

Profiles of Community Planning Areas:

San Francisco's Eastern Neighborhoods

The Planning Department would like to acknowledge the generous contributions of time and technical expertise from community organizations and the support of the Board of Supervisors.

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One

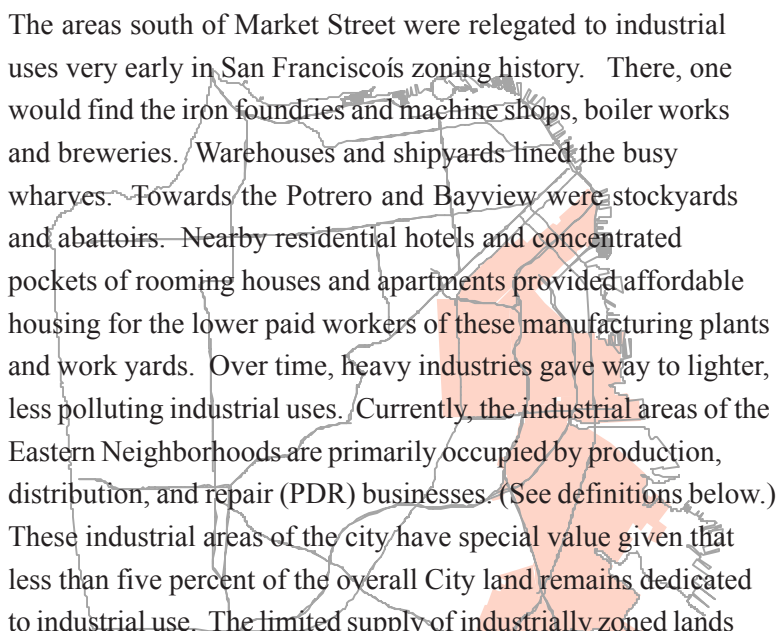
Introduction

Despite the current downturn, San Francisco recently went through a period of strong economic growth in which it gained more than 86,000 jobs and 53,000 people. Unlike previous growth spurts when development occurred in the downtown core, this time capital, business, and building activity surged south of downtown, into the industrial and residential Eastern Neighborhoods. While this wealth brought some needed resources, the transformation of the Eastern Neighborhoods has created major conflicts around the use of land. Old and new residents, established industrial businesses and new dot-com ventures all vied for building space and available land in the Eastern Neighborhoods: South of Market, the Mission, Showplace Square, Potrero, Central Waterfront, South Bayshore, and Visitacion Valley community areas. Some of the traditional users of these neighborhoods could not afford suddenly increased costs of space. Many of the new uses were not compatible with already established uses because of differences in acceptable environmental expectations. Noise, noxious fumes, early and late hours of operations, heavy truck traffic and lack of pedestrian sidewalks, and waste handling led to clashes between industrial and residential neighbors.

This report will initiate a wide ranging community planning process. The intent is to provide an understanding of the recent shifts in land use composition in the Eastern Neighborhoods which will help inform and shape the permanent zoning controls that will result from this inclusive community process. It looks at changes in employment and business patterns, analyzes new building uses and real estate trends, and discusses the changes in residential patterns and demographic shifts. This report also considers the community plan areas individually in order to understand the relationship of each plan area to the Eastern Neighborhoods as a whole and to the entire City. This information and analysis will be revised and refined by the participating communities for a more comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date assessment of these Eastern Neighborhoods. Each of the Eastern

Neighborhoods has unique economic and social strengths. They have faced major challenges as a result of the strong development pressures of the last few years and will be facing new challenges in the current economic downturn. Each of these communities will have to find ways to use its resources and create new ones to adjust to these changes.

Industrial and Residential Neighborhoods



The areas south of Market Street were relegated to industrial uses very early in San Francisco's zoning history. There, one would find the iron foundries and machine shops, boiler works and breweries. Warehouses and shipyards lined the busy wharves. Towards the Potrero and Bayview were stockyards and abattoirs. Nearby residential hotels and concentrated pockets of rooming houses and apartments provided affordable housing for the lower paid workers of these manufacturing plants and work yards. Over time, heavy industries gave way to lighter, less polluting industrial uses. Currently, the industrial areas of the Eastern Neighborhoods are primarily occupied by production, distribution, and repair (PDR) businesses. (See definitions below.) These industrial areas of the city have special value given that less than five percent of the overall City land remains dedicated to industrial use. The limited supply of industrially zoned lands means these PDR businesses, if displaced by other uses, cannot relocate anywhere else in the City.

PDR businesses--printers and publishing houses, catering kitchens and convention planners, limousine services and auto repair shops, flower markets and warehouses, furniture designers and manufacturers, among others--are essential to the functioning of the city's economy because they support a wide range of businesses across economic sectors. Without these PDR businesses, the cost of goods and services in San Francisco would increase. The PDR businesses also provide stable and better paying jobs for the low-skilled sector of the local labor force. These relatively higher wages also allow some cushion in the growing wage

polarization of the City. In an economy driven by professional services and information-based activities, workers either earn very high salaries in professional services occupations or very low wages in retail and personal services.

Residential areas in the Eastern Neighborhoods contribute to the character of the City because of their strong cultural identities, diverse communities, specialized retail stores, and the variety of cultural and entertainment activities they offer. It is also in these residential neighborhoods that many low-income households have found affordable housing. The colorful character of the Eastern Neighborhoods attracts local and regional visitors who come to experience and explore San Francisco history and its diversity.

Residential and Industrial neighborhoods can coexist in close proximity, as they do in many parts of the Eastern Neighborhoods. Strengthening industrial neighborhoods need not be in conflict with the thriving vitality of the residential neighborhoods. But PDR businesses require "elbow room" for their operations--early morning or nighttime activities, truck traffic, large open storage, and sufficient land for related specialized businesses to cluster--and they need land use regulations that recognize these needs. Residential neighborhoods also have needs in order to provide a comfortable living environment: transit, open space, commercial services.

Responding to Change

The rapid pace of economic and land use change has led communities of the industrial and residential Eastern Neighborhoods to engage in planning processes that explore and define the future direction of their neighborhoods. The Planning Department is joining these efforts by compiling basic information for this report and scheduling a series of workshops throughout these Eastern Neighborhoods. In these community planning processes, the San Francisco General Plan will be providing guidance for enhancing the character of existing places and opening opportunities for future development. At a more specific level, zoning controls can be revised to preserve and strengthen the residential and indus

Boundaries

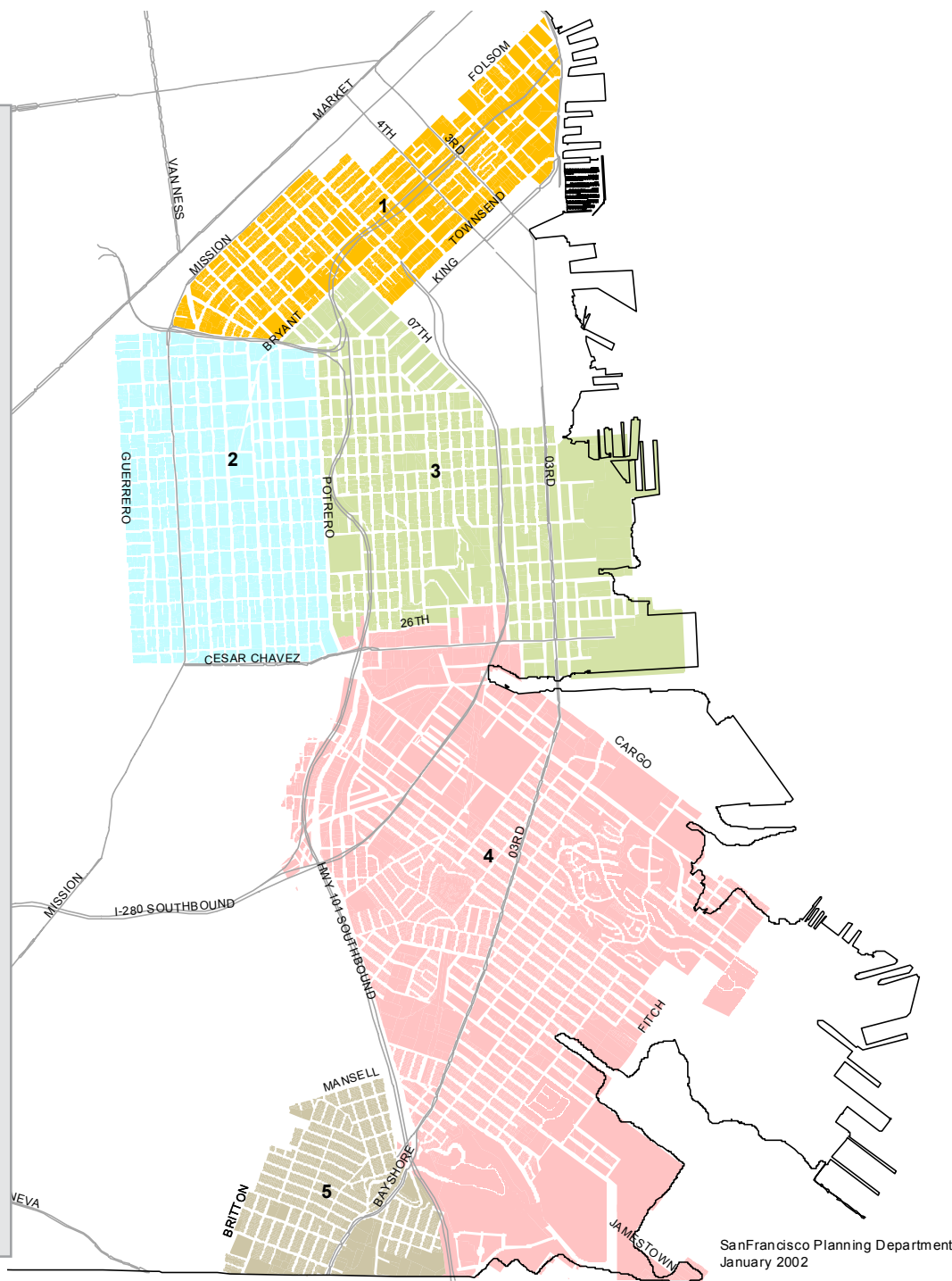
1) The **South of Market** boundaries are Mission and Folsom Streets to the north, the Waterfront to the east, Townsend to the south, and Division to the west.

2) The **Mission** is bounded by Division to the north, Potrero to the east, Cesar Chavez to the south, and Guerrero to the west. The NEMIZ, or Northeast Mission Industrial Zone, is located within the Mission.

3) **Showplace Square ñ Potrero ñ Central Waterfront** are grouped into one district in this community planning process. It is bounded by Bryant Street and Seventh Street to the north, San Francisco Bay to the east, Islais Creek and the Bayshore to the south, and the Mission District to the west.

4) The **South Bayshore** lies between 26th Street to the north, the Bay to the east, the City boundaries to the south, and Highway 101 to the west.

5) **Visitacion Valley** is bounded by McLaren Park to the north and west, Highway 101 to the east, and the City boundaries to the south.



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Figure 1.2.1 Eastern Neighborhoods Community Plan Area Boundaries

trial Eastern Neighborhoods as well as to identify areas that are best suited for future residential, commercial, and industrial development.

Community organizations, the Planning Department, and other agencies have in the last few years engaged in a variety of planning efforts related to the Eastern Neighborhoods. Some of these efforts focused on zoning controls that targeted specific issues and areas. Others considered a more comprehensive approach and looked at the overall role of the Eastern Neighborhoods in the City. These efforts constitute the foundations for the community planning process in which community organizations and the Planning Department are embarking.

Recent Zoning Controls in Eastern Neighborhoods

In August 1999, the City Planning Commission responded to development pressures in industrial areas by approving a set of interim controls that created Mixed Use Housing Zones and Industrial Protection Zones. This was an attempt to guide the flood of live/work development towards areas that were better suited for residential uses. These controls expired in August 2001 and, instead of being replaced by permanent controls, were superseded by a set of policy guidelines adopted by the Planning Commission and the creation of a Special Use District in the northern portion of South Bayshore. This district has recently been approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Communities in the Eastern Neighborhoods have also engaged in the development of their own interim controls. In July 2001, the Board of Supervisors adopted interim controls proposed by the Mission Community. A few months later, Supervisor Maxwell introduced a set of interim controls for the area covering Showplace Square, Potrero and Central Waterfront. This proposal was put on hold pending the completion of the Community Planning effort being initiated by this report.

After several community sessions and major community organizing efforts, the South of Market community decided not to proceed with interim controls given the on-going proposals at the Board of Supervisors and this upcoming Planning Department effort. In the South Bayshore, community efforts coordinated by the Redevelopment Agency have resulted in a plan, which is now being reviewed by the Project Area Committee. All these community efforts constitute essential input into the overall community planning process in which the Planning Department is engaged. The upcoming community planning workshops are but one aspect of the Citywide Action Plan (CAP).

San Francisco Citywide Action Plan (CAP)

The last few years saw economic prosperity and population growth that led to overwhelming demand for housing and commercial space. In response, the Planning Department formulated a Citywide Action Plan (CAP) to provide a comprehensive long-range framework for the allocation of development that will enhance the quality and character of the City's neighborhoods.

The CAP calls for locating residential and mixed-use development in areas with access to public transit and urban amenities. Office development will be directed near the financial district, reinforcing the City's employment core and enhancing the existing skyline. Industrial activities essential to the city will be allowed to operate in industrial areas. The guiding assumption of the CAP is that San Francisco is a mature city. For it to sustain itself and grow, it cannot continue to rely on the automobile, which is better suited for more sprawling cities. San Francisco's unique strength and charm lies in its compact and easily accessible diversity. Historically, San Francisco has wisely invested in transit and matured on a robust transit infrastructure. It must now reinforce the strengths that have served it so well in the past and plan for the future intelligently. Land is scarce and it must be used efficiently. San Francisco's strength can only be maintained if its diverse activities can find adequate and suitable space.

This Citywide Action Plan illustrated in Figure 1.3.1 is made of five major interrelated tasks. Its success will require the implementation of all these tasks:

Community Planning and Code Changes: The dramatic transformation of some of the Eastern Neighborhoods requires that the City revisit existing zoning controls to ensure that the goals of the communities as stated today and through the General Plan are met. Residential and industrial neighborhoods will be evaluated to ensure that existing residents have access to appropriate services and amenities; that production, distribution, and repair businesses have access to land; and that new adequate residential, commercial, and industrial developments are placed at appropriate locations. This task will rely on the participation and input from the communities involved: Mission, South of Market, Showplace Square-Potrero-Central Waterfront, South Bayshore, and Visitacion Valley.

Enhance New Downtown Neighborhood: The concentration of jobs in the downtown core has allowed a very dynamic local economy, efficiently built on a transit system, and has allowed neighborhoods in the rest of the city to retain their character and scale. The reinforcement of this downtown core as an employment center will ensure this balance of urban scale between the core and the rest of the city. Major development areas south of the downtown core, such as the Transbay Terminal, Rincon Hill, and Mission Bay, are expanding this core. They will be absorbing major office and residential development over the next decades. This development must incorporate the necessary services and public spaces for new businesses, workers, and a new residential community; enhance the skyline of the City with new high-density development with a prominent presence; and transition gracefully between the high-density downtown core and the surrounding lower-density industrial areas.

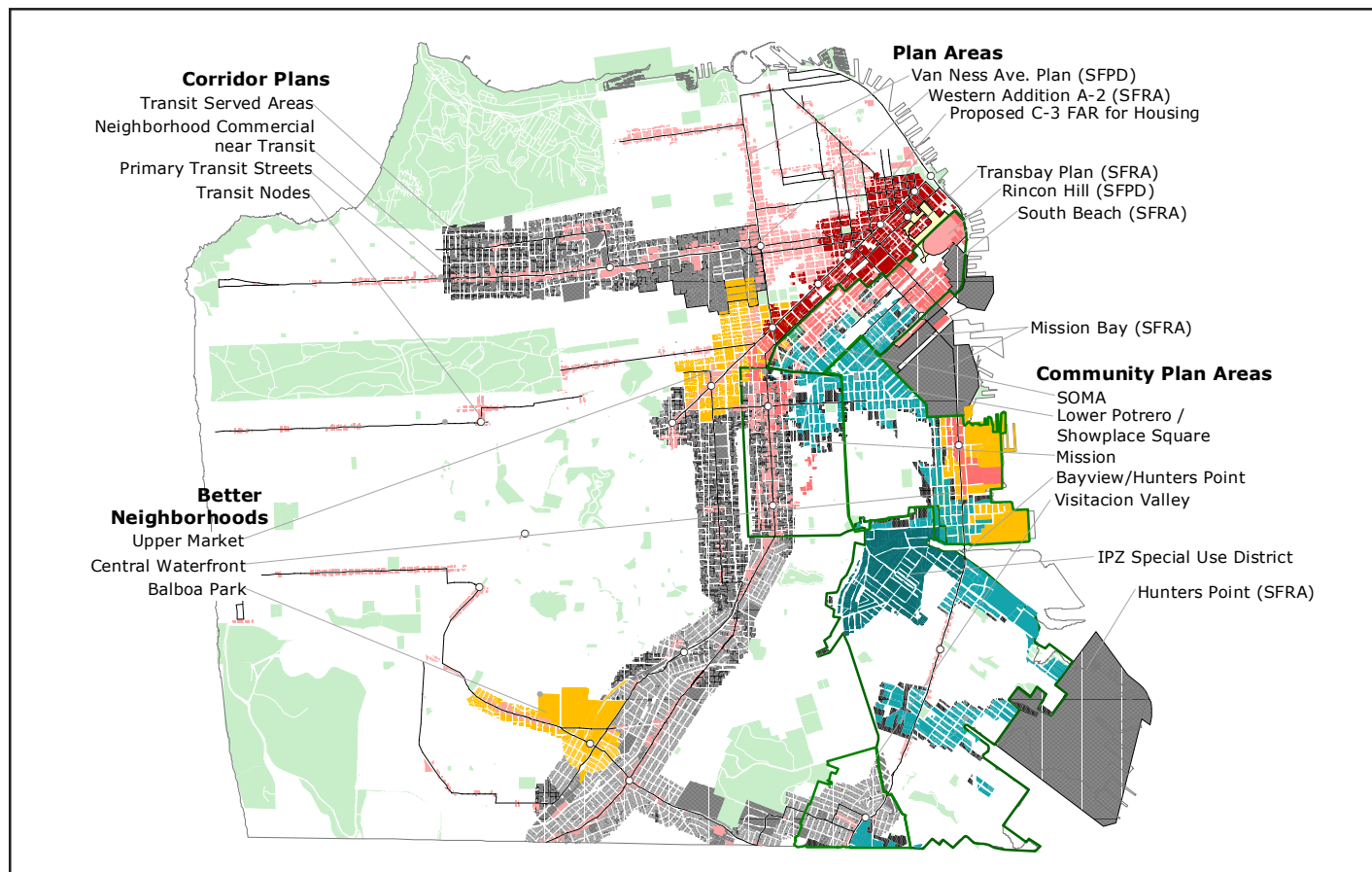


Figure 1.3.1 Citywide Action Plan

Reinforce Transit Corridors and Mixed-Use Areas: Easy transit access to services and jobs has been essential to the development of the city. The enhancement of the transit services in coordination with land use planning could improve transit service along key corridors, open areas for sensitive transit oriented development, and enhance the pedestrian environment. This effort will require effective coordination with the transportation agencies in the city.

Continue Better Neighborhoods Program: This program seeks to engage communities to actively transform their neighborhoods to become the best places to live and work in. Three neighborhoods ñ Octavia/Market, Central Waterfront and Balboa Park ñ were chosen for the pilot program because they present tremendous opportunities to link land use to transit availability. All have significant transit nodes, tracts of public and private lands available for development, and involved communities concerned about the direction of development. All three programs have housing components that will encourage housing where it makes sense.

Update General Plan Elements: For the first time, the Planning Department will develop a self contained land use element. This will replace the existing land use index, which provides an inventory of all land use related policies throughout the General Plan. The Housing Element is being updated as required by the State. The update will reinforce the housing affordability policies and strengthen the implementation component of the element.

The Urban Design Element and eventually the Transportation Element will be updated in light of recent planning issues and development trends. New policies will be considered to ensure that new development will enhance the City’s urban form and pattern and that the City will be able to meet its needs for accessibility and moving about.

Defining the Production, Distribution and Repair (PDR) Sector

A new term iPDRî has been recently coined to describe industrial activity as it exists today in the City. It is widely recognized that smoke-stack industry has long left the City. Many remaining production, distribution and repair services are integral to the daily lives of people living and working in San Francisco. City dwellers and workers require the services of PDR businesses at one time or another if they expect to live or work conveniently in an urban environment, if they need repairs done, a shuttle to the airport, or a cab to the doctor. They will need food that most likely was prepared or warehoused somewhere in the City.

PDR is an essential element in the successful operation of businesses. Most businesses need brochures and annual reports. Some businesses need to deliver their goods. Other businesses need catering services.

PDR activities are essential to the core financial and tourist sectors. PDR services like transportation, food services, entertainment and events production play a crucial supporting role in the City’s ability to attract tourists. The busy Moscone Convention Center cannot host large national conferences without the services of catering and events producers or its marshalling yard.

PDR businesses are quite diverseóanging from services such as taxis or catering and event production to manufacturing activities such as printing and garment manufacturing. The businesses are not only categorized by the goods they produce but also by their particular requirements for building type and lot size. PDR activities can occupy a wide variety of building types and can produce an extensive spectrum of goods and services. However, the one thing most of these firms have in common is their low standing in the rent food chain.

Production

This business sector includes the production of a variety of goods and services. The components considered to be part of production activities are typically: processing, design, construction, and manufacturing. The design, manufacture and wholesale of clothing and furniture along with the many tasks involved in event production and catering are a part of the production sector. Video, film, graphic design, and photography are also included in this category.



Distribution

This category refers to activities revolving around the distribution of goods, services and even people. Rather than producing goods as described above, wholesalers of items such as flowers, appliances and furniture are in the business of distributing goods to grocery stores, restaurants, construction contractors and others. The distribution category also includes the movement of people by taxis and shuttle services; shipping, handling and trucking; storage of equipment and materials, interior design, showrooms and construction storage.



Repair

The final activity in the PDR category is repair. Vehicular, equipment, appliances, furniture and other home or business repair services are included in this group.



PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND REPAIR

PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION OF GOODS

- ĩ Fashion/garment design manufacture
- ĩ Event production and catering
- ĩ Construction contractors
- ĩ Printers, designers, photographers
- ĩ Food processing
- ĩ Manufacturers of furniture, specialty fixtures, custom wood, and metal work, jewelry, machinery
- ĩ Film producers and sound recording

DISTRIBUTION-MOVEMENT OF GOODS, PEOPLE, INFORMATION

- ĩ Delivery services: messengers, airport shuttle vans, taxis, limousines, trucks
- ĩ Food and beverage wholesalers and distributors serving groceries stores, restaurants, hotels
- ĩ Wholesalers of furniture, flowers, equipment, appliances, food & beverages, jewelry, machinery
- ĩ Interior design and showrooms
- ĩ Construction storage
- ĩ Building material suppliers
- ĩ Self storage and moving companies
- ĩ Storage of essential equipment and materials, shipping & handling, and trucking

REPAIR SERVICES

- ĩ Repair shops for cars and trucks
- ĩ Repair shops for equipment, appliances, and furniture
- ĩ Business and home repair services