

IV.A Land Use and Land Use Planning

IV.A.1 Introduction

This section describes the existing land uses and *Planning Code* (zoning) controls in the Central SoMa Plan (Plan) area and analyzes potential changes to the Plan Area's land uses that may occur over time if the Plan, its proposed policies and *Planning Code* amendments, street network changes, and open space improvements were adopted and implemented. The Environmental Setting documents the Plan Area's existing land uses, development pattern, and its built environment and infrastructure, which include public streets, alleyways, and open spaces that contribute to the Plan Area's urban character. The Impacts and Mitigation section analyzes whether implementation of the Plan's proposed *Planning Code* amendments, related land use policies, street network changes, and open space improvements would disrupt or physically divide the neighborhood or conflict with the *General Plan* or with other plans, policies or programs adopted for the purpose of mitigating adverse environmental impacts.

IV.A.2 Environmental Setting

Plan Area Boundaries and Location

The Plan Area is located within the heart of the city's South of Market (SoMa) area. Its boundaries extend from Second Street on the east to Sixth Street on the west, from Townsend Street on the south, and along an irregular northern border that generally jogs along Folsom, Howard, and Stevenson Streets to its northernmost point at Stevenson and Mission Streets. As illustrated on Figure II-1, Central SoMa Plan Area Boundaries, in Chapter II, Project Description, the Plan encompasses an area of approximately 230 acres comprising 17 full and partial city blocks and the following intersecting public rights-of-way: Mission, Howard, Folsom, Harrison, Bryant, Brannan, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Streets. The Plan Area also includes a segment of the 1.7-mile alignment of the Central Subway along Fourth Street that when operational in 2019 will provide transit service from Bayshore to Chinatown. Two stations, at Fourth and Brannan Streets and Fourth and Folsom Streets, are within Plan Area boundaries.

The SoMa Street Grid

San Francisco's urban form traces its origins to a survey and map of the village of Yerba Buena drawn by sailor and surveyor Jean-Jacques Vioget in 1839. Vioget based the layout and dimension of city blocks and streets on the *vara*, a Spanish unit of measurement that corresponds to roughly 33 inches. The city's first blocks originated around Portsmouth Square, a product of Vioget's "50-Vara survey," resulting in blocks measuring 150 vara by 100 vara (412 feet six inches by 275 feet), with square corner lots often measuring 50 vara by 50 vara (137 feet six inches on a side). The original streets around Portsmouth Square were of irregular width, though the city eventually settled on a 25 vara standard street width (68 feet nine inches) for most north-of-Market streets. In 1847, the town, now named San Francisco, hired civil engineer and surveyor Jasper

O'Farrell, who laid out Market Street in its characteristic northeast-to-southwest orientation to connect the settlement at Yerba Buena Cove to Mission Dolores.⁶² O'Farrell expanded the street grid to the south of Market Street, including the Plan Area, using a "100 Vara survey," that resulted in blocks measuring 825 feet by 550 feet (300 vara by 200 vara), about four times larger, and oriented at about a 45-degree angle to those to the north of Market Street.

O'Farrell's 100-Vara survey resulted in 30-vara-(82-foot-six-inch-)wide streets running parallel to Market Street, as opposed to the narrower streets north of Market Street. The Plan Area's primary east/west thoroughfares of Mission, Howard, Folsom, Harrison, Bryant, Brannan and Townsend Streets reflect O'Farrell's survey dimensions: each is 82 feet six inches wide. SoMa's 100-Vara survey creates an expansive pattern of large blocks (each roughly 10.5 acres) set between 82-foot-six-inch-wide thoroughfares, in contrast to a more densely aligned pattern of smaller blocks and narrower streets north of Market Street. SoMa's large blocks are interlaced with a network of smaller back streets and alleys that include Jessie, Tehama, Minna, Natoma, Clementina, Shipley, Perry, Welsh, Freelon, and Bluxome Streets in the east/west direction, along with several other, shorter mid-block streets and alleys that run north/south.

SoMa's alleys reduce the scale of large blocks by providing access into their interiors where interior spaces handle back-of-house services off of main thoroughfares. SoMa's alley network has also created a unique pattern of residential enclaves, where historically residential buildings fronted on alleys in close proximity to industrial uses (e.g., factories, foundries, warehouses, etc.) which face main thoroughfares. SoMa's varied block and lot pattern accommodates a variety of building types and spatial configurations on any of its given blocks and contributes to the fine grained mix of land uses in the neighborhood today.

The topography of the Plan Area is relatively flat. Much of the southwestern and central portion of the Plan Area has an elevation of zero feet, SFD.⁶³ Moving northward, elevation increases to between about 20 and 35 feet, SFD, toward Market Street. The high point of the Plan Area is the western slope of Rincon Hill; the elevation here is 50 feet, SFD, at the intersection of Second and Harrison Streets.

The Plan Area's flat topography and regular grid pattern are, in theory, easily walkable, yet South-of-Market's long blocks, wide streets with high traffic volumes, and the elevated I-80 viaduct with multiple freeway on- and off-ramps dividing the neighborhood may discourage pedestrian travel in much of the Plan Area.

Local and regional rail transit is available to the north of the Plan Area via Muni Metro and the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) district's Montgomery and Powell Street stations; the terminus of the Peninsula Joint Powers district's Caltrain station is located at Third and King Street just south of the Plan Area. Beginning in 2019, the Muni Metro Central Subway extension will operate along and beneath Fourth Street. Bus service is provided by SamTrans and Golden Gate Transit north of the Plan Area, and by Muni bus service on various streets within and adjacent to the Plan Area.

⁶² Following San Francisco convention, Market Street and streets parallel to it are considered to run east/west, while the perpendicular numbered streets are considered to run north/south.

⁶³ SFD, or San Francisco City Datum, establishes the City's zero point for surveying purposes at approximately 11.3 feet above the current 1988 North American Vertical Datum. Street elevations on Public Works maps are given in SFD, and this datum is commonly used in mapping and technical reports in the City.

Land Uses and Use Districts

Existing Land Uses

A variety of land uses are located throughout the Plan Area, generally represented in the following categories: retail/entertainment; (non-residential) mixed-use; residential; residential mixed-use; cultural/institutional/educational; visitor; office; medical; production, distribution, and repair (PDR); and open space. The descriptions below present examples of the specific uses that are present within, or in the vicinity of, the Plan Area. Current and projected population and employment figures for the Plan Area are presented in Chapter IV, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures.

Retail/Entertainment, Cultural/Educational/Institutional, and Office Uses

A concentration of higher density office, regional-serving retail (such as the Westfield San Francisco Centre and Target) and cultural/institutional uses (e.g., Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Contemporary Jewish Museum, California Historical Society, Old Mint/San Francisco History Museum, Museum of the African Diaspora, Cartoon Art Museum, Children’s Creativity Museum and forthcoming Mexican Museum) are concentrated on large parcels located generally north of Folsom Street, west of Third Street and east of Fifth Street within or immediately bordering the northern portion of the Plan Area.

Office uses in the Plan Area are generally geared to professional trades, secondary education and media services. Co-working facilities located in the Plan Area include the Sandbox Suites (Second and Bryant Streets) that provides work space and meeting facilities for socially focused enterprises. In the area between Second and Fourth Streets and Folsom and Harrison Streets and between Second and Third Streets south of Harrison Street, the Mixed-Use, Office (MUO) use district and height limits of 85 and 130 feet allow for employment-generating uses at a moderate scale, while the Plan’s southern area, generally south of the elevated Interstate 80 (I-80) freeway and west of South Park, features lower-scaled development primarily for office, PDR, retail, and entertainment uses, as well as several surface parking lots.

The San Francisco Unified School District’s Bessie Carmichael Middle School is located within the Plan Area, on Harrison Street just west of Fourth Street. (The Bessie Carmichael elementary campus is just west of the Plan Area, on Seventh Street.)

Convention and Visitor-Serving Uses

Moscone Convention Center is the largest convention/assembly use in San Francisco, located just north the Plan Area between Third, Fourth, Mission and Folsom Streets. It comprises three main halls: Moscone North and South are underground beneath Yerba Buena Gardens, and a three-level Moscone West exhibition hall across Fourth Street. Moscone Center is currently undergoing expansion. A number of hotels and visitor-serving lodging uses are also in close proximity to Moscone Center.

Residential Use

Residential uses are distributed throughout the Plan Area, although there are concentrations of relatively smaller, older residential buildings in the western part of the Plan Area, as well as surrounding South Park in

the Plan's southeast quadrant. There are also several newer, much larger residential buildings, particularly on Folsom, Brannan, Townsend, and Fifth Streets.

A variety of settlement patterns is discernible in the Plan Area, based on building age and location of lot size. Some of Central SoMa's oldest residential buildings date from the period immediately following the 1906 Earthquake and Fire and are clustered along the Plan Area's western flank, north of Harrison Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets, in enclaves off of the main east/west thoroughfares. The Plan Area's smaller streets and alleys (e.g., primarily Tehama, Clementina, Shipley, and Clara Streets) accommodate two-, three- and four-story wood-frame walk-up apartment buildings often intermixed with garages and light industrial buildings. Residential hotels are another common residential typology in the South of Market and are most common in the northwestern section of the Plan Area, particularly in proximity to Mission and Howard Streets along Sixth Street as well as on corner locations primarily south of Harrison Street.

A large amount of residential development has occurred in and near the Plan Area in recent years. In 2015, for example, just over half of the approximately 3,000 new housing units added in San Francisco were in SoMa⁶⁴ Among the newer, larger Plan Area residential projects are the Mosso (two buildings on Fifth Street between Folsom and Tehama Streets; approximately 360 units); 298 units at The Palms (555 Fourth Street; 2006); 117 units in the development known as Blu, at 631 Folsom Street (2009); 114 units under construction at 923 Folsom Street; and 200 units at 855 Folsom Street (Yerba Buena Lofts; 2001).

Production, Distribution, and Repair (PDR) Uses

Production, Distribution, and Repair (PDR) uses are, generally, light industrial land uses in nature. The Planning Commission, by resolution in 2004, grouped PDR uses into 11 broad categories: Publishing, Audio/Visual, Arts, Fashion, Transport, Food/Event, Interior Design, Construction, Equipment, Motor Vehicles and Other.⁶⁵ The Plan Area includes several clusters of PDR uses, where similar types of businesses located near each other take advantage of factors such as building characteristics, proximity to transportation and/or customer base, and access to a particular labor pool. Locating in proximity to one another also allows like businesses to share information and resources. Auto repair, including both mechanical and body repair, is the predominant PDR business cluster in the Plan. Other groupings include music production (studios and rehearsal space), furniture repair, wholesaling, printing and publication, construction, and a relatively recent (re-)arrival to the area, food and beverage production, notably wine and beer. The Plan Area is also home to the San Francisco Flower Mart, the city's wholesale flower terminal, which is located at Sixth and Brannan Streets. Additional supporting businesses are located proximate to the Flower Mart. While buildings historically built for PDR uses still exist in the Plan Area, many of these buildings are now less occupied by "traditional" PDR businesses and are increasingly occupied by "new" technology users that may include PDR functions.

Parks and Open Spaces

Public open spaces and facilities within and proximate to the Plan Area are limited. These include South Park, located in the southeast portion of the Plan Area, Yerba Buena Gardens, located just north of the Plan Area,

⁶⁴ San Francisco Planning Department, *2015 San Francisco Housing Inventory*, March 2015. Available at: http://default.sfplanning.org/publications_reports/2015_Housing_Inventory_Final_Web.pdf, accessed August 31, 2016.

⁶⁵ Appendix D of Planning Commission Resolution No. 16727, adopted February 12, 2004.

and Victoria Manalo Draves Park and the Gene Friend Recreation Center South Park, both located just west of the Plan Area. South Park is the only Recreation and Park Department property within the Plan Area. The uneven distribution of these community assets leaves portions of the area underserved with open space.

Additional description of the visual character, streetscape pattern, and built environment is included in Section IV.B, Aesthetics.

Parcel Configurations

In addition to the street grid and existing land uses, another key factor in the character of the Plan Area is the myriad of relatively small parcels, particularly in the area west of Fourth Street and south of Folsom Street. While much of the newer development in the Plan Area has occurred on large parcels—either single large lots or combinations of smaller lots—many of the smaller parcels are occupied by older, smaller-scale buildings. The age and size of these buildings limits their utility for certain uses. Many of the smaller, older buildings are occupied by PDR uses that are able to use the smaller spaces, as well as to afford the generally lower rents that these older, less popular buildings command. As shown in **Figure IV.A-1, Existing Land Uses in Plan Area**, PDR uses tend to cluster, in part, on the Plan Area’s smaller parcels.

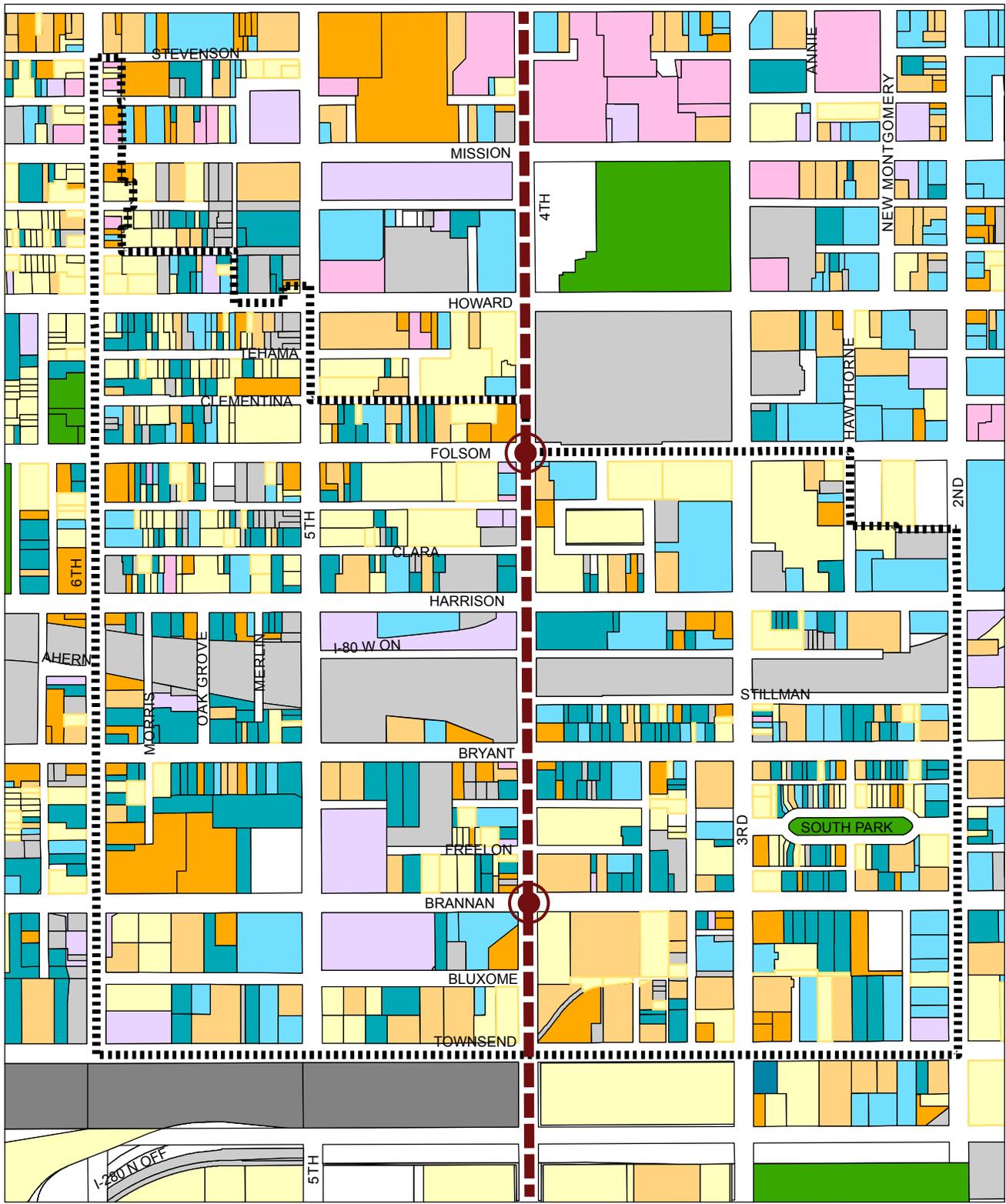
The other predominant land use found on many smaller parcels is residential. Residential uses on the smaller mid-block streets tend to be two- to four-story walkup buildings that are smaller than many of the contemporary multi-family residential buildings in the Plan Area. In recent years, however, there has been a substantial amount of new residential construction on these smaller streets. These newer buildings, which have typically replaced light industrial buildings and parking lots, may occupy larger lots and are generally built to the height limit, meaning that they are typically four and five stories in height. As noted above, newer residential buildings on the larger, principal streets of the Plan Area⁶⁶ tend to be much larger in scale, having been developed on large parcels, sometimes including several consolidated lots.

Existing Planning Code Use Districts

The existing use districts (see Figure II-2 in Chapter II, Project Description) that govern most of the Plan Area are Mixed Use-Residential (MUR; north of Harrison Street only), MUO, Western SoMa Mixed Use-Office (WS-MUO), Service/Light Industrial District (SLI), and Western SoMa Service, Arts, Light Industrial District (WS-SALI).⁶⁷ Portions of two blocks north of Harrison Street are in Western SoMa Mixed Use-General (WS-MUG) use districts, and the Sixth Street frontage north of Folsom Street is in a Neighborhood Commercial-Transit (NCT) use district. Other use districts governing small areas include Residential Enclave

⁶⁶ Mission, Howard, Folsom, Harrison, Bryant, Brannan and Townsend Streets, and the numbered north/south streets.

⁶⁷ Land within the Plan Area currently zoned WS-SALI was primarily zoned SLI prior to adoption of the Western SoMa Plan in April 2013. The SLI and WS-SALI districts are not dissimilar; the primary differences are that the WS-SALI district allows nighttime entertainment use and prohibits all residential and office use (other than in a small Special Use District on the south side of Bryant Street, opposite the Hall of Justice). The SLI district on the other hand prohibits nighttime entertainment, conditionally permits affordable housing and office use in certain historic buildings or certain types of offices, such as those that accommodate design professionals.



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| Plan Area | Cultural, Institutional, Educational | Mixed Uses(Without Residential) | Residential |
| Subway | Medical | Mixed Uses (with Residential) | Retail, Entertainment |
| NORTH | Office (Management, Information and Professional Services) | Open Space | Right of Way |
| | Missing Data | Production, Distribution and Repair | Vacant |
| | | | Hotel, Visitor Services |

SOURCE: San Francisco Planning Department

Case No. 2011.1356E: Central SoMa Plan
Figure IV.A-1
 Existing Land Uses in Plan Area

District (RED), Downtown Commercial-Office (C-3-O),⁶⁸ Service/Secondary Office (SSO), South Park District (SPD),⁶⁹ Light Industrial (M-1), and Public (P). The most restrictive of the primary use districts are the SLI district (which does not allow housing, other than one hundred percent affordable housing, group housing, and single-room occupancy dwelling units, and does not allow most office use, other than in landmark buildings or contributory buildings in Historic Districts with Conditional Use authorization), and WS-SALI, which does not permit housing or offices. The SLI and WS-SALI use districts are intended to encourage PDR uses. These use restrictions have contributed to this area's low-scale (one- to two-story), low-density light industrial character.

In addition to the above noted land uses and districts, the South of Market Area Youth and Family Special Use District (SUD) overlays part of the western portion of the Plan Area (see Figure II-2, Existing Plan Area Use Districts), generally bounded by Howard, Fourth, and Harrison Streets, and extending to the west outside of the Plan Area to just beyond Seventh Street. This SUD was adopted as part of the planning for the Eastern Neighborhoods Area Plans and Rezoning project in 2008. It is intended to expand the provision of affordable housing, and to that end allows for dedication of land to the City and County of San Francisco (the City) by a developer, for use as a site for affordable housing, in lieu of the developer paying a fee or providing affordable housing. The SoMa Youth and Family SUD also requires Conditional Use authorization for several uses, including bars and liquor stores, restaurants, religious facilities, various entertainment uses, and parking. The Plan proposes no change to the SoMa Youth and Family Zone SUD.

IV.A.3 Regulatory Setting

See Chapter III, Plans and Policies, for information regarding applicable *General Plan* goals, policies, and objectives; and applicable area plans. See Chapter II, Project Description, for more information regarding current zoning and existing height and bulk classifications in the Plan Area.

IV.A.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Significance Criteria

For purposes of this EIR, implementation of the proposed project would have a significant effect on land use if it would:

- Physically divide an established community; or
- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

⁶⁸ The Plan proposes no change to this use district on the parcel occupied by the mid-rise SoMa Square Apartments at Third and Folsom Streets.

⁶⁹ The Plan proposes no change to the SPD district, which surrounds South Park.

Approach to Analysis

Central SoMa Plan

The Plan is a regulatory program and, if adopted, would result in new planning policies and controls for land use to accommodate additional jobs and housing. The Plan itself would not result in direct physical changes to existing land uses. Indirect effects could result as specific development projects allowed under the Plan could replace existing residences and businesses, or increase space for residences or businesses in the Plan Area. Street network changes and open space improvements could result in direct physical effects. The following analysis for land use evaluates the subsequent development anticipated in the Plan Area, as compared to existing conditions.

Regarding the second significance criterion analyzed below, a conflict between a proposed project, including potential *General Plan* amendment(s), and a *General Plan* policy does not necessarily indicate a significant effect on the environment under CEQA. The staff report for the Planning Commission will analyze the Plan's consistency with *General Plan* policies. Additionally, Chapter III, Plans and Policies, provides a thorough description of the plans and policies relevant to the Plan Area. To the extent that development under the Plan, including proposed street network changes and open space improvements, would result in physical environmental impacts that implicate a potential policy inconsistency, those impacts are analyzed in the applicable topic section of this EIR and in the Initial Study (see Appendix B). It is noted that a proposed project's inconsistency with a plan that is applicable to the project does not, in itself, result in an adverse physical effect on the environment. However, such an inconsistency may potentially, at least in some cases, be indicative of an adverse physical effect. The determination of a significant impact – which, by definition, must involve a physical change – is separate from the legal determination of plan consistency.

Potential effects regarding the character of the Plan Area and vicinity are addressed in this EIR only to the degree that such effects relate to physical environmental changes. Such changes are addressed in Section IV.B, Aesthetics, and Section IV.C, Cultural Resources. Other effects of the Plan in relation to land use character are, in general, social or economic effects. Refer to Chapter V, Other CEQA Considerations, for further information about how social and economic effects are addressed by CEQA.

Street Network Changes

The analysis also addresses impacts related to proposed street network changes at a project level, as a sufficient level of detail has been developed to allow for analysis of the potential environmental effects of these changes. Impacts related to or associated with operational changes are considered in the analyses of air quality, noise, and transportation. The proposed street network changes would involve no changes in land use, as the alteration of lane configurations, widening of sidewalks, and addition of bicycle lanes and cycle tracks, transit-only lanes, and mid-block pedestrian crossings would have no bearing on either the permitted uses or the allowable building heights.

Open Space Improvements

The analysis also includes consideration of the potential land use impacts of the proposed open space improvements described in Chapter II, Project Description, both within and outside of the Plan Area.

Impact Evaluation

Physically Divide an Established Community

Impact LU-1: Development under the Plan, and proposed open space improvements and street network changes would not physically divide an established community. (Less than Significant)

The Plan is a regulatory program, not a physical development project or set of projects (with the exception of the street network changes and open space improvements, discussed below), and therefore any impacts related to the physical division of an established community would be secondary effects, related to subsequent development enabled by the Plan.

Development under the Plan

Subsequent development under the Plan would not be expected to divide an established community. Although the elevated I-80 freeway currently divides the Plan Area between Harrison and Bryant Streets, the proposed rezoning within the Plan Area would not create any new physical barriers within the Plan Area. There are no major planned roadways, such as freeways, that would divide the Plan Area or isolate individual neighborhoods within it.

The Plan's proposed amendments to use districts and zoning controls would allow for a diversity of land uses throughout the Plan Area and would not alter the physical layout of the Plan Area such that movement within or across the Plan Area would be obstructed. The Plan's proposed zoning changes, which would allow more flexibility of uses generally, and more office development specifically, may be expected to result in changes in land use patterns as subsequent development projects are implemented pursuant to the Plan. However, these changes would not result in physical barriers to established communities either within or surrounding the Plan Area. On the contrary, implementation of the Plan would result in development within established lot boundaries, in most cases at a scale and density greater than already permitted. Additionally, the Plan's requirements that larger developments include mid-block alleys and publicly-accessible open space could improve connectivity between land uses and neighborhoods within the Plan Area. Proposed open space improvements could function as green connections linking land uses to open spaces and to each other. For the reasons stated above, the Plan would have no impact related to the division of an established community.

Street Network Changes

The proposed street network changes would not involve any changes in land use and would not alter either the permitted uses or the allowable building heights. The proposed street network changes, including improvements to mid-block alleys and mid-block crosswalks, could decrease existing physical barriers by reducing the length of many of the Plan Area block faces and thereby facilitating pedestrian movement through the neighborhood. Furthermore, the substitution of traffic lanes with transit-only lanes and bicycle lanes/cycle tracks, widening of sidewalks, installation of mid-block crosswalks, and reopening of closed crosswalks would remove barriers to circulation within the neighborhood, especially for non-automobile modes, which would be beneficial for neighborhood connectivity. Consequently, no adverse impact related to the division of an established community would result from implementing the street network changes. The impact would be *less than significant*.

Open Space Improvements

Proposed open space improvements, both within and outside of the Plan Area, would tend to link, rather than divide, neighborhoods and communities. New and improved parks and open spaces would also form neighborhood common spaces and would help to foster a sense of place. New parks and open spaces would not create physical barriers that could physically divide a community. The proposed open space improvements would therefore have *no impact* related to the division of an established community

Because the Plan, proposed street network changes and open space improvements would not physically divide an established community, there would be *no impact*, either directly or indirectly associated with this criterion.

Mitigation: None required.

Conflict with Environmental Plans and Policies

Impact LU-2: Development under the Plan, including proposed open space improvements and street network changes, would conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the General Plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. (Significant and Unavoidable with Mitigation)

San Francisco General Plan

As discussed in detail in Chapter III, Plans and Policies, the proposed Plan would not appear to conflict substantially with the great majority of policies in the *General Plan* that were adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. This includes such policies contained in the Air Quality Element, Housing Element, Urban Design Element, Recreation and Open Space Element of the *General Plan*. Consistency with General Plan policies is also discussed in the impact discussions in other sections of Chapter IV.

Also as discussed in Chapter III, implementation of the Plan could result in siting sensitive receptors in close proximity to noise sources by changing zoning to allow uses that may generate high noise levels, such as PDR and Places of Entertainment, in proximity to new and existing residences. This may conflict with the *General Plan's* Environmental Protection Element, Policy 11.1: Discourage new uses in areas in which the noise level exceeds the noise compatibility guidelines for that use. However, as recounted in Chapter III and discussed in detail in Section IV.E, Noise and Vibration (Impact NO-1), this EIR concludes that compliance with the *San Francisco Building Code*, *San Francisco Green Building Code*, and Regulation of Noise from Places of Entertainment ordinance would reduce the potential for such conflicts, and that specified mitigation measures identified in this EIR (Mitigation Measure NO-1b, Siting of Noise-Generating Uses) would reduce noise impacts to less than significant. Therefore, with mitigation measures identified in this EIR, no substantial conflict with this *General Plan* policy is expected.

Chapter III and Section IV.E, Noise and Vibration, also state that Plan implementation could result in increased traffic noise levels, which could conflict with the *General Plan's* Environmental Protection Element

Policy 9.6: Discourage changes in streets which will result in greater traffic noise in noise-sensitive areas. This impact relates specifically to the potential for implementation of the Plan to result in increased traffic noise levels on Howard Street under the two-way option for Howard and Folsom Streets. This impact could be substantially reduced by implementation of Mitigation Measure M-NO-1a, Transportation Demand Management (TDM), for new development projects, but it is uncertain the degree to which this mitigation measure could reduce traffic noise to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable in Section IV.E and would also result in a *significant and unavoidable* conflict with this General Plan policy related to transportation noise.

San Francisco Planning Code

As explained in Chapter II, Project Description, implementation of the proposed Plan would involve amending the City's *Planning Code*, including the Zoning Maps, to change both the use districts and the height and bulk districts applicable to portions of the Plan Area. Because the *Planning Code* use districts and height and bulk districts are not explicitly "adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect," the Plan's proposed rezoning, in itself, would not result in a significant impact. Physical effects that would result from subsequent development pursuant to the Plan and its proposed rezoning are analyzed as secondary effects throughout this EIR.

Plan Bay Area

As set forth in Chapter II, the Plan includes eight goals, the first of which is, "Increase the capacity for jobs and housing." This goal is driven by the need to meet the growth forecasts identified for San Francisco in *Plan Bay Area*, the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy, prepared by the Association of Bay Area Governments and Metropolitan Transportation Commission. *Plan Bay Area* estimates that approximately 92,000 additional housing units and 191,000 additional jobs would be added in San Francisco by 2040, which would equate to roughly 15 percent of the total growth anticipated in the region. *Plan Bay Area* sets out a plan to meet most of the region's growth in Priority Development Areas, or PDAs, as identified by local governments. Much of the eastern third of San Francisco is within various PDAs; the Plan Area is contained within the Eastern Neighborhoods PDA,⁷⁰ which also includes Rincon Hill, Western SoMa, the Mission District, Showplace Square and Potrero Hill, and the Central Waterfront. The Plan's proposed increase in development capacity is therefore consistent with *Plan Bay Area's* policies aimed at concentrating future growth in PDAs, the overall purpose of which is to reduce dependence on the automobile and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Other Plans and Policies

As discussed in Chapter III, Plans and Policies, the proposed Plan would not substantially conflict with policies contained in the City's *Climate Action Plan*, *Bicycle Plan*, *Better Streets Plan*, or *Transit First Policy* that were adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. As discussed in Section IV.F, Air Quality, the proposed Plan would be consistent with the *Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan*, which is the regional air quality plan for the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin.

⁷⁰ A small portion of the Plan Area is also within the Van Ness-Geary PDA.

Other Regulations

Development pursuant to the Plan, as well as the street network changes and open space improvements, would also be required to conform to or comply with specific City, State, and federal code requirements adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. These include:

- *California Public Resources Code* provisions concerning protection and treatment of Tribal Cultural Resources, Human Remains, and Paleontological Resources, as discussed in Section IV.C, Cultural and Paleontological Resources;
- *Planning Code* provisions concerning off-street parking and loading and, assuming they are enacted by the Board of Supervisors in 2016, concerning transportation demand management, as discussed in Section IV.D, Transportation and Circulation;
- Provisions of the *Administrative Code*, *Building Code*, *Planning Code*, and *Police Code* adopted in 2015 (Ordinance 70-15), including Chapter 116 of the *Administrative Code*, Compatibility and Protection for Residential Uses and Places of Entertainment, to minimize land use conflicts between residential uses and Places of Entertainment and also minimize adverse economic effects on Places of Entertainment, as discussed in Section IV.E, Noise and Vibration;
- The City's Noise Ordinance, which regulates construction noise and new noise sources;
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District regulations and permit requirements for new stationary sources of emissions such as diesel emergency generators and fire pumps and other sources of toxic air contaminants, as discussed in Section IV.F, Air Quality;
- Article 38 of the City's *Health Code*, which requires that new residential construction projects located in areas of poor air quality install enhanced ventilation to protect residents from the respiratory, heart, and other health effects of living in an area with poor air quality;
- Section 295 of the *Planning Code*, which limits shadow on City parks, as discussed in Section IV.H, Shadow;
- The City's Stormwater Management Ordinance and associated Stormwater Management Requirements and Design Guidelines and City *Public Works Code* and *Health Code* provisions concerning recycled and non-potable water use, discharges of dewatered groundwater, and construction site runoff, as well as the City's Floodplain Management requirements specified in the *Administrative Code*, as discussed in Section IV.I, Hydrology;
- Provisions of the *San Francisco Building Code* and *San Francisco Green Building Code*, which incorporate relevant *California Building Code* and *California Green Building Standards Code*, concerning water and energy conservation, as discussed in Section IV.I, Hydrology, and in Initial Study Section D.11, *Utilities and Service Systems*, and Section D.17, Mineral and Energy Resources (Appendix B);
- Various regulations identified in the City's *Strategies to Address Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHGs) in San Francisco*, as discussed in Section D.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, of the Initial Study (Appendix B);
- The federal and California Endangered Species Acts concerning special-status species, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and *California Fish and Game Code* (Sections 3503, 3503.5) concerning protection of birds, *Planning Code* Section 139 concerning bird-safe building design, and the City's Urban Forestry Ordinance (Chapter 16 of the City *Public Works Code*) concerning protection of landmark, significant, and street trees, as discussed in Section D.13, Biological Resources, of the Initial Study (Appendix B);

- The *San Francisco Building Code*, which incorporates the *California Building Code*, concerning seismic safety, as discussed in Section D.14, Geology and Soils, of the Initial Study (Appendix B); and
- Articles 21, 21A, and 22 of the *City Health Code*, as well as *California Health and Safety Code* and *California Code of Regulations* provisions, concerning handling of hazardous materials and wastes, and *City Building Code* and *Fire Code* provisions concerning fire and life safety, as discussed in Section D.16, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of the Initial Study (Appendix B).

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, the Plan, including the proposed street network changes, could conflict with the *General Plan's* Environmental Protection Element policies discussed above. Section IV.E, Noise and Vibration, concludes that noise from noise-generating uses could be reduced to a less-than-significant level with mitigation measures identified in that section, but the impact related to increased traffic noise is significant and may be unavoidable. Therefore, the conflict with *General Plan* Policy 9.6 would also be *significant and unavoidable*.

Mitigation: Implement **Mitigation Measures NO-1a, Transportation Demand Management, and Mitigation Measure NO-1b, Siting of Noise-Generating Uses**, for new development projects.

Significance after Mitigation: Implementation of Mitigation Measure M-NO-1b would reduce noise from noise generating uses to less-than-significant levels. However, while implementation of Mitigation Measure NO-1a would reduce traffic noise on Howard Street under the two-way option for Howard and Folsom Streets, it may not be sufficient to reduce Impact NO-1 to less than significant. Therefore, the potential for a significant conflict with the *General Plan* policy related to transportation noise also remains *significant and unavoidable*.

IV.A.5 Cumulative Impacts

The Plan Area and neighborhoods citywide serve as the geographical context for cumulative impact analysis for land use. In addition to the growth and land use changes associated with development pursuant to the Plan, other development unrelated to the Plan could occur throughout the Plan Area and the surrounding vicinity. As noted in Chapter II, Project Description, *Plan Bay Area*, the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy, identifies the city's growth needs and projects approximately 92,000 additional housing units and 191,000 additional jobs for San Francisco by 2040, compared to existing conditions, and represents roughly 15 percent of the region's total growth.⁷¹ These figures also represent a 25 percent increase in the number of housing units and a 34 percent increase in employment within San Francisco as compared to existing conditions. The Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, joint preparers of *Plan Bay Area*, expect this growth to be planned largely in high-density, transit-served Priority Development Areas, or PDAs, such as the Plan Area.

⁷¹ *Plan Bay Area* was necessitated by the adoption of Senate Bill 375, which required regions to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (or Alternative Planning Strategy) to reduce GHGs by linking growth to transit, resulted in higher jobs and housing growth projections.

The cumulative scenario for land use includes ongoing land use controls of the adjacent portions of the East and Western SoMa Plans not modified by the proposed Plan, Transit Center District Plan, and Rincon Hill Plan, the approved Moscone Center Expansion Project, the approved 706 Mission Street project (under construction), the approved 5M Project, other recently approved and proposed projects within the Plan Area, such as 725 Harrison Street, 598 Brannan Street, and other cumulative projects which are described in Chapter IV, Overview.

Impact C-LU-1: Development under the Plan, including the proposed open space improvements and street network changes, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the vicinity, would contribute considerably to a significant cumulative land use impact. (Significant and Unavoidable with Mitigation)

In general, the Plan, and particularly the proposed street network changes and open space improvements, would improve linkages within the Plan Area and serve to enhance the physical connection between and through various parts of the Plan Area. The open space improvements would, as well, help foster a sense of neighborhood cohesion. The adjacent area plans would make comparable public realm improvements contributing to improved connectivity within and between neighborhoods. None of the individual projects in the Plan Area noted above is expected to preclude or interfere with proposed public realm improvements, and many would contribute positively to pedestrian connections, new infrastructure, and/or include open space enhancements. Therefore, the Plan would not combine with these projects and plans such that an existing community would be divided. Other large proposed projects outside of and distant from the Plan Area, such as the Mission Rock (Seawall Lot 337/Pier 48) project and buildout of the Mission Bay area, including the approved Golden State Warriors event center, and University of California, San Francisco, *Long-Range Development Plan*, would likewise not combine with the proposed Plan to result in significant cumulative impacts related to dividing established communities.

As discussed under **Impact LU-2**, with mitigation, the Plan could result in a significant unavoidable impact with respect to increased traffic noise, which would conflict with a General Plan policy adopted for the purpose of mitigating or avoiding an environmental effect. Cumulative traffic noise levels under 2040 conditions that take into account cumulative traffic levels were evaluated, as described in Section IV.E, Noise and Vibration. As described in that section, the Plan, including both the one-way and two-way operation of Folsom and Howard Streets would make a considerable contribution to cumulative traffic noise levels and no additional mitigation measures, beyond **M-NO-1a, Transportation Demand Management (TDM)**, for new development projects, has been identified to reduce this impact to less than significant. Therefore, the project's contribution to cumulative traffic noise impacts would remain *significant and unavoidable*, as would the potential for Plan to conflict with the *General Plan* policy related to transportation noise.