encouraged night-time bars and clubs catering to more daring nightlife without fear of disturbing neighbors or attracting unwanted attention.

Previously, only scattered documentation existed regarding the history of San Francisco's LGBT communities. Currently, however, the GLBT Historical Society has partnered with a team of historians to develop a city-wide LGBTQ Historic Context Statement. The document will examine the formation and development of the city's LGBTQ communities from their roots in the 19th century through the AIDS crisis in the 1980s. The project is supported by a grant from the Historic Preservation Fund Committee, and will provide a foundation for identifying and interpreting historic places associated with the LGBTQ communities.

While the context statement has yet to be published, it has been documented that active lesbian, gay, and transgender communities began to emerge in San Francisco's North Beach and Tenderloin neighborhoods following the repeal of Prohibition in 1933. The influx of thousands of war workers and military personnel during the Second World War provided new venues and opportunities for gays and lesbians to gather and socialize. By 1956, the two most prominent national organizations dedicated to improving the social status of gays and lesbians were both



headquartered in San Francisco within the Central SoMa study area: the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis, both located at 693 Mission Street (no longer extant).<sup>108</sup>

The following decades witnessed the growth of LGBT consciousness and activity, both politically and culturally. In 1964, a *Life* magazine article entitled “Homosexuality in America” identified the city as a “the capital of the gay world.” With increasingly prominent national media coverage, San Francisco’s LGBT communities continued to grow, evidenced in part by the number of bars catering to a gay clientele, which rose from 53 to 86 during the 1960s.<sup>109</sup>

Coinciding with an increasing out-migration of native San Franciscans to the suburbs, the new arrivals began to take up residence in parts of the city that previously had no direct connection to sexual minorities. Beginning in the 1960s and accelerating during the 1970s, various LGBT-oriented business establishments opened in the decaying industrial belt in the South of Market. Although the area eventually became known primarily for its leather subculture, the South of Market featured a variety of establishments, including bars, bathhouses, and dance clubs, that catered to a cross-section of San Francisco’s diverse LGBT communities.<sup>110</sup> In 1962, The Tool Box opened at 4th and Harrison streets as the first leather bar located in the South of Market (the building was torn down in 1971 by redevelopment).<sup>111</sup>



Demolition of the Tool Box showing a mural of leathermen painted by Chuck Arnett, 1971.  
(FoundSF.org, “Folsom Street: The Miracle Mile”)

<sup>108</sup> Address is based on the 1958 San Francisco city directory.

<sup>109</sup> Page & Turnbull, Inc., *South of Market Historic Context Statement*, Prepared for the City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, (San Francisco, 2009), 73.

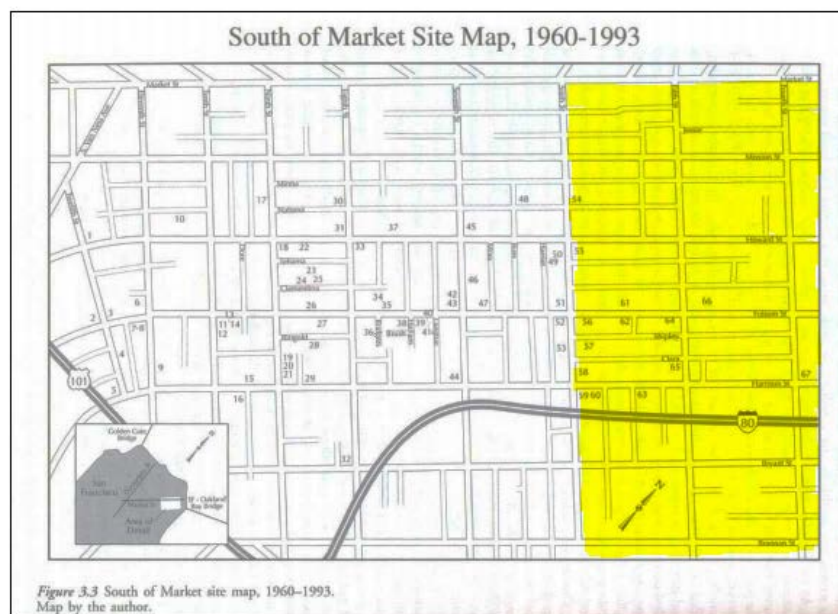
<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Gayle S. Rubin, “The Miracle Mile South of Market and Gay Male Leather 1962-1997,” in *Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture*, edited by James Brook, Chris Carlsson and Nancy J. Peters, (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1998), 255-256.

In 1966, Folsom Street emerged as the main street for leather culture in San Francisco with the opening of Febe's and the Stud. According to Gayle S. Rubin's study, *The Miracle Mile – South of Market and Gay Male Leather*:

By the late 1970s, the Castro was unquestionably the center of local gay politics, but the Folsom had become the sexual center. The same features that made the area attractive to leather bars made it hospitable to other forms of gay sexual commerce. Many of the nonleather gay bathhouses and sex club also nestled among the warehouses. Just before the age of AIDS, the South of Market had become symbolically and institutionally associated in the gay male community with sex.<sup>112</sup>

The majority of the LGBT establishments were clustered in the vicinity of Howard and Folsom streets between 7th and 10th street. Within the Central SoMa study area, some of the properties with the longest association with the LGBT community include The End Up bar at 401 6th Street (1973-present), and 960 Folsom Street which was associated with the leather community during the 1970s and 1980s and is presently used as an adult store. Another important LGBT business establishment in the Central SoMa area was the Trocadero Transfer, an after-hours dance club located at 520 4th Street. Established in 1977 in a warehouse building, the business remained open until 2000.

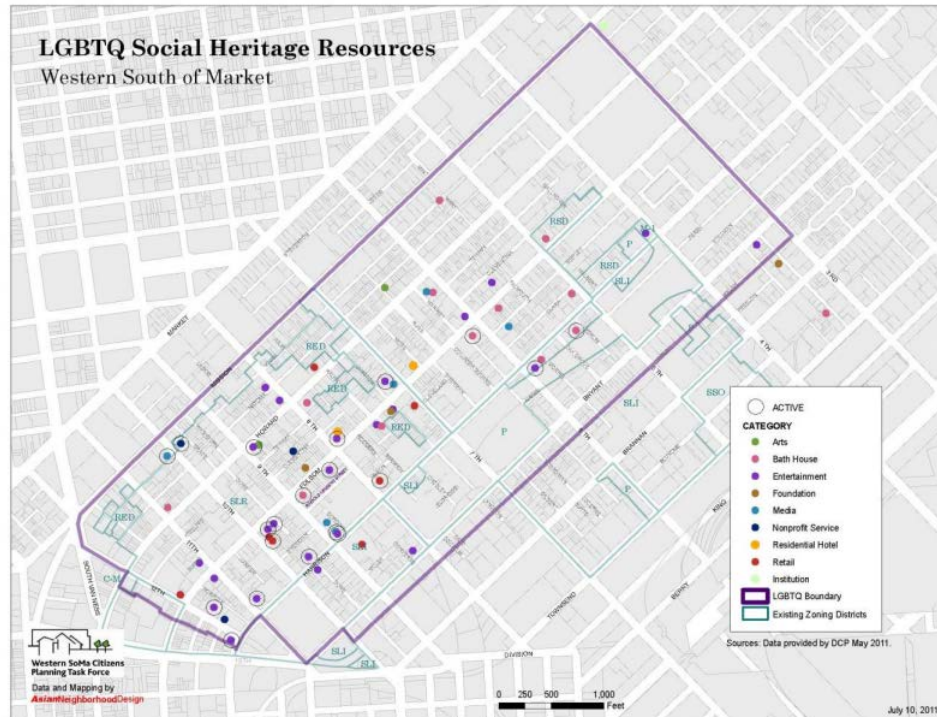


Map of the LGBT sites in the South of Market, with the western portion of the Central SoMa study area highlighted.  
(Adapted from the *Sexing the City* historic context statement by Damon Scott)

In 2011, an LGBTQ Social Heritage Special Use District was proposed for the South of Market neighborhood by the Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force. As stated in the proposal, *Recognizing, Protecting and Memorializing South of Market LGBTQ Social Heritage Neighborhood Resources*, the proposed special use district will use “creative means to educate, acknowledge diversity and the value of LGBTQ neighborhood resources,” as well as “memorialize

<sup>112</sup>Ibid: 258.

and recognize the living LGBTQ social heritage and fabric” of the neighborhood.<sup>113</sup> The district embraces areas from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to 12<sup>th</sup> Street, largely between Mission and Bryant streets, and is largely composed of both former and active entertainment venues, bath houses, and retail establishments. As mentioned previously, a formal procedure for recognizing social and cultural resources is discussed in the Recommendations section at the end of this report.



Map of the proposed LGBTQ Special Use District  
(Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force)

With the Central SoMa Plan Area, the proposed LGBTQ Special Use District includes two active establishments.

- The End Up, 401 6<sup>th</sup> Street
- Blow Buddies Bath House, 933 Harrison Street

<sup>113</sup> Western SoMA Citizens Planning Task Force, *Recognizing, Protecting and Memorializing South of Market LGBTQ Social Heritage Neighborhood Resources*, July 18, 2011, 1.

## Postscript: Yerba Buena Center (1974-Present)

The agreement signed by TOOR and the SFRA in 1973 was not the last chapter in the battle over the Yerba Buena Center. During the 1970s, widespread opposition to redevelopment began to grow among middle-class San Franciscans. In contrast to groups like TOOR that were founded to resist the displacement of its members, many groups following in TOOR's footsteps resented the SFRA's seemingly unchecked authority in reshaping the city and were opposed to redevelopment in any form. As related by the Bruner Foundation:

Even after TOOR's success, the situation South of Market had hardly been resolved. As in many other American (and international) cities, urban renewal had left an ugly legacy. However, in San Francisco key lessons had been learned from the bitter legal battles, and when interest in redevelopment again picked up, it proceeded along very different lines. In 1976 San Francisco Mayor George Moscone appointed a Select Committee to study the area and produce a consensus design vision, explicitly encouraging citizen input through public hearings and discussions. This committee affirmed what were to be the most enduring elements of the project: the commitment to subsidized low-income housing ... the goal of mixing a variety of commercial uses and public facilities; and, importantly, the idea of locating the convention center expansion underground and covering it with a public garden and other amenities. When the Redevelopment Agency sent out its request for qualifications, it emphasized another crucial aspect: it required developers to set aside land and funds for cultural institutions such as museums, exhibits, and theaters.<sup>114</sup>

The provision for low-income housing reflected the efforts of the Tenants and Owners Development Corporation (TODCO), which grew directly from the TOOR group. Incorporated in 1971 as non-profit housing development organization, TODCO's goal was to create permanent subsidized low-income housing units in the Yerba Buena Center redevelopment area. By the late 1970s, TODCO had secured funding for its first project, the Woolf House (Phase 1), which opened in 1979. Named after TOOR co-founder George Woolf, it included 112 apartments at 4th and Howard.

Over the following years, TODCO built a number of low-income housing projects. Within the Central SoMa study area, these projects included the Mendelsohn House at 737 Folsom Street (1987), named in honor of TOOR co-founder Peter Mendelsohn, and the Knox Hotel, a 140-unit SRO at 241 6th Street, renovated in 1994.<sup>115</sup> TODCO projects also included the Dimasalang House (since renamed the San Lorenzo Ruiz Center) at 50 Rizal Street, completed in 1980. This was a HUD-funded joint venture between TODCO and the Filipino fraternal organization, Caballero de Dimasalang. Concurrent with construction of the building, the Caballero de Dimasalang also lobbied to rename the surrounding streets after historic Filipino personages. These included Bonifacio, Lapu Lapu, Mabini and Rizal streets.<sup>116</sup>

The central blocks of the Yerba Buena Center were gradually built out during the 1980s and 1990s, beginning with the Moscone Convention Center (Moscone South) in 1981. This was followed by Moscone North (1992); Yerba Buena Gardens, including Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (1993); the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1995); the Children's Center (1998); and Moscone West (2003). Other projects include the adaptive reuse of the Jesse Street substation for the Jewish Contemporary Museum, with an addition by architect Daniel Libeskind (2008).

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<sup>114</sup> Bruner Foundation, "1999 Rudy Bruner Award – Gold Medal Winner: Yerba Buena Gardens San Francisco California," accessed 9/5/2013 from [http://brunerfoundation.org/rba/pdfs/1999/01\\_Yerba.pdf](http://brunerfoundation.org/rba/pdfs/1999/01_Yerba.pdf).

<sup>115</sup> Chester Hartman, *City for Sale: The Transformation of San Francisco*, (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2002), 216-217.

<sup>116</sup> Page & Turnbull, *San Francisco Filipino Heritage – Addendum to the South of Market Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco, Page & Turnbull, Inc., 2013), 30.





Circa 2009 aerial view of the Yerba Buena Center redevelopment area including the Moscone Center, Yerba Buena Gardens, the Metreon, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.  
(Amy Neches, SFRA, *San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center*, 2009)

DRAFT

## Property Types & Registration Requirements (1937-1973)

The period 1937-1973 was overall characterized by moderate infill construction. But the widespread demolition efforts associated with the Yerba Buena Center redevelopment meant that there were likely fewer buildings in the Central SoMa area at the end of the period than there were at the beginning. As mentioned previously, there are approximately 120 buildings located in the study area that were constructed during this period. These are overwhelmingly light industrial buildings, with a minority of commercial buildings. Other property types, including residences and public assembly properties are exceedingly rare and should be evaluated individually on a case-by-case basis.

### INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS: CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES



Industrial building at  
457 Minna Street (1944)



Industrial building at  
336 Ritch Street (1955)



Industrial building at  
750 Bryant Street (1956)



Industrial building at  
126 Hawthorne Street (1963)

**Form and Scale:** Typically one to two stories in height. As with the previous period, a common variant is a predominately one-story building with a two-story office wing at the street frontage. Flat or bow truss roofs are most common. Most buildings feature at least one, if not several, large entrances for the loading or unloading of materials.

**Framing and Cladding:** Reinforced concrete and concrete masonry unit (concrete block) buildings with a stucco skim coat are most common. A brick veneer water table was also a common feature during the 1950s and early 1960s.

**Fenestration:** For pre-1960 buildings, industrial steel-sash multi-lite windows are most common, although glass block was sometimes used, especially around entries. Afterward, sliding or single-hung aluminum window systems gain in popularity.

**Common Styles:** During the 1930s through the 1950s, Art Deco and Streamline Moderne designs were sometimes used for industrial buildings, transitioning to International style influenced designs during the 1950s and 1960s. However, most industrial buildings from this period are constructed in a simple utilitarian style with little or no ornament.

**Distribution:** Most industrial buildings from this period are found south of Harrison Street.

## COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS: CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES



Mediterranean Revival style commercial building at 411 Brannan Street (1938)



International style building at 250 4th Street (1947).



San Francisco Flower Mart building at 599 6th Street (1956)



Modern style commercial building at 633 Folsom Street (1966)

**Form and Scale:** Typically one- to two stories in height with a boxy massing. Flat roofs are most common.

**Framing and Cladding:** Reinforced concrete and concrete masonry unit buildings are most common. A brick veneer water table was also a common design feature during the 1950s and early 1960s.

**Fenestration:** Plate glass and aluminum storefront systems were most common during this period. Glass block fenestration was also sometimes used, especially around entries. From the 1960s onward, anodized aluminum

storefront assemblies are most common. On the upper floors, double-hung wood or steel-sash windows are most common from the 1930s through the 1950s. Afterward, aluminum windows are most common.

Common Styles: During the 1930s through the 1950s, Mediterranean Revival Art Deco, Streamline Moderne and International style design influences were most common. Afterward, Midcentury Modern designs are dominant.

Distribution: Commercial buildings are scattered throughout the Central SoMa study area but are most common in proximity to Market Street or along the numbered streets.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The table below discusses the significance of properties from this era according to criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources.

National/ California Register	Significance	Discussion
A/1	Events	<p><u>Industrial Properties:</u> Industrial buildings from this period typically represent infill construction and are unlikely to be significant for their associations with industrial development. However, some industrial properties could be significant for their association with new methods in industrial production, or the founding of significant enterprises.</p> <p><u>Commercial Properties:</u> Much like industrial buildings, commercial properties from this period typically represent infill construction and are unlikely to be significant. However, some could potentially be found significant for their association with the founding of a prominent business.</p>
B/2	Persons	Buildings from this period may be significant for their association with persons important to history. If this is the case, however, the residence should be the best or only remaining property capable of representing that person's achievements or reasons for being significant.
C/3	Architecture/ Design	Buildings from this period may be significant for their architecture, as expressed by intact stylistic features, forms or construction methods. Buildings may also qualify as the work of a master architect or prominent builder. Individual resources qualified under these criteria should be excellent examples of types and/or styles, and retain all or nearly all of their original features.
D/4	Information Potential	Buildings, ruins or subsurface remains may be significant for their potential to provide information about local construction methods and materials. However, such examples are unlikely.

## INTEGRITY

In order to be eligible for listing in the local, state, or national historic registers, properties from this period must retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance in association with development during this period. While most buildings undergo change over time, alterations should not significantly change the essential historic character of the buildings. Because these buildings have had less time to accrete changes relative to previous periods, a stricter interpretation of integrity is warranted. The aspects of integrity deemed most important for this period are design,



materials, workmanship and feeling. Buildings qualified as individual resources at the state or national level should retain all or nearly all of their original features.

#### **Minimum Eligibility Requirements**

- Clear example of architecture from this period (most likely Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, International or Modern design influences, as well as utilitarian examples).
- Retains its original form, cladding and roofline
- Substantially retains the original pattern of windows and doors
- Retains all or nearly all of its original ornamentation, if applicable. (The retention of entry, window and/or roofline ornamentation should be considered most important)

#### **Other Integrity Considerations**

- Rear additions that have respected the scale and massing of the original building generally are not a strong detriment to integrity. However, additions that compromise a building's form and scale greatly diminish integrity.
- The retention of windows greatly enhances integrity of materials. However, far more important is the retention of the original pattern of windows, and that any replacement windows(s) are similar to the originals and located within the original frame openings.
- Replacement of doors is typically acceptable, but the replacements should conform to the original pattern and the size of the openings.

#### **Special Considerations for Commercial Properties:**

Commercial buildings from this period that retain their original storefront configurations are not common as storefronts are "the feature most commonly altered in a historic commercial building."<sup>117</sup> These alterations typically occurred as store owners sought to update their entrances and display windows (and sometimes the entire facade) according to the popular tastes of the day. Thus, in multi-story commercial buildings, storefront alterations are often not as severe an impact as long as they are subordinate to the overall character of the building. Similarly, storefront alterations that demonstrate evolving commercial design patterns associated with a subsequent historically significant context may also gain significance in their own right. In addition, buildings which have been altered wholesale into a new style, such as the Kamm/Morris Plan Company and David Hewes buildings, have lost architectural association with their original construction, but may be significantly associated with the period during which the alteration occurred. As has been demonstrated in this analysis, the complete remodeling of commercial properties—many of them prominent buildings along Market Street—did not occur in isolation, but rather was part of a clear and significant trend.

**Special Considerations for Industrial Properties:** Industrial buildings are often modified to adapt to changing methods of production and distribution. Therefore, some discretion is warranted when considering integrity. Nevertheless, the property must retain the essential physical features that made up its historic character.

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<sup>117</sup> National Park Service, "Storefronts," retrieved 27 August 2013 from: [http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/incentives/avoiding\\_2.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/incentives/avoiding_2.htm)

## Chapter 3

# Survey Findings

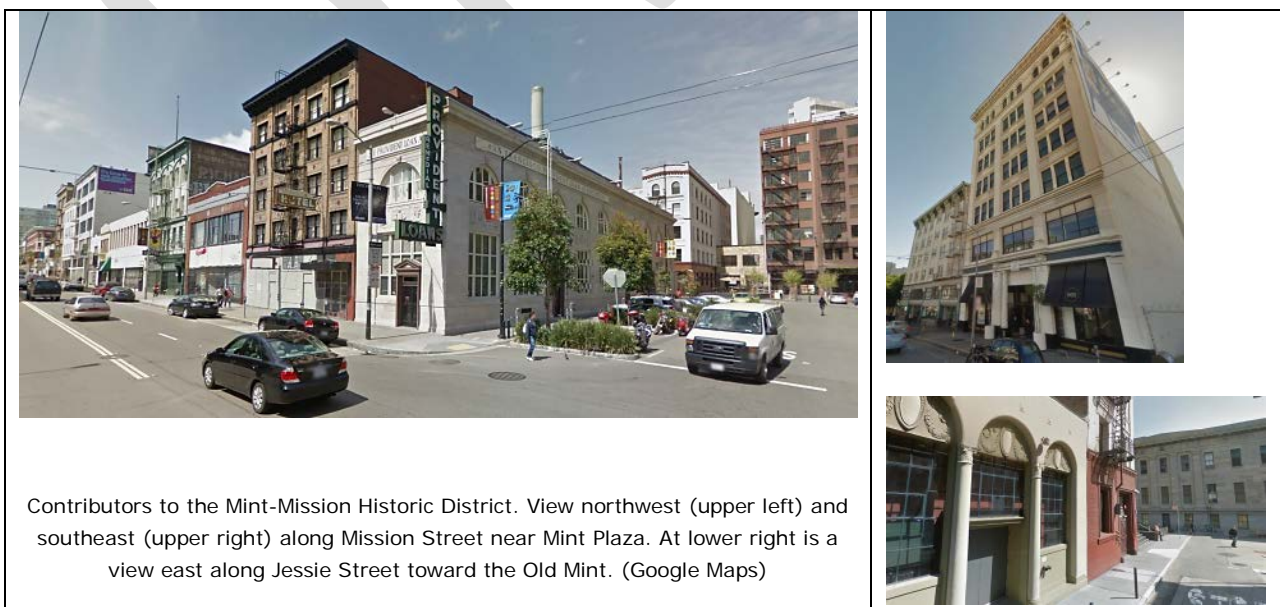
The Central SoMa Historic Survey examined a total of 134 parcels that had not been previously surveyed, or for which prior survey information was incomplete. Of these, 72 were not documented, typically because the properties were vacant or not age eligible. The remaining 63 properties were documented in spreadsheet format to create a property information catalog. This catalog includes baseline information including the assessor's block and lot, address, and year built, as well as any previous historic documentation. A variety of architectural attributes were captured for each property, including the following:

- Number of stories
- Architectural style
- Framing system
- Cladding
- Roof form and roofline details
- Typical windows
- Entry/storefront details
- Ornamental features
- Signage
- Rear façade details (if applicable)
- Apparent architectural integrity

Preliminary historic resource status codes were then assigned to each property. A total of 31 properties were determined eligible for the California Register. Many of these properties also contribute to the California Register eligible Mint-Mission Historic District, described below.

In addition to identifying individual historic resources and eligible historic districts, the survey also identified two eligible additions to the locally designated Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District, as well as one property that appears eligible for addition to the previously identified 6th Street Lodginghouse Historic District. The survey also recommends updating the status codes for four previously-surveyed properties based on new information generated by this study.

### MINT-MISSION ELIGIBLE HISTORIC DISTRICT



Boundary: Mission Street, Mint Plaza, Jessie Street and Stevenson Street

Period of Significance: 1906-1925.

Historical Resource Status Code: 3CD; Appears eligible for the California Register as a Historic District

District Eligibility: Events (California Register Criterion 1) and Architecture (California Register Criterion 3)

District Contributors: 18 contributing buildings and 4 non-contributing buildings and/or parcels

Summary of Significance: The California Register eligible Mint-Mission Historic District is located near the northwestern edge of the Central SoMa study area and is comprised of small- to mid-scale industrial, residential and commercial buildings. These include several warehouses and industrial lofts, three residential hotels with commercial ground floors, and a former bank. The district is significant for its association with post-Earthquake reconstruction and the evolution of land use patterns at the northern edge of the South of Market neighborhood. Specifically, this eligible district embodies the historic function of the blocks immediately south of Market Street as a transition zone between the large-scale commercial uses along Market Street and the predominately industrial uses to the south. This land use pattern first evolved during the 19th century and was duplicated during the rebuilding efforts which followed the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. Other than portions of the New Montgomery-Mission-Second Street Conservation District, there are no other blocks north of Howard Street or east of 6th Street which so strongly retain this historic mix of residential hotels, small scale commercial buildings, warehouses and manufacturing facilities. This district is also rare in that most buildings are constructed on through-lots and have visible rear elevations.

The district also appears significant for its architecture, as it features an overall cohesive mix of reinforced concrete and brick masonry buildings featuring Classical Revival style design influences. The use of Classical design elements, more so than any other style, typified early 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture in San Francisco. Common examples of Classical Revival design include the use of corniced rooflines, frequently with brackets or modillions; dentil moldings; applied cast shield or swag ornaments; and arched openings. These design details are frequently strongest on residential and mixed-use buildings, and less pronounced on industrial buildings.

The Mint-Mission historic district also directly adjoins the Neoclassical-style Old Mint, a National Historic Landmark. The Old Mint is not a contributor to the district as its construction pre-dates the development of the district by decades. However, the Old Mint serves as an iconic visual backdrop for the east end of the district. Conversely, the district provides an architecturally cohesive setting for the Old Mint.

At its western end the district abuts the 6th Street Lodginghouse Historic District, which shares a similar building scale and Classical Revival design influences. However, the significance of the Lodginghouse District is specifically tied to residential use. Thus, the Mint-Mission District—given its diversity of building uses—does not appear to qualify as an extension to the Lodginghouse District. Similarly, the northern and eastern end of the district is adjacent to the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District. However, the Mint-Mission district does not appear suitable as an extension of the Conservation District as the latter is composed primarily of four to eight story commercial buildings associated with the retail and tourism district surrounding Union Square.

Several of the buildings within the Mint-Mission district have previously been identified as significant and have Article 11 Category I or II ratings. These include the seven-story California Casket Company building at 959-965

Mission Street, designed by master architect, Albert Pissis. The building was nearing completions at the time of the 1906 Earthquake and rehabilitated afterward. They also include the five-story Haas Candy Factory at 54 Mint Street (1907), designed by William Curlett, as well as the San Francisco Remedial Loan Association Building at 66 Mint Street (1916) designed by Frederick Whitton. Of interest, the district also includes another partial survivor of the 1906 Earthquake. The brick shell of the Waldorf lodging house at 44-48 5<sup>th</sup> Street remained standing after the disaster and was rehabilitated in 1907 as the Oakwood Hotel.

Parcel(s)	Address	Year Built	Historic Name	Proposed Survey Code	Current Article 11 Status
3704003	44-48 5th Street	1907	Oakwood Hotel	3CB	V – Unrated Building
3704010	12 Mint Street	1919		6L	V – Unrated Building
3704012	66 Mint Street; 932 Mission Street	1916	Remedial Loan Association	3CB	I – Significant Building
3704013	936-940 Mission Street	1915	Land Hotel / Chronicle Hotel	3CD	V – Unrated Building
3704017	948-952 Mission Street	1907	Piedmont Hotel / Alkain Hotel	3CB	V – Unrated Building
3704018	956-960 Mission Street	1910		6L	V – Unrated Building
3704019	966 Mission Street	1922		3CD	No rating
3704020	968 Mission Street	1930	Toledo Scale Company	3CS	V – Unrated Building
3704021	972-976 Mission Street	1925	Dohrmann Hotel Supply Company	3CD	No rating
3704022	980-984 Mission Street	1924		3CD	No rating
3704024	986 Mission/ 481 Jessie Street	1907	Hulse Bradford Carpets & Draperies	3CD	No rating
3704028	471 Jessie Street	1912		3CD	V – Unrated Building
3704029	431 Jessie Street	1912		3CD	No rating
3704034	14-16 Mint Plaza; 54 Mint Street	1907		1S, 3CD	I – Significant Building
3704035	440-444 Jessie Street	1924	Wobbers Printing & Engraving	3CB	No rating
3704059	443 Stevenson Street	1914		3CD	No rating
3704079	2 – 4 Mint Plaza	1926	Hale Brothers warehouse & offices	1D, 3CB	No rating
3704113	10 Mint Plaza	1924		3CD	No rating
3704144	6-8 Mint Plaza	1924		3CD	No rating
3725087	959-965 Mission Street	1906	California Casket Company	3CB	II – Significant Building
3725088	951-957 Mission Street	1916	Ford Apartments	3CD	No rating





Satellite map of the California Register eligible Mint-Mission historic district  
(Google Earth image edited by author)



Parcel map of the California Register eligible Mint-Mission historic district  
(San Francisco Property Information Map edited by author)

## POTENTIAL ADDITIONS TO THE KEARNY-MARKET-MASON-SUTTER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



The Hotel Lankershim at left, and the Pickwick Hotel at right (Google Maps)


Reconnaissance survey efforts along the northern edge of the Central SoMa study area revealed the potential for two additions to the locally designated Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District. Both of these buildings relate to the established historical context and architectural character of the Conservation District, and both are located directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the District. As noted in the discussion of the Emporium Market Street Block Historic District in *Splendid Survivors* (which informed the designation of the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District): “The District could conceivably be extended down Fifth Street to the Mint, a possibility that was not considered here, because Fifth Street is outside the survey area.”<sup>118</sup> Notably, both of the buildings proposed for addition to the district are larger-scale hotels. The Pickwick Hotel at 67-99 5th Street (1923) has an existing Article 11 Category I rating, while the Hotel Lankershim at 55 5th Street is not currently listed on any local, state or national historic register.

Parcel(s)	Address	Year Built	Historic Name	Current Survey Code	Current Article 11 Status
3705021, 3705023, 3705054	67-99 5th Street; 898 Mission Street	1923	Pickwick Hotel	none	I – Significant Building
3705039	55 5th Street	1913	Hotel Lankershim	none	No rating

## ADDITION TO THE 6th STREET LODGINGHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT


Survey efforts revealed an eligible addition to the previously identified 6th Street Lodginghouse Historic District. The subject building, 481 Minna Street, is located directly adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Lodginghouse District. The building is shown as a residential hotel on the 1913 and 1950 Sanborn maps, and was constructed within the identified period of significance (1906-1913) for the Lodginghouse District. It has been assigned a survey rating of 3D, meaning that it appears eligible for the National Register as a contributor to a National Register district through survey evaluation.

<sup>118</sup> Michael Corbett, *Splendid Survivors – San Francisco’s Downtown Architectural Heritage*, (San Francisco: California Living Books), 1979), 251.

Parcel(s)	Address	Year Built	Current Survey Code	Proposed Survey Code	Photo
3725066	481 Minna Street	1912	none	3D	

#### ADDITION TO THE SOUTH END HISTORIC DISTRICT ADDITION

Survey efforts revealed an eligible addition to the South End Historic District Addition, previously described on a State of California DPR 523 D (District) form completed in 2009. The subject property, 434 Brannan Street, is a three-story, reinforced concrete industrial building constructed in 1929 for the Scoville Manufacturing Company and designed in the Art Deco style. The building appears to qualify as a contributor as it was constructed within the South End Historic District Addition's period of significance (1906-1935) and accords with the industrial character, scale and materiality of the District. The building's architecture is likewise harmonious with the Streamline Moderne styling of 435 Brannan Street, a contributing property located directly across the street. The subject building was previously assigned a 5S3 rating by the South of Market Historic Resource Survey. It has been assigned a survey rating of 5B, meaning that it is significant both individually and as a contributor to a district that is locally listed, designated, determined eligible or appears eligible through survey evaluation.


Parcel(s)	Address	Year Built	Previous Survey Code	Proposed Survey Code	Photo
3776151	434 Brannan Street	1929	5S3	5B	

#### ADDITION TO THE BLUXOME AND TOWNSEND WAREHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Survey efforts revealed an eligible addition to the Bluxome and Townsend Warehouse Historic District, previously described on a State of California DPR 523 D (District) form completed in 2009. The subject property, 601 Brannan Street, was designed by architects Ashley & Evers and constructed in 1924 for Grinnell Company of the Pacific, successor firm to General Fire Extinguisher Company. It was photographed for the March 1935 issue of *Architect &*



*Engineer* and was noted in the UMB Survey for its “robust red” brick. The building also features ornamental plaques at the roofline with the letter “G” and the image of a fire sprinkler. Its addition to the Bluxome and Townsend Warehouse Historic District reflects an apparent omission made during the SoMa Historic Resource Survey. The DPR 523 A form prepared for that survey does not note the year of construction of 601 Brannan Street, and the accompanying photo focuses on the Grinnell Company’s steel-framed pipe shed, a gable roofed structure constructed no later than 1938 which was historically distinct (no internal connections) from the brick building. As a well-preserved example of a steel frame and brick masonry warehouse, 601 Brannan Street appears to qualify as a contributor to the Bluxome and Townsend Warehouse District. The District is located immediately adjacent and is entirely composed of one- to five-story industrial buildings constructed between 1912 and 1936. The architects, Ashley and Evers, also designed another contributor to the historic district, 650 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

Parcel(s)	Address	Year Built	Previous Survey Code	Proposed Survey Code	Photo
3785132	601 Brannan	1924	6Z	5D3	



## UPDATED ARTICLE 11 RATINGS





Survey efforts and research conducted by Planning Department staff have determined that Article 11 reclassification is warranted for eight properties within the Central SoMa study area. The current ratings were assigned approximately 30 years ago, and new information and/or comparisons with similar properties were used as the basis for these recommended updates.

- **44-48 5th Street (Oakwood Hotel).** Constructed in 1907 by the McDougall Brothers, the building incorporates the shell of the Waldorf lodging house, which remained standing following the 1906 disaster. According to research by San Francisco Heritage, the Waldorf’s terra cotta cornice was also salvaged and the lobby reconstructed. The building features richly ornamented spandrel panels and highly ornate fire escapes, and has been identified as a contributor to the eligible Mint-Mission Historic District.  
Current Article 11 Rating: V / Proposed Article 11 Rating: I
- **948 Mission Street (Alkain Hotel).** Constructed in 1907 and designed by architect, Philip Schwerdt, the Alkain Hotel is a four story, brick masonry building featuring a rusticated second floor and unusual flat arch voussoris over the top floor windows. The storefronts maintain their original configuration and the building is strongly representative of the type of mixed use residential hotels constructed in the Central SoMa area immediately following the 1906 disaster. The building has also been identified as a contributor to the eligible Mint-Mission Historic District.  
Current Article 11 Rating: V / Proposed Article 11 Rating: III



- **953-957 Mission Street (Ford Apartments).** Constructed in 1916, the Ford Apartments building retains excellent integrity on its upper floors, including an ornate cornice with oversized brackets. The building has been identified as a contributor to the eligible Mint-Mission Historic District, and was also identified in the 1976 Department of City Planning Architectural Survey.  
Current Article 11 Rating: V / Proposed Article 11 Rating: III
  
- **936-940 Mission Street (Land Hotel / Chronicle Hotel).** Constructed in 1915 as the Land Hotel—later renamed the Chronicle Hotel for its proximity to the newspaper—the property is a five story, brick masonry building featuring patterned polychrome brickwork with terra cotta beltcourses. The building is strongly representative of the type of mixed use residential hotels constructed in the Central SoMa area following the 1906 disaster. The building has been identified as a contributor to the eligible Mint-Mission Historic District.  
Current Article 11 Rating: V / Proposed Article 11 Rating: III
  
- **357 Tehama Street (Spaulding Pioneer Carpet Cleaners).** Constructed in 1910 and designed by architect Dixon & Sutton, 357 Tehama Street was built for J. Spaulding and Company. Founded circa 1865, the company was associated with this location since at least 1870. This brick masonry building features a classic industrial design, with segmental arched window openings and a corbeled cornice. It housed the company's rug beating machines and steam cleaners.  
Current Article 11 Rating: V / Proposed Article 11 Rating: III
  
- **55 5<sup>th</sup> Street (Lankershim Hotel).** Designed by the Reid Brothers, the Lankershim Hotel was constructed in 1913 for James B. Lankershim, who had previously constructed another Hotel Lankershim in downtown Los Angeles in 1905. The building features restrained Classical Revival ornamentation and retains excellent integrity on the upper floors. The ground floor rustication, however, is not original. It has been identified as a potential addition to the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Article 11 conservation district.  
Current Article 11 Rating: V / Proposed Article 11 Rating: IV
  
- **821 Howard Street (Bake Rite Oven Manufacturing / Southern Police Station).** This building was constructed in 1921 and used initially by the Bake Rite Oven Manufacturing Company. Not long afterward it was used temporarily as the Southern Police Station until the completion of a new Southern Police Station at 360 4<sup>th</sup> Street in 1925. Designed with Classical Revival influences, the building's facade is divided by large fluted pilasters with Corinthian capitals and crowned with a dentil cornice.  
Current Article 11 Rating: No rating / Proposed Article 11 Rating: III
  
- **440-444 Jessie Street / 439-441 Stevenson Street (Wobbers Inc. Printing & Engraving).** This building was constructed in 1924 as the printing plant for Wobbers Inc., one of San Francisco's most prominent stationers, printers and bookbinders. The building is a unique example of a single-story industrial plant featuring an arcade of Ionic concrete columns across its primary facade, as well as applied swags and shields. Although some bays have been infilled, the building remains an exceptional example of its type. The building has been identified as a contributor to the eligible Mint-Mission Historic District.  
Current Article 11 Rating: V / Proposed Article 11 Rating: IV


Parcel(s)	Address	Year Built	Current Article 11 Rating	Proposed Article 11 Rating	Photo
3704003	44-48 5th Street	1907	V	I	
3704017	948 Mission St	1907	V	III	
3275088	953-957 Mission Street	1915	V	III	
3704013	936-940 Mission Street	1915	V	III	

3733137	357 Tehama Street	1910	V	III	
3705039	55 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	1913	No rating	IV	
3733088	821 Howard Street	1921	No rating	III	
3704035	440-444 Jessie / 439-441 Stevenson Street	1924	No rating	III	



## UPDATED INDIVIDUAL HISTORIC RESOURCE STATUS CODES

Survey efforts and new information gathered by Planning Department staff have determined that updated California Historic Resource Status Codes are warranted for three properties within the Central SoMa study area. These include the following:

- **964 Howard Street** is a well-preserved example of a small-scale, brick masonry residential hotel constructed soon after the 1906 Earthquake. The three-story building features strong Classical Revival design influences, including arched first-story windows with heavy molded surrounds crowned with keystones, as well as a modillion cornice. The updated status code reflects new information provided by this context statement, which has identified residential hotels as the most significant property type in the survey area. The building's significance is likewise derived from evaluative comparisons with other extant residential hotels in the survey area, which demonstrate that this building is an extremely rare example of its type, as unlike most residential hotels of its era, it does not have a commercial ground floor.
- **194-198 5<sup>th</sup> Street** was designed by architects Cunningham & Politeo and constructed in 1912 as the Hotel George. As discussed in the historic context statement, residential hotels are the most significant residential property type in the survey area. The updated status code reflects this significance, as well as the recent availability of a historic image which demonstrates that the building retains exceptional physical integrity on its upper floors. As well, recent scholarship has provided an enhanced understanding of the career of Cunningham & Politeo, demonstrating that this building is a good representative of their work.
- **534-548 4th Street** was designed by master architect William Koenig and constructed for the Thiebaut Brothers Paper Box Company, one of the oldest paper box manufacturers in San Francisco. The updated status code reflects new photographic evidence. The evaluation prepared for the Downtown Inventory states that the windows are alterations, and the DPR 523 A form prepared for the building as part of the SoMa Historic Resource Survey states the building does not retain integrity. However, a historic photo taken in 1923 has been made available which indicates that the building's unusual horizontally divided wood-sash windows are original, and that the building likewise retains most of its original articulation, save for minor changes at the ground floor. As a brick masonry industrial building constructed during a significant period of industrial development in the South of Market, the subject building appears to qualify as an individual historic resource as an excellent and intact example of a type, period and method of construction.

Parcel(s)	Address	Year Built	Current Survey Code	Proposed Survey Code	Photo
3725020	964 Howard	1907	6L	3CS	



Parcel(s)	Address	Year Built	Current Survey Code	Proposed Survey Code	Photo
3725007	194-198 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	1912	6L	3CS	
3777017	534-548 4th	1919	6Z	3CS	

## Chapter 4

# Recommendations

The following is a set of recommendations for future activities related to the documentation, evaluation, and protection of the Central SoMa's significant historic resources.

### FURTHER DOCUMENTATION

#### Documentation of Potential Landmarks

Survey efforts and research conducted by Planning Department staff in conjunction with this report have identified several potential San Francisco Landmarks. These buildings appear eligible for landmark status either for their architecture, their historical or cultural significance, or both. Landmark status provides the greatest level of protection for historic resources in San Francisco and is administered under Article 10 of the Planning Code (Preservation of Historical Architectural and Aesthetic Landmarks). Nearly all of the properties are designated as Priority Historic Resources in the Central SoMa plan.

#### Hotel Utah

500-504 4th Street

The Hotel Utah is significant for its association with the development of mixed-use residential hotels South of Market; its associations with San Francisco culture and nightlife, and for its architecture.

Year Built: 1908

Current Survey Code: 3S

Parcel: 3777001



#### Omiya Hotel/ Gran Oriente Filipino

104-106 South Park St.

The property at 104-106 South Park is culturally significant for its associations with the development of a Japanese enclave in the South Park area, as well as its associations with the Filipino community. The building was purchased by the Gran Oriente Masonic Lodge during the 1930s and appears to be among the longest Filipino-owned cultural assets in San Francisco.

Year Built: 1907

Current Survey Code: 5D3

Parcel: 3775058



**Gran Oriente Filipino Masonic Temple**  
**95 Jack London Alley**

This building has significant associations with San Francisco Filipino community. The building currently contributes to the South Park Historic District

Year Built: 1951  
Current Survey Code: 5D3  
Parcel: 3775039



**Shreve & Company Factory**  
**539 Bryant Street**

The Shreve & Co. Factory was designed by architect Nathaniel Blaisdell and is an excellent example of a large-scale industrial loft building featuring Classical Revival style ornamentation.

Year Built: 1912  
Current Survey Code: 3S  
Parcel: 3776041



**480 5th Street**

480 5th Street is an extremely rare example of a light industrial building featuring outstanding Renaissance Revival style ornamentation.

Year Built: 1925  
Current Survey Code: 3CS  
Parcel: 3760012



**Central Hotel**  
**566-586 3rd Street**

The Central Hotel was designed by master architects Sutton & Weeks and completed in 1907. It served as one of the largest rooming houses in the South of Market, serving low-wage laborers working at the nearby rail yards and waterfront.

Year Built: 1907  
Current Survey Code: 3S  
Parcel: 3776008



**Paul Wood Warehouse**  
**340-350 Townsend Street**

The Paul Wood Warehouse is an outstanding example of a brick masonry warehouse located adjacent to the former Southern Pacific rail yard. Constructed immediately following the 1906 Earthquake, it retains an extremely high level of architectural integrity.

Year Built: 1906  
Current Survey Code: 2S2  
Parcel: 3786015



**A. Carlisle & Company Building**  
**645 Harrison Street**

Designed by master architect Herman C. Baumann, the A. Carlisle & Company building was noted in the 1976 Department of City Planning Architectural Survey for possessing “powerful Moderne imagery.” It retains a high degree of integrity and is a superb example of industrial Art Moderne design.

Year Built: 1947  
Current Survey Code: 3S  
Parcel: 3763105





**Southern Police Station**  
**360 4th Street**

The former Southern Police Station Central Hotel was designed by architect Alfred I. Coffee and completed in 1925, replacing an earlier Mission Revival style police station on the same lot. It is indicative of the popularity of period revival architecture for civic buildings during the period, and is perhaps the finest Spanish Colonial Revival style building in the South of Market.

Year Built: 1925  
Current Survey Code: 2S  
Parcel: 3752010



**Murschen & Hoelscher Building**  
**508-514 4th Street**

The Murschen & Hoelscher Building was designed by architect Walter C. Falch and completed in 1925. It is an excellent example of the Mediterranean Revival style and retains a high degree of integrity, including its multi-light storefront transom.

Year Built: 1925  
Current Survey Code: 5S3  
Parcel: 3777002



**Heubline Wine Distribution Warehouse**  
**601 4th Street**

The Heubline Wine Distribution Warehouse was designed by master architects Sutton & Weeks and completed in 1916. It is among the largest industrial buildings in the South of Market and retains a high degree of integrity on its exterior. In 1989, the building interior was converted for residential condominiums.

Year Built: 1916  
Current Survey Code: 3S  
Parcel: 3787052



**Oakwood Hotel**  
**44-48 5th Street**

Constructed in 1907 by the McDougall Brothers, the building incorporates the shell of the Waldorf lodging house, which remained standing following the 1906 disaster. According to research by San Francisco Heritage, the Waldorf's terra cotta cornice was also salvaged and the lobby reconstructed. The building features richly ornamented spandrel panels and highly ornate fire escapes, and has been identified as a contributor to the eligible Mint-Mission Historic District. The building is also currently designated as a Category V (Unrated) building under Article 11 of the Planning Code.

Year Built: 1907  
Current Survey Code: 3CB  
Parcel: 3704003



**Victor Equipment Company**  
**844-850 Folsom Street**

The Victor Equipment Company Building was designed by architect R. W. Jenkins and completed in 1923. It is extremely unusual form in that the architecture combines Art Deco ornament with a Western False Front roofline. The building is currently split into two separate parcels.

Year Built: 1923  
Current Survey Code: 5S3  
Parcel: 3733019, 3733020



**854 Folsom Street**

854 Folsom Street is a good example of a combination light industrial and commercial building. The turned columns dividing the second story windows also appear unique to the Central SoMa area.

Year Built: 1926  
Current Survey Code: 5S3  
Parcel: 3733020A



### 461 Bryant Street

461 Bryant Street was designed by architect Oliver Everett and features some of the most intricate brickwork in the entire South of Market.

Year Built: 1912

Current Survey Code: 5S3

Parcel: 3775084



### 355 and 361-365 Brannan Street

Designed by architect C. W. Zollmer, these extremely rare twin buildings combine Art Deco lines with lavish entries featuring Classical ornament. Both retain a high degree of integrity.

Year Built: 1928

Current Survey Code: 5S3

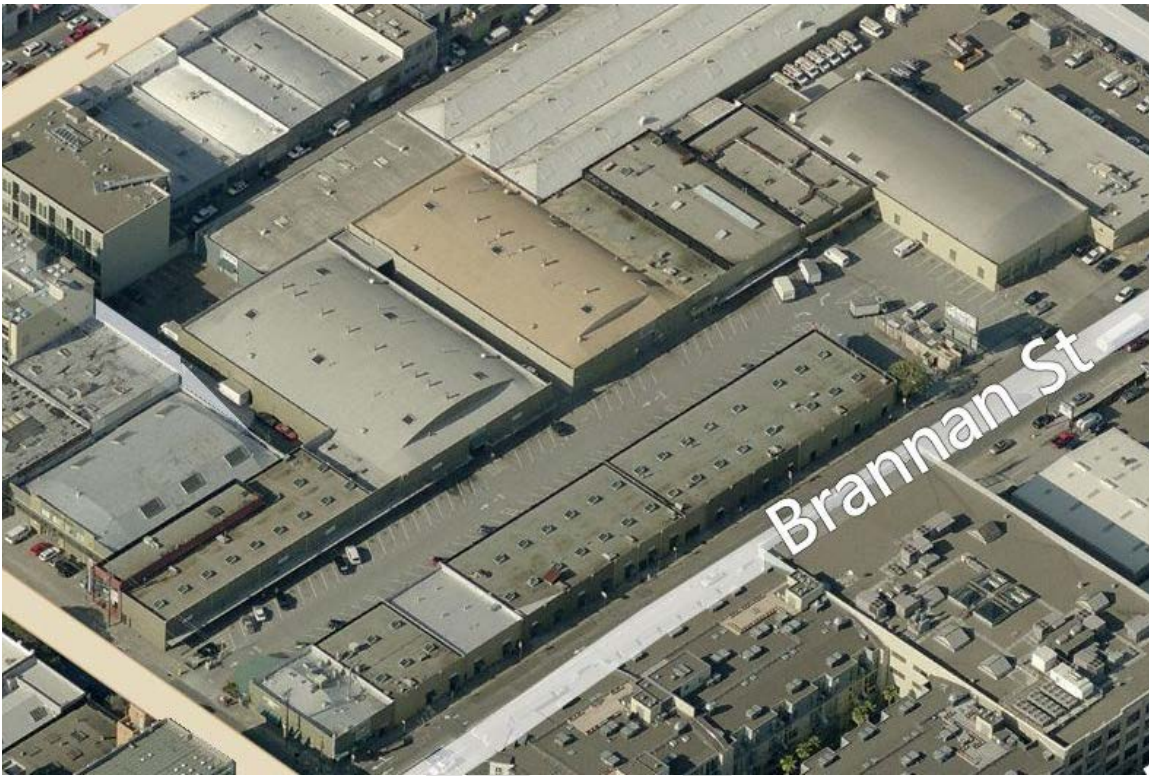
Parcel: 3788024 and 3788024A



## DOCUMENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL RESOURCES

The San Francisco Flower Mart is a complex of interrelated buildings located on the southern half of the block bounded by 5th, 6th, Bryant and Brannan streets. It was completed in 1956 and designed by master architect, Mario Ciampi. The complex was initially addressed by the South of Market Historic Resources Survey, which assigned a survey status code of "7R," meaning that it was identified in a reconnaissance survey but not evaluated. According to the survey findings, the assessment of the Flower Mart complex "cannot be accurately completed without an appropriate culturally oriented context statement that addresses the roles of Chinese, Italian and Japanese merchants in the region." Based on information developed for the context statement, the Flower Mart appears individually eligible for the California Register under Criteria 1 and 3 for its associations with San Francisco's floral industry and inter-ethnic commercial cooperation, as well as its purpose-built design by Mario Ciampi. However, it is recommended that a more focused study of the complex be completed to further illuminate these themes.





Satellite view of the San Francisco Flower Terminal at 6<sup>th</sup> and Brannan streets.  
(Bing Maps)

## **ADOPT PROCEDURES FOR RECOGNIZING SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES**

As discussed previously in this report, the Western SoMA Citizens Planning Task Force previously proposed special use districts in the South of Market focused on Filipino and LGBTQ social heritage. As yet, the City has not adopted formal procedures for the designation of social and cultural heritage resources—especially intangible resources such as organizations, businesses, programs, festivals and other activities that are not necessarily tied to a specific building or location. Recently, though, the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission formed a Cultural Heritage Assets Committee to explore strategies for recognizing and protecting social and cultural heritage resources. Some of the Committee’s work is informed by a policy paper published in September 2014 by San Francisco Heritage entitled “Sustaining San Francisco’s Living History: Strategies for Conserving Cultural Heritage Assets.”

### **Defining Social and Cultural Heritage Resources**

While social and cultural heritage resources may not necessarily be eligible for listing in local, state or national historic registers, their identification can help guide future planning efforts. One potential methodology for identifying such resources was developed as part of the Japantown Cultural Heritage and Economic Sustainability Strategy (JCHES).

For JCHES, the definition of social and cultural heritage resources was based on language used by the National Park Service to define traditional cultural properties. The NPS definition was modified such that social and cultural heritage resources were defined as: “Those elements, both tangible and intangible, that help define the beliefs,



customs and practices of a particular community. These elements are rooted in the community's history and/or are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community."<sup>[1]</sup>

### **Social Heritage Criteria**

As part of the JCHESS program, social heritage inventory forms were also produced for a select number of properties. The form identifies Social Heritage Criteria which roughly follow the significance criteria used by the National Register of Historic Places. The Criteria are grouped into four categories:

- Criterion A: Resources that are associated with historic events that have made a significant contribution to the social or cultural heritage of the area.
- Criterion B: Resources that are, or are associated with persons, organizations, institutions or businesses significant to the social or cultural heritage of the area.
- Criterion C: Resources that are valued by a cultural group for their design, aesthetic or ceremonial qualities such as:
- 1) Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or style of architecture that represents the social or cultural heritage of the area.
  - 2) Representation of the work of a master architect, landscape architect, gardener, artist or craftsman significant to the social or cultural heritage of the area.
  - 3) Association with the traditional arts, crafts, or practices significant to the social or cultural heritage of the area.
  - 4) Association with public ceremonies, festivals and other cultural gatherings significant to the social or cultural heritage of the area.
- Criterion D: Archaeological resources that have the potential to yield information important to the social or cultural heritage of the area.

### **Prioritizing Resources**

To identify potentially significant cultural heritage resources, the JCHESS methodology placed a premium on identifying resources that had a significant and longstanding association the community. The definition of "longstanding" was not static, but the consensus was that a period of at least twenty-five years represented a reasonable baseline figure. The concept of longstanding association also helped focus attention on resources that significantly influenced the community's identity, rather than those of a more transitory or esoteric nature. The JCHESS methodology prioritized the following types of resources:

- Physical properties or objects that are documented as having a significant and longstanding association with social or cultural heritage
- Organizations or programs that are documented as having a significant and longstanding association with social or cultural heritage
- Festivals/events/traditional practices that are documented as having a significant and longstanding association with social or cultural heritage

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<sup>[1]</sup> Page & Turnbull, *Japantown Social Heritage Program—Methodology*, Prepared for the City and County of San Francisco Planning Department. September 24, 2012..

As part of the JCHESS methodology, a select group of properties which met the criteria outlined above were recorded with Social Heritage Inventory Forms. These forms include the name, address and a photograph of the resource, as well as the Social Heritage Criteria under which it is significant. Sources of further information about the history of the property are also provided.

This study recommends that formal procedures for identifying and recognizing social heritage resources, such as those outlined above, be adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission and endorsed by the Board of Supervisors. Such efforts will aid in planning efforts, and potentially allow social and cultural heritage resources to benefit from incentives designed to preserve them for continued use by the community. Should these procedures be adopted, the study further recommends that the social and cultural resources identified by this report as associated with SoMa's Filipino and LGBT communities be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission and recorded on Social Heritage Inventory Forms.

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## Chapter 5

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## Appendix A

# Historic Context Methodology

Development of the context statement relied upon a range of primary and secondary sources, field visits, GIS mapping, and synthesis of previously prepared neighborhood-based historic context statements. This section briefly describes the archival sources, historic context statements, and other environmental review documents consulted in the preparation of the context statement.

### HISTORIC AND ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Archives and Repositories	San Francisco Public Library History Center, San Francisco Planning Department archives, San Francisco Assessor and Recorder's Office, Internet Archive.org, Google Books, Open Library.org
Primary Sources	<p><b>Municipal Sources:</b> Property deeds, sales ledgers, original building permit applications and architectural plans, 1976 Department of City Planning Architectural Survey field forms</p> <p><b>Photograph Collections:</b> San Francisco aerial photography (1937-1938, 1940), San Francisco Public Library Historic Photograph Collection, Calisphere, Online Archive of California, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA) digital photograph collection</p> <p><b>Maps:</b> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (1913-1915; 1950), Works Progress Administration Land Use Maps (1948-1960), Assessor's Block Book Maps (1937), David Rumsey Historic Map Collection</p> <p><b>Periodicals:</b> <i>Building &amp; Engineering News</i>, <i>Architect &amp; Engineer</i>, weekend Real Estate sections of the <i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>, <i>San Francisco Examiner</i>, and <i>San Francisco Call</i>, San Francisco City Directories</p>

### SURVEYS, EVALUATIONS & CONTEXT STATEMENTS

Several past surveys, context statements, and evaluations related to the South of Market and Central SoMa planning area have been prepared. They are discussed below in chronological order:

#### Here Today

The first major historic resources survey completed in San Francisco was The Junior League of San Francisco's Here Today survey, published in 1968 as *Here Today: San Francisco's Architectural Heritage*. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors under Resolution No. 268-70, the survey contains information about approximately 2,500 properties. The Here Today survey included the South of Market, but only a handful of significant buildings were identified in the Central SoMa study area. These include the Old U.S. Mint at 88 5th Street, St. Patrick's Church at 756 Mission Street, and the PG&E Jessie Street Substation at 222-6 Jessie Street. Overall, 13 properties in the study area are mentioned in *Here Today*.

### **Department of City Planning 1976 Architectural Survey**

Approximately 10,000 buildings were identified and ranked in the Architectural Survey conducted by the Department of City Planning from 1974 to 1976. This survey focused solely on architecture and did not identify or evaluate a property's cultural or historic associations. Buildings included in this survey were considered at that time to be among the top 10% of architecturally significant buildings in San Francisco. Field survey forms for each individual property are located in a 61-volume set at the San Francisco Planning Department preservation library. Surveyed buildings were concentrated in the central and northern neighborhoods and included residential, industrial, commercial, religious, and institutional property types. The 1976 Architectural Survey examined approximately 105 properties in the Central SoMa study area.

### **San Francisco Architectural Heritage Surveys**

San Francisco Architectural Heritage is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of San Francisco's unique architectural heritage. The organization has sponsored several major architectural surveys in San Francisco, including Downtown, the Van Ness Corridor, Civic Center, Chinatown and the Northeast Waterfront. The Downtown Survey was published in 1979 as *Splendid Survivors*, and contributed to the creation of San Francisco's Downtown Plan. The Downtown Survey included both primary and secondary survey areas. The primary survey area included a small portion of the Central SoMa study area, generally bounded by Market, Mission, 2nd and 6th streets. The secondary survey areas covered the remainder of the Central SoMa study area. Buildings were evaluated using the Kalman Methodology, an evaluation method based on qualitative and quantitative factors. The ratings range from "A" (highest importance), to "D" (minor or no importance). In total, approximately 265 buildings in the Central SoMa study area were assigned Heritage ratings. Of these, approximately 60 buildings were given ratings of either A (highest importance) or B (major importance). These included the California Casket Company building at 959-965 Mission Street, and the Hale Brothers Department Store at 979-989 Market Street.

### **Unreinforced Masonry Survey**

In the wake of the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, the San Francisco Landmarks Board initiated a survey of all known unreinforced-masonry buildings in San Francisco. The survey was conducted with the knowledge that earthquake damage and risk remediation would likely result in the demolition or extensive alteration of many vulnerable masonry buildings. As part of the survey, the Landmarks Board also sought to establish the relative significance of these buildings in San Francisco. The completed report: *A Context Statement and Architectural/Historical Survey of Unreinforced Masonry Building (UMB) Construction in San Francisco from 1850 to 1940*, was completed in 1990. In total, the survey examined more than 2,000 privately owned buildings in San Francisco. The Landmarks Board organized the UMB Survey into three categories: Priority I, Priority II, and Priority III UMBs. The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) evaluated the survey and produced determinations of eligibility for listing in the National Register for many of the 2,000 buildings. Approximately 160 buildings in the Central SoMa study area were addressed by the survey—a particularly high concentration given the size of the study area as compared to the city as a whole.



## **LGBT Historic Context Statement**

In 2004 the historic context statement, *Sexing the City: The Development of Sexual Identify Based Subcultures in San Francisco 1933-1979*, was prepared for the Friends of 1800. The historic context statement provides a city-wide review of sites associated with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities. The study focused on the period between the repeal of Prohibition in 1933 and the first National March on Washington in 1979. Appendix D of the report provides a map of LGBT sites located in the South of Market neighborhood. Several of these are located in the Central SoMa study area and are primarily clustered along 6th Street. Some of the properties with the longest association with the LGBT community include The End Up bar at 401 6th Street (1973-present), and 960 Folsom Street which was associated with the leather community during the 1970s and 1980s and is presently used as an adult store.

## **Historic Architectural Evaluation Report for the Central Subway**

The *Historic Architectural Evaluation Report for the Central Subway, Phase 2 of the Third Street Light Rail Project* was completed in 2007 by Garcia and Associates for PB/Wong Joint Venture. The study examined properties in the Area of Potential Effect (APE), which included the first row of buildings on either side of the proposed subway alignment. This included properties located along 4th Street in the Central SoMa study area, as well as properties located adjacent to an alternative proposed alignment along 3rd Street. The study found two buildings in the Central SoMa study area to be individually eligible for the National Register: an industrial loft building 601 4th Street (1916), and the Keystone Hotel at 54 4th Street (1914). It also concluded that 166 South Park should be included as an eligible contributor to the South Park Historic District.

## **Transit Center District Survey**

The Transit Center District Survey was completed in 2008 by Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting. It was commissioned by the San Francisco Planning Department in association with the Transit Center District Plan, a planning effort designed to extend the city's urban core south of Market Street. The survey examined the Transit Center District Plan Area and surrounding blocks in an area roughly bounded by Market Street on the north, Folsom Street on the south, Main Street on the east and 3rd Street on the west. The survey identified two potential historic districts composed primarily of early 20<sup>th</sup> century masonry loft buildings: the New Montgomery, Mission and Second Street Historic District Historic district; and the First and Mission Potential Historic District. The survey recommended extending the boundaries of the existing New Montgomery-Second Street Conservation District to include all or some of the boundaries of the New Montgomery, Mission and Second Street Historic District Historic district.

## **South of Market Historic Context Statement and Historic Resource Survey**

The *South of Market Historic Context Statement* was commissioned by the San Francisco Planning Department and completed by Kelley & Verplanck Historical Resources Consulting in cooperation with Page & Turnbull. Completed in 2009, the historic context statement examined most of the South of Market neighborhood in an area roughly bounded by Market Street to the north, Mission Channel to the south, 13<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, and San Francisco Bay to the east. The historic context statement was used to inform a historic resource survey designed to provide specific information about the location and distribution of historic resources within the Eastern Neighborhoods SoMa Area Plan and Western SoMa Community Plan. In total, the survey examined 2,141 properties. California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523A—Primary Record forms were produced for 1,241 properties, and DPR 523B—Building, Structure, Object forms were prepared for 128 properties.

In addition, five DPR 523D—District Records were prepared. These identified groupings of historically significant properties eligible for designation as historic districts. These districts included the following:

*The Western SoMa Light Industrial and Residential Historic District*

The Western SoMa Light Industrial and Residential Historic District was the largest identified historic district and encompasses a total of 721 properties. No part of the historic district is included within the Central SoMa study area. In general terms, the district boundaries encompass the area bounded by Mission Street to the north, 6th Street to the east, Harrison Street and Bryant Street to the south, and 13th Street to the west. The district was determined to be significant for its association with industrial and residential reconstruction and has a period of significance from 1906 to 1936.

*Sixth Street Lodginghouse Historic District*

The Sixth Street Lodginghouse District had been previously identified by Anne Bloomfield and recorded on a DPR 523 D form in 1997. As described in the form, the Sixth Street Lodginghouse District consists of a 43 total properties, including 33 single room occupancy (SRO) residential hotels, or lodginghouses, built from 1906 through 1913, along with a few low-rise commercial buildings. The district runs along Sixth Street stretching from a point near Market Street to buildings a short distance south of Howard Street. The district was proposed as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its association with the working life of laborers, sailors and the elderly who inhabited the lodginghouses. The eastern edge of the historic district is located at the northwestern corridor of the Central SoMa study area. Survey efforts associated with this study also identified one additional building as an eligible contributor to the historic district.

*South Park Historic District*

The South Park Historic District encompasses 37 properties immediately adjoining South Park, and is wholly contained within the Central SoMa study area. This district features a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential buildings constructed between 1906 and 1935 that are unified in terms of scale, materials, architectural styles, and relationship to the street and park. The district also has associations with both the Japanese and Filipino communities.

*South End Historic District Extension*

The South End Historic District Addition (SEHD Addition) is comprised of 19 properties located in the Central SoMa study area roughly bounded by Brannan Street to the north, Third Street to the east, Townsend Street to the south, and Lusk Street to the west. The district comprises an addition to the local (Article 10) and National Register-listed South End Historic District, significant for its associations with industrial development. The additional contributing resources were identified as compatible with the “warehouse architectural form” theme of the South End Historic District.

*Bluxome and Townsend Warehouse Historic District*

The Bluxome and Townsend Warehouse Historic District is located within the Central SoMa study area and consists of 10 industrial warehouse buildings significant for their association with industrial development. The buildings display a cohesive relationship in terms of scale, style and relationship to the street, and were all constructed between 1912 and 1936.

## **San Francisco Filipino Historic Context Statement**

The report, *San Francisco Filipino Heritage – Addendum to the South of Market Historic Context Statement*, was completed by Page & Turnbull in 2013. This study was commissioned by the San Francisco Planning Department as an

addendum to the *South of Market Historic Context Statement*. It examines the evolution of the Filipino experience in San Francisco and key themes that led to the development of a Filipino community South of Market. These include immigration patterns, employment, and the establishment of social, religious and educational institutions. The document is accompanied by oral history summaries and lists several sites within the Central SoMa study area that are significant to the Filipino community. These include the Gran Oriente Filipino Lodge at 104 South Park, the Mint Mall at 953-957 Mission Street and the Lipi Ni Lapu Lapu mural on the side of the San Lorenzo Luis Center at 50 Rizal Street.

### **Property Evaluations**

As part of its CEQA environmental review process, the Department requires research-based documentation and evaluation of certain historic properties in the form of Historic Resource Evaluations (HRE). A handful of completed HREs were consulted as they relate to the Central SoMa survey area.

### **Designated Resources**

#### **Article 10 Landmarks**

Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code (*Preservation of Historical Architectural and Aesthetic Landmarks*) provides for official designation of landmarks, landmark districts, and structures of merit that have “a special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.” Landmarks can be buildings, sites, or landscape features. Landmark status provides the greatest level of protection for historic resources in San Francisco. Currently, the Central SoMa study area includes five individual San Francisco Landmarks: Saint Patrick’s Cathedral (Landmark No. 4); The Palace Hotel Garden Courtyard (Landmark No. 18); The Jessie Street Substation (Landmark No. 87); the Sharon Building (Landmark No. 163); and the Old Mint (Landmark No. 236). The study area is also home to portions of the South End Landmark District.

#### **Article 11 Buildings and Conservation Districts**

Article 11 of the San Francisco Planning Code (*Preservation of Buildings and Districts of Architectural, Historical, and Aesthetic Importance in the C-3 Districts*), was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1985 as part of the Downtown Area Plan, and currently governs approximately 430 downtown buildings. According to the Plan, San Francisco’s downtown is a vital part of the city, recognized for its “compact mix of activities, historical values, and distinctive architecture and urban forms that engender a special excitement reflective of a world city.” In order to achieve these aims, the Downtown Area Plan employs a rating system for evaluating historical resources located in the C-3 (Downtown Commercial) district. There are five ratings. Category I and II buildings have the highest level of significance. Contributory Buildings have a slightly lower level of significance and are classified as belonging to either Category III or Category IV. Unrated or non-contributory buildings are assigned to Category V. This category includes all other buildings in the C-3 Downtown District not otherwise designated.

An important provision of Article 11 is the establishment of conservation districts. Section 1103 of the San Francisco Planning Code defines conservation districts as “substantial concentrations of buildings that together create sub areas of special architectural and aesthetic importance.” There are presently six conservation districts located throughout downtown San Francisco, two of which are located within the Central SoMa study area. The New Montgomery-Second Street Conservation District is almost wholly located within the Central SoMa study area and primarily includes properties along New Montgomery Street and 2nd Street between Market and Howard streets. The Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District is largely centered around Union Square, but does include a few properties along the south side of Market Street between 3rd and 6th streets.

In total, there are 112 buildings with Article 11 ratings in the Central SoMa study area. Of these, 63 are rated categories I – IV, while 49 are rated Category V.

### **National Register**

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is a list of buildings and sites of local, state, or national importance. This program is administered by the National Park Service through the California Office of Historic Preservation. Typically, resources over fifty years of age are eligible for listing in the National Register if they meet any one of the four significance criteria and if they sufficiently retain historic integrity. However, resources under fifty years of age can be determined eligible if it can be demonstrated that they are of “exceptional importance,” or if they are contributors to a potential historic district. National Register criteria are defined in depth in National Register Bulletin Number 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. There are four basic criteria under which a structure, site, building, district, or object can be determined eligible for listing in the National Register:

*Criterion A (Event):* Properties associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

*Criterion B (Person):* Properties associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

*Criterion C (Design/Construction):* Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction; and

*Criterion D (Information Potential):* Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. The criterion is generally reserved for archaeological resources or ruins.

The San Francisco Planning Department treats National Register-listed properties as historic resources per the California Environmental Quality Act. Approximately 20 buildings in the Central SoMa study area are listed in the National Register, either individually or as a contributor to a historic district.

### **California Register**

The California Register of Historical Places is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. It is administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-eligible properties are automatically listed in the California Register. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places. In order for a property to be eligible for listing in the California Register, it must be found significant under one or more of the following criteria:

*Criterion 1 (Event):* Resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.



*Criterion 2 (Person):* Resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.

*Criterion 3 (Design/Construction):* 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.

*Criterion 4 (Information Potential):* Resources or sites that have yielded or have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

In total, the Central SoMa study area includes approximately 60 buildings that are listed in the California Register. However, many other buildings have been assigned California Historical Resource Status codes by prior historic studies—most notably the South of Market Historic Resource Survey.

## REGULATORY BASIS FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

### Federal Level

In the United States, the concept of preserving a community's architectural past emerged during the decades preceding the Civil War and focused on colonial buildings and other structures connected with important figures in American history. Public concern over the possible loss of historic sites and buildings of importance to the nation's heritage prompted Congress to adopt the Antiquities Act of 1906, offering protection to prehistoric and historic sites located on federal properties. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 established a national policy of preserving historic resources of national significance and created the National Historic Landmark Program. This legislation empowered the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the National Park Service, to use the Historic American Buildings Survey to survey, document, evaluate, acquire, and preserve archaeological and historic sites<sup>120</sup>.

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 established a number of programs that deal with historic preservation at the federal and state levels. The National Register of Historic Places, maintained by the Secretary of the Interior, was created as a federal planning tool and contains a list of national, state, and local districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. In addition, the NHPA created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency that serves as the primary federal policy advisor to the President and Congress; recommends administrative and legislative improvements for protecting our nation's heritage; advocates full consideration of historic values in federal decision-making; and reviews federal programs and policies to promote effectiveness, coordination, and consistency with national preservation policies. The NHPA also established the review process known as Section 106, in which federal undertakings must be assessed for potential impact on historic resources.<sup>121</sup>

Both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970 require consideration of a project's effects on historical, architectural, and archaeological resources as part of the environmental review process. In 1983, the Secretary of the Interior released Preservation Planning Standards and

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<sup>120</sup> Architectural Resources Group. 2009. Preservation Element (draft). (Commissioned by the San Francisco Planning Department).

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties that are used nationwide and under CEQA to guide appropriate preservation strategies.<sup>122</sup>

### State Level

The State of California maintains preservation programs through the OHP within the California Department of Parks and Recreation. This office is administered by the State Historic Preservation Officer and overseen by the State Historical Resources Commission, whose members are appointed by the Governor. The office maintains the California Register of Historical Resources, which lists properties evaluated and/or designated by federal, state and local authorities.<sup>123</sup>

CEQA is the foundation of environmental policy and law in the state of California, and encourages the protection of all aspects of the environment, including historical resources. Under CEQA, state and local governmental agencies must consider the impact of proposed projects on historic resources.

### Local Level

At the local level, there are numerous studies, mandates and guidelines pertaining to the identification, evaluation, and preservation of historic and cultural resources in San Francisco. San Francisco's commitment to retaining its historic fabric is codified in Section 101.1 of the Planning Code, which sets forth eight Priority Policies, including Policy 7, which states that "landmarks and historic buildings be preserved."

The Department's 1966 study "The Preservation of Landmarks in San Francisco" outlined goals for City legislation to protect architectural and historic resources. In 1967, the Board of Supervisors adopted a landmarks ordinance, Article 10 of the Planning Code, which established the Landmarks Board.<sup>124</sup> In 1985 the Downtown Plan was adopted as part of the General Plan, and Article 11 of the Planning Code created five categories of notable buildings and implemented the preservation policies created for that Plan. Finally, the General Plan's introduction incorporated a 1986 voter-approved initiative, known as Proposition M, which added Section 101.1 to the Planning Code.

In 1995, San Francisco became a Certified Local Government (CLG) under the provisions of the NHPA. CLGs must comply with five basic requirements:

- Enforce appropriate state and local laws and regulations for the designation and protection of historic properties
- Establish a historic preservation review commission by local ordinance
- Maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties
- Provide for public participation in the local preservation program
- Satisfactorily perform responsibilities delegated to it by the state

In 2008, voters approved a charter amendment to replace the Landmarks Board with a newly created Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) that has expanded powers over historic resources in San Francisco. In June 2012, Articles 10 and 11 of the Planning Code were amended to reflect the duties and powers of the HPC. The HPC makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on designations of Article 10 landmarks and landmark districts. The HPC may also review and comment on projects affecting historic resources that are subject to environmental review under the CEQA, and/or projects subject to review under Section 106 of the NHPA. The HPC also approves

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> The Historic Preservation Commission replaced the Landmarks Board in 2009.

Certificates of Appropriateness for alterations of Landmarks and properties located within Article 10 Landmark Districts. The context statement will be brought to the HPC for adoption.

In addition to properties officially designated under Articles 10 and 11, the City and County of San Francisco also recognizes those properties identified as eligible resources in adopted informational historic and cultural surveys. Properties lacking official designation at the local, state, or federal levels, and also lacking documentation in an adopted informational survey, may still be considered potential resources pursuant to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No. 16, "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources."

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