Key Questions and Answers Related to the Eastern Neighborhoods Program

Will the zoning on my property change?

Zoning is proposed to change on some parcels within the four neighborhoods. To determine if a zoning change is proposed for your property, locate your property on the Existing Zoning and Proposed Zoning Maps. These maps can be found on our website at: **http://en-hearings.sfplanning.org** (scroll down to the link entitled "Proposed Area Plans, Zoning and Heights Limits Maps")

What changes are proposed for properties currently zoned Residential (RH, RM, RED)?

Generally, the proposal is to leave these existing exclusively residential zones unchanged. An exception to this is the area generally between South Van Ness Avenue and Guerrero Street, where the current residential zoning is proposed to be changed to a new "Residential Transit-Oriented" (RTO) designation. This new zoning category continues to require exclusively residential uses, except that it also allows small retail on corner parcels. In recognition of the good transit service in this area, the RTO zoning also removes the minimum parking requirements and relaxes density controls.

What changes are proposed for properties currently zoned Industrial (M-1, M-2, C-M)?

Areas currently zoned industrial will generally be rezoned to one of following designations:

- ***Production, Distribution and Repair Zones (PDR):*** In these zones, everything that is permitted today would continue to be permitted, except new residential development, which would be prohibited, and retail stores and offices, which would be limited in size.
- ***Urban Mixed-Use Zones (UMU):*** These zones are designed to promote a mix of different types of activities. The rules applying to these new urban mixed-use zones are generally the same as the above PDR zones, however new residential development would also be permitted.

In both zones all existing offices, retail stores and residences which received a permit at the time they were built or established would be considered legal and allowed to remain indefinitely. For example, if a tenant of an office space were to move out, a similar office tenant would be able to move in to that space. In other words, all legal pre-existing offices, stores and residences are "grandfathered" with respect to the new zoning.

What changes are proposed for properties currently zoned Neighborhood Commercial (NC)?

The neighborhood commercial zones will be rezoned to Neighborhood Commercial – Transit (NCT) districts, which differ from the old designations (NC) generally in that they remove parking minimums and relax density controls.

What changes are proposed for properties in South of Market zoning districts?

The South of Market currently contains a series of specialized zoning districts intended to promote a mixture of activities. Proposed zoning controls update the existing zoning to encourage a greater mixture of residential, office and PDR activities, while introducing increased open space requirements and new design guidelines.

How much new housing and affordable housing will the Plans produce?

Under the proposed Plans, the Planning Department projects that over the next 20 years a total of 7,500 – 10,000 new housing units will be built in the four neighborhoods. Based on the affordable housing rules in the proposed new zoning, we expect that the majority of units built would be "market rate," while 20-30 percent of the units produced would be below market rate, affordable to a range of families and individuals earning from 30-150% of city's median income. (For context, the median income for a single individual in San Francisco is about $58,000 per year, while for a family of four it is about $83,000 per year. It requires an annual income of at least 200% of the median income to afford to buy a market rate priced house or condominium in San Francisco.)

Does the Plan affect building height limits?

Height limits are proposed to change on some parcels within the four neighborhoods. To determine if a height limit change is proposed for your property, locate your property on the Existing Zoning and Proposed Zoning Maps found on our website: **http://en-hearings.sfplanning.org** (scroll down to the link entitled "Proposed Area Plans, Zoning and Heights Limits Maps.") In general, height limits are not proposed to increase by more than two stories.

How does the Plan affect parking requirements?

Currently, parking is required, in varying amounts, for most new residential or commercial development. The zoning proposal would remove minimum parking requirements, and instead replace them with a maximum number of spaces allowed. These maximums vary by neighborhood. However, parking requirements are not proposed to change in areas whose zoning remains RH or RM.

What are "Public Benefits" and how will they work in the Eastern Neighborhoods?

The Eastern Neighborhoods Plans propose to provide a full array of public benefits to ensure the development of "complete neighborhoods," including open space, improved public transit, transportation, streetscape improvements, community facilities, and affordable housing. To help fund these community improvements the Plans propose an impact fee on new residential and commercial development as well as identifying other funding sources.

What outreach has been conducted?

The Planning Department has carried out an extensive outreach program over several years including mailed notices, workshops in each neighborhood, hundreds of smaller meetings with community groups and individuals, and over 20 Planning Commission hearings. Mailings have been sent twice during the outreach process to all property owners and tenants within the four plan areas.

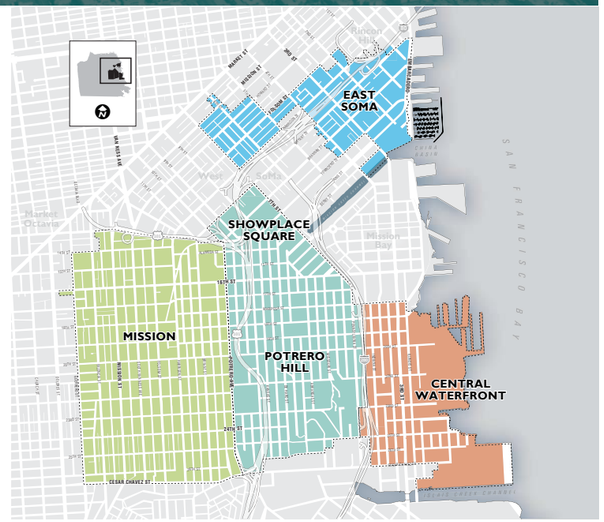
What is the Eastern Neighborhoods Program?

The Mission, Central Waterfront, East South of Market and Showplace Square/Potrero Hill neighborhoods are home to much of the city's industrially-zoned land. For the last 10 to 15 years, these neighborhoods have been changing and have seen growing land use conflicts, where residential and office development has begun to compete with industrial uses. How should we plan for the future of these areas? Should we allow housing and offices to gradually predominate or should we seek to create a balance of some sort? Does the City need to keep a place for "production, distribution and repair" businesses, as well as the arts? How much space should we provide for "high-tech" industries? How much new housing should be made "affordable?" How can necessary improvements to neighborhood parks and transit be funded? Resolving these difficult questions – with an emphasis on balance – is at the heart of the Eastern Neighborhoods Program.

Based on several years of community input and technical analysis, the Eastern Neighborhoods Program calls for transitioning about half of the existing industrial areas in these four neighborhoods to mixed use zones that encourage new housing. The other remaining half would be reserved for "Production, Distribution and Repair" districts, where a wide variety of functions such as Muni vehicle yards, caterers, and performance spaces can continue to thrive.

The Process

The Eastern Neighborhoods community planning process began in 2001 with the goal of developing new zoning controls for the industrial portions of these neighborhoods. A series of workshops were conducted in each area where stakeholders articulated goals for their neighborhood, considered how new land use regulations (zoning) might promote these goals, and created several rezoning options representing variations on the amount of industrial land to retain for employment and business activity.



In February 2004, the Planning Commission established interim policies for East SoMa, the Mission, and Showplace Square/Potrero Hill to be in effect until permanent zoning is established.

Starting in 2005, the community planning process expanded to address other issues critical to these communities including affordable housing, transportation, parks and open space, urban design and community facilities. The Planning Department began working with the neighborhood stakeholders to create Area Plans for each neighborhood to articulate a vision for the future. Since then, the Planning Department has conducted an extensive outreach program, including several large workshops in each of the neighborhoods, hundreds of smaller meetings and discussions with community groups and individuals, over 15 planning commission hearings, office hours in the neighborhoods, surveys and focus groups with owners of PDR businesses, and a citywide summit on industrial land.

Draft Eastern Neighborhood Area Plans were released in December 2007 for public comment. In April 2008, the Planning Commission initiated the adoption process and held several hearings throughout the spring and summer. On August 7, 2008 the Planning Commission adopted the Area Plans and new zoning code for the Eastern Neighborhoods. Hearings at the Board of Supervisors will begin in September 2008.

Key Components of the Community Planning Process

1. Area Plans - Building Complete Neighborhoods

In response to the goals and ongoing community input, an Area Plan was created for each neighborhood. Area Plans become a part of the city's General Plan and guide the long-term development of an area, responding to its unique characteristics by addressing issues around housing, jobs, transportation, parks and other neighborhood elements that contribute to creating complete neighborhoods.

The Plans generally contain the following sections: 1) Land Use; 2) Housing; 3) Built Form; 4) Transportation; 5) Streets and Open Space; 6) Economic Development; 7) Community Facilities and 8) Historic Resources.

Each Area Plan articulates a holistic vision for a neighborhood, by promoting areas that are transit, bicycle and pedestrian friendly, by strengthening and encouraging vibrant neighborhood-serving commercial areas; by providing and maintaining community facilities and open space to ensure neighborhood livability and by increasing both the supply and variety of housing for residents, with emphasis on affordable housing.

2. Zoning – Balancing the Use of Land

Zoning controls are the primary way that the city regulates the use of land. (It is zoning, for example, that allows tall buildings to be built downtown, while prohibiting them in outlying residential neighborhoods.) To implement the Area Plan policy documents, the Eastern Neighborhoods Program will include new zoning controls that specify what land uses will be permitted in the future.

In general, the Planning Department is proposing three types of zoning in the Eastern Neighborhoods:

1. **Residential Zones:** In areas which are currently zoned for residences only (generally portions of the Mission, Potrero Hill and Dogpatch) the proposal is to leave this zoning intact, with some changes intended to encourage development near strong transit service.

2. **PDR Zones:** The intent of these districts is to ensure space for existing and new PDR businesses and activities. In order to protect PDR, residential development would be prohibited, while office, retail, and institutional uses (schools, hospitals, etc.) would be limited. HOWEVER, residences, offices and retail which currently exist legally in these areas may stay indefinitely.

3. **Mixed-Use Zones:** There are many portions of the Eastern Neighborhoods where it makes sense to promote a mix of different types of activities. The Plans propose a variety of different mixed-use zones, to accommodate unique characteristics of different neighborhoods. These range from neighborhood commercial zones, which call for a mix of residences and retail, to other zones which bring PDR into the mix.

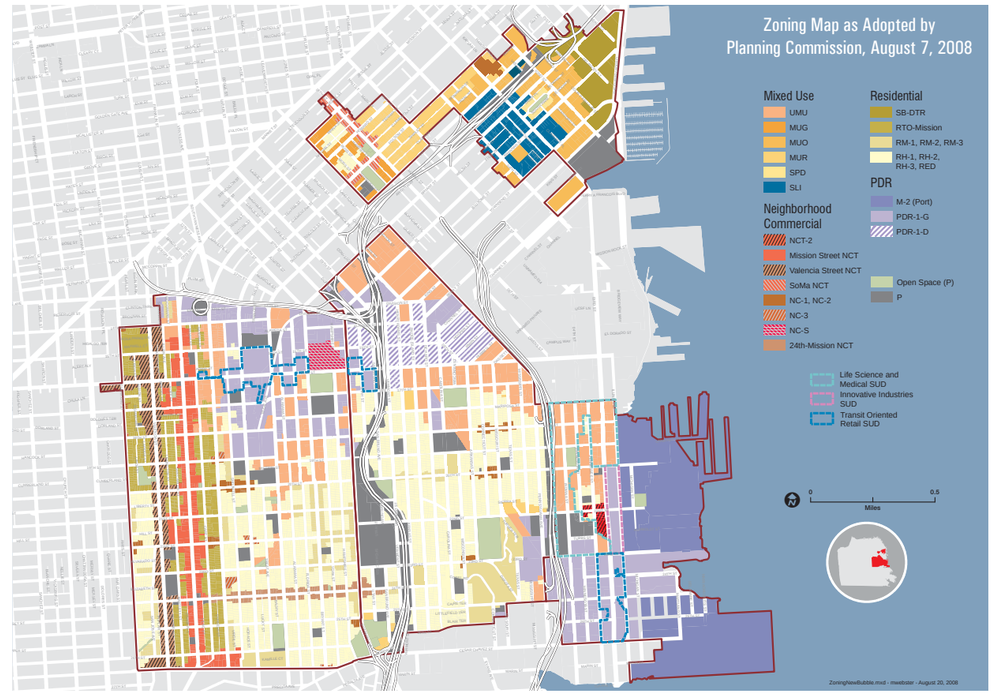
? What is PDR?

Some have been concerned that the city is trying to preserve old-fashioned, "smoke-stack" industry. This is not the case. The Planning Department has adopted the term "Production, Distribution and Repair" or "PDR" to refer to the very wide variety of activities which have traditionally occurred and still occur in our industrially zoned areas. PDR businesses and workers prepare our food and print our books; produce the sounds and images for our movies; take people to the airport; arrange flowers and set theatrical stages; build houses and offices; pick up our mail and garbage. PDR includes arts activities, performance spaces, furniture wholesaling, and design activities.

In general, PDR activities, occurring with little notice and largely in the Eastern Neighborhoods, provide critical support to the drivers of San Francisco's economy, including the tourist industry, high tech industry and financial and legal services, to name a few. PDR businesses also tend to provide stable and well-paying jobs for the 50% of San Francisco residents who do not have a college degree.

Why do PDR businesses need protection through zoning? There are several reasons why San Francisco, like many other large U.S. cities, is considering providing protection for PDR activities through zoning changes in some areas. 1) Competition for land: San Francisco has very limited land available and because current zoning permits almost any activity in an industrial zone, residential and office uses, which can afford to pay far more to buy land, have been gradually displacing PDR activities. 2) Land use conflicts: Some (though certainly not all) PDR businesses use large trucks, stay open late, make noise or emit odors. As residences and offices locate adjacent to these PDR businesses more frequently, conflicts arise, sometimes forcing the PDR businesses to curtail operations or even leave the city.

For details on proposed zoning, go to: ***http://easternneighborhoods.sfplanning.org***



Aside from regulating what sorts of activities can occur on a given parcel of land, the proposed Eastern Neighborhoods rezoning also includes a variety of changes to other key regulations, including the following:

Building Heights: Height limits would be adjusted both up and down in various areas. No heights would be raised above 85 feet.

Parking: In mixed-use areas, parking requirements would be changed generally to remove minimum parking requirements and establish maximum requirements instead.

Open Space: In many areas, the amount of open space required as part of new development would be increased. Additionally, these spaces will be required to be greener and more usable.

Unit Mix: Existing density requirements would be replaced with a bedroom-mix requirement to ensure a diversity of housing units.

3. "Public Benefits" including Affordable Housing

As some portions of the Eastern Neighborhoods transform over time from largely PDR areas to places for people to live and work, a variety of community needs will be created. These include affordable housing, transportation improvements, new and improved open space, as well as a variety of other community facilities.

The Eastern Neighborhoods public benefits program will outline the full list of needs and prioritize them. A complete funding and implementation strategy will ensure that these needs can be addressed over the life of the Plan.

Focus on affordable housing

To house diverse groups of people and address the citywide need for more affordable housing, while ensuring the vitality and character of new neighborhoods, we must provide a variety of housing types at a range of affordability levels. Given San Francisco's high cost of living, affordable housing is a high community priority as part of new housing development in the Eastern Neighborhoods.

The Eastern Neighborhoods proposals would encourage about 7,500 -10,000 new housing units over the next 20 years. The Plans strive to provide new housing that meets the needs of low, moderate and middle income individuals and families. In addition to the City's existing Inclusionary Housing Ordinance which requires that market-rate developments larger than five units provide 15-20 percent of their units at below market rate, the Plans require higher percentages of affordable housing in formerly industrial areas, provide new options to develop land for affordable housing, and provide funding for affordable housing production through new fees.

? What Is Affordable Housing?

"Affordable housing" refers simply to apartments or condominiums that are priced to be affordable to individuals and families earning anywhere from about 30% to about 120% of the city's median income (or about $30,000 to $114,000 for a family of four). Because affordable housing sells or rents for less than the amount required to cover its costs, it must be subsidized. This subsidy can come in the form of government funding, or through requirements that developers designate a certain percentage of new units they build as affordable.