



PLANNING DEPARTMENT Director's Report

PLANNING DIRECTOR:
JOHN RAHAIM

January 2013

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Happy New Year! The start of the new year marks my fifth anniversary with the Planning Department. I am constantly surprised by that phenomenon we all experience that time seems to accelerate as we age. It is hard for me to believe that I have been in San Francisco for half a decade. While the past five years has been a challenge, both personally and professionally, it has also been hugely rewarding.

The work of the Commissions and the Department leaves an extraordinary legacy to the city. We have adopted and are implementing nine (!) neighborhood plans: Market Octavia, Eastern Neighborhoods (Mission, Portrero Hill, Central Waterfront, East SOMA, and Western SOMA), Balboa Park, Glen Park, and Transit Center District. These plans cover over 20% of the area of the city. More importantly, 80% of the city's growth will happen in these areas.

In addition, the department is now responsible for a very broad range of plan implementation work, from environmental reviews, to project reviews, design review, impact fees, street improvements and capital budgeting. Further, our work to improve the public realm via the city's streets covers 25% of the city's land area, more than all parks combined. And we are now working at a regional level with numerous partners, and we more fully understand and appreciate our role within a growing, sophisticated region.

What's ahead? Perhaps more than ever, our work involves collaboration with multiple partners. At the regional level, we will grow our work with ABAG, MTC, other counties and cities, and High Speed Rail. In the city, much of our work is being driven by public agencies, including the Port, PUC, UCSF, Rec Park, Housing Authority and MTA. Three of our largest upcoming development projects are on Port-controlled property and two are on Housing Authority property.

Of course, we will also see an increase in private development proposals. Because of San Francisco's position nationally, the growth of the technology industry, and the growing interest in city living and city working, economists forecast that we will continue to see growth for at least the next two years.

While we will work to complete the Central Corridor Plan and Japantown Plan, it is unlikely that we will start a broad new neighborhood plan similar in scope to these or the recently adopted plans. Rather, we will work on large, single owner sites (such as the Port or UCSF and Housing Authority) and make sure that development on these sites helps us to meet growth goals, exemplifies great design, and are well integrated into the city. And we will work on the Mayor's Invest in Neighborhoods strategy, intended to strengthen neighborhood commercial districts. I have long believed that these corridors represent a huge untapped resource for the city, not necessarily through the type of neighborhood plans we've done in the past, but through more strategic, focused measures such as business support or street improvements.

I am excited, challenged and humbled by the prospect of the next five years. And I thank the Planning and Historic Preservation Commissions for their confidence and support of me and the Department.

My best for a great new year,
John

DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES INCREASE:

Effective January 1, 2013, most Development Impact Fees increased by 4% in accordance with San Francisco Planning Code Article 4, Section 409(b). The new fee schedule applies to Development Impact Fees collected on or after January 1, 2013 (including applications that were filed before January 1st for which fees have not been paid by January 1st). The Controller's Office annually adjusts the applicable fees based on the Annual Infrastructure Construction Cost Inflation Estimate (AICCIE) published by Office of the City Administrator's Capital Planning Group and approved by the Capital Planning Committee. These rate adjustments will occur annually on January 1st, with a few exceptions noted on the impact fee register.

POPOS AND PUBLIC ART MAP NOW AVAILABLE:

An interactive map listing all privately owned public open spaces (otherwise known as POPOS), and all artwork part of the "1% Art Program", can be found online at <http://popos.sfplanning.org>.

This map was developed in conjunction with new legislation to improve POPOS signage, making the spaces more visible and accessible to the general public.

PUBLIC MEETING:

Castro Street Design Workshop

Please join us to discuss the future of Castro Street from Market Street to 19th Street. We want to hear your ideas on ways to improve and beautify this important neighborhood street. At this workshop there will be a brief presentation of a preliminary design concept, followed by an opportunity to provide feedback. Presented by the City of San Francisco in coordination with the Castro/Upper Market Community Benefits District, the Merchants of Upper Market and Castro, and the Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association.

Date: Wednesday, January 23, 2013

Start Time: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: Eureka Valley Recreation Center, Auditorium, 100 Collingwood Street

More Info: <http://castrostreetsdesign.sfplanning.org>

SPUR Evening Forum: The Meanies and the War Mongers: Recent Planning Lessons from SF

Land use planning in San Francisco is often called a blood sport. John Rahaim, Planning Director, will discuss the last five years of planning in San Francisco during his tenure, and why that phrase is too weak. Rahaim will look at the accomplishments of planning in the city, the impacts from the last decade of neighborhood plans and the lessons from the war that will guide the Planning Department into the next decade.

Date: Tuesday, January 29, 2013

Start Time: 6:00 pm

Location: SPUR Urban Center, 654 Mission Street

Admission: Free to SPUR members, \$10 for non-members

Register at: www.spur.org or call 415-781-8726