



**TRANSIT CENTER DISTRICT SURVEY  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA  
FINAL**

PREPARED BY  
KELLEY & VERPLANCK  
FOR THE  
SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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KELLEY & VERPLANCK HISTORICAL RESOURCES CONSULTING  
2912 DIAMOND STREET #330, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94131  
415.337.5824 // [www.kvpconsulting.com](http://www.kvpconsulting.com)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. PURPOSE

As part of ongoing long-range planning efforts in the area, the City and County of San Francisco has contracted with Kelley & VerPlanck Historical Resources Consulting (KVP) to survey the Transit Center District Area and prepare a Historic Context Statement that summarizes historical patterns of development, describes existing historic resources, and examines the cumulative impact of several major new projects in the Plan Area.

The Transit Center District Plan, currently being implemented by the San Francisco Planning Department, is an outgrowth of the 1985 Downtown Plan, in particular the latter document's policy of extending the city's urban core south of Market Street. The plan will result in new planning policies and controls for land use, urban form, building design, and improvements to private and publicly owned properties to enhance the public realm.

The Transit Center District Plan covers a section of the eastern South of Market Area (SOMA) bounded by Market, Main, Tehama, and New Montgomery streets. At its center is the 1939 Transbay Terminal, a commuter bus station slated to be demolished and replaced with a new office tower and multi-modal transit center. In addition to the proposed 850' to 1,200' Transit Tower, there are at least seven other privately owned development projects anticipated for the near future in the surrounding area, including an 850' tower at 350 Mission Street, a 1,200' tower at 50 1<sup>st</sup> Street, the 675' Palace Hotel addition at 2 New Montgomery Street, a 600'-800' tower at 177-187 Fremont Street, a 500' tower at 509 Howard Street, a 435' tower at 222 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and an 800' tower on the north side of Howard Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> streets.<sup>1</sup>

This Historic Context Statement is organized into eight sections, beginning with Section I, Introduction. Section II, Methodology, describes how the survey and Historic Context Statement were researched and prepared. Section III, Identification of Existing Surveys, Studies and Reports, discusses in depth prior survey work in the area and all previously identified historic resources. Section IV, Historic Context, describes important historic events and patterns of events that have contributed to the evolution of the survey area. Section V, Definition of Property Types, defines common property types found in the survey area. Section VI, Recommendations, analyzes the impact of proposed projects in the survey area and proposes an expanded Second and New Montgomery Historic District. The report concludes with Section VII, Conclusion, and Section VIII, Bibliography.

### B. DEFINITION OF GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The geographical area under study encompasses the entire Transit Center District Plan Area and several surrounding blocks where new construction is anticipated. At the heart of the survey area is the Transbay Terminal Transit Center, the centerpiece of the Transbay Redevelopment Area. The Transbay Redevelopment Area is bounded roughly by Mission, Main, Folsom, and 2<sup>nd</sup> streets. The survey area itself is somewhat larger, extending east from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (including the first parcel on the west side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street) to Main Street on the east (including the first parcel on the east side of Main), and from the south side of Market Street on the north to the north side of Folsom Street on the south. The southern boundary is irregularly configured to exclude the Redevelopment Agency's Zone One-Transbay Downtown Residential area (**Figure 1**).

The survey area is generally flat, although the grade rises steadily uphill toward the south where it meets Rincon Hill. Prior to the Gold Rush of 1848-49, much of the survey area was submerged, including nearly everything east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street. West of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, most of the survey area was occupied by sand dunes interspersed with narrow wooded valleys. Grading and filling operations gradually erased these natural features in preparation for development. Presently, the entire

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<sup>1</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, "Downtown Proposed or Potential Projects Exceeding Current Height Limit" (San Francisco: unpublished map, 2007).

survey area is thoroughly urbanized. Much of the eastern portion of the survey area has been gradually redeveloped by private capital to the extent that very few pre-1960 resources remain east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Concentrations of historic post-1906 Earthquake masonry and wood-frame commercial, residential, and industrial buildings survive between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets along Market, Mission, Howard, and Tehama streets, as well as areas of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, New Montgomery, and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets. Transit infrastructure and surface parking occupy a large portion of the survey area, particularly southeast of the Transbay Terminal, an area cleared in the 1930s to make way for the Transbay Terminal viaduct.



**Figure 1. Transit Center District Survey Area  
(North is toward the top of the page)  
Source: KVP Consulting**

### ***C. IDENTIFICATION OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS AND PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANCE***

The survey area embodies four important historical contexts, the most important being the reconstruction of the South of Market Area after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. The period of significance for this context is 1906-1929. During this period, the survey area largely assumed its historic physical character of low and mid-rise brick and reinforced-concrete commercial/light industrial loft buildings. Post-disaster building trends led to the exclusion of housing from the survey area, supplanting it with wholesale businesses, light industry, and support functions for offices and retail businesses north of Market Street. The survey area formerly contained a notable maritime-oriented industrial district east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps for San Francisco, California: 1899-1900 and 1913-15.

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Another important context comprises the Depression and World War II periods. The period of significance for this era is 1930-1945. Long home to maritime workers, migrant farm laborers and other itinerant workers, the survey area became at this time a destination for thousands of war workers. Similar to earlier waves of newcomers, these were mostly single males, many of whom lived in the residential hotels that formerly lined 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Many local residents worked along the Waterfront and participated in the 1934 Waterfront and General Strikes. The 1930s also saw important physical changes within the survey area as it became an important regional transit hub with the completion of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge in 1936 and the Transbay Terminal in 1939. These massive public works projects greatly altered the physical fabric of the survey area, as properties were cleared to make way for elevated concrete viaducts carrying both vehicular traffic and Key Route trains to and from the bridge.

A third important context within the survey area occurred during the postwar period as private and public capital began to finance the expansion of the Financial District south of Market Street. The period of significance is 1946-1984. By the late 1950s, many of the traditional industries in the area had begun relocating outside the city. As local unemployment grew, social problems became more visible, serving as a pretext for urban renewal. Based on plans initially conceived in the mid-1950s by developer Ben Swig, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency began acquiring properties in the survey area on which to construct the Yerba Buena Center, demolishing buildings and displacing remaining industries and longtime residents. As consensus broke down over what form the area should take, the City and County of San Francisco issued its 1971 Urban Design Plan, encouraging the design of new boxy modernist towers with large plazas.

The fourth and final context is ongoing, encompassing the 1980s office construction boom and the reaction of preservation and slow-growth activists toward this boom. The period of significance is 1985 to the present, during which much of the remaining industrial, warehousing, and other commercial uses were displaced by privately financed office towers, hotels, museums, and condominium projects. Devised in response to this development boom, the Downtown Plan, an element of the General Plan adopted in 1984, responded to the concerns of preservationists that Downtown was losing its historic character. Utilizing the findings of San Francisco Architectural Heritage's Downtown Survey, the Downtown Plan protected approximately 250 of the area's most significant buildings while allowing new development to occur on the sites of less significant buildings.

## II. METHODOLOGY

Before initiating the survey and the Historic Context Statement, Kelley & VerPlanck consulted the San Francisco Planning Department for copies of Section 106, CEQA and other environmental compliance reports, DPR 523 A and B forms for properties within the survey area, and numerous other relevant planning documents and studies. We also requested a records search of the survey area from the Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State University. Kelley & VerPlanck then completed an intensive-level survey of the entire survey area, recording existing conditions on each parcel and identifying potential historic buildings, structures, sites, and objects. Fieldwork consisted of photographing each property and recording pertinent information using a GIS-based application loaded on handheld personal digital assistants (PDAs). Upon completion of the fieldwork we further researched the survey area at several local and regional repositories, including the San Francisco Public Library, the California Historical Society, the Mechanic's Institute Library, and San Francisco Architectural Heritage. Kelley & VerPlanck prepared a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 A (Primary) form for each property within the survey area with the exception of parking lots and vacant parcels. We then identified parcels worthy of further investigation and prepared DPR 523 B (Building, Structure, and Object) forms for 36 of these. We prepared a DPR 523 D (District form) for the remaining 90 properties that appear to constitute a historic district within an area roughly bounded by Market, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Tehama, and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets.

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### III. IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING SURVEYS, STUDIES AND REPORTS

In this section we briefly describe each major survey undertaken and completed within the survey area from the 1960s to the present. We have also compiled a list of several significant environmental compliance reports and studies that examine properties or groups of properties within the survey area.

#### **A. HERE TODAY**

The earliest survey completed in San Francisco was the Junior League of San Francisco's so-called "*Here Today*" survey, published as *Here Today: San Francisco's Architectural Heritage* (1968). The survey was adopted by the Board of Supervisors under Resolution No. 268-70 and documents approximately 2,500 properties within San Francisco. The survey files are housed in the History Center at the San Francisco Main Library.<sup>3</sup> For the most part, *Here Today* focused on well-known buildings of obvious architectural distinction, concentrating on prominent public buildings and architecturally significant dwellings. *Here Today* devotes only a brief chapter to the South of Market Area, which for the purposes of the study included the entire eastern waterfront of San Francisco from Market Street south to the San Mateo County line. *Here Today* lists only four buildings within the survey area: the Sharon Building and the Call Building at 55 and 74 New Montgomery Street (page 281), the California Farmer Building at 83 Stevenson Street (page 296), and the Mercantile Building at 86 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (page 298).

#### **B. 1976 CITYWIDE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY**

Between 1974 and 1976, the San Francisco Planning Department conducted a citywide inventory of architecturally significant buildings within the City and County of San Francisco. An advisory review committee of architects and architectural historians assisted in the ultimate determination of ratings for the roughly 10,000 buildings surveyed. This unpublished survey, consisting of sixty volumes of survey data, is on file at the San Francisco Planning Department. Both contemporary and older buildings were surveyed but without considering historical associations. Nor was every building assigned a rating. Only buildings considered architecturally significant were assigned a rating ranging from "0" (contextually significant) to "5" (individually significant). Architectural significance was defined in the survey methodology as a combination of variables, including design features, contribution to the urban design context, and overall environmental significance. When completed, the 1976 Architectural Survey was felt to represent the top 10 percent of the city's building stock.<sup>4</sup> Buildings rated "3" or better were believed to represent the best 2 percent of the city's architecture. The survey was adopted by the Board of Supervisors under Resolution No. 7831 in 1977 and the Planning Department has been directed to use it, although the methodology is inconsistent with current CEQA Guidelines PRC 5024.1(g).

We note 40 individual properties within the survey area that have 1976 Survey ratings (**Table 1**). Kelley & VerPlanck developed this list based on an inventory of original survey forms checked against the Planning Department's current historic resources inventory and we account for demolished buildings and merged lots. Since the 1976 Survey was completed, 13 survey-rated properties have been demolished.

#### **C. SAN FRANCISCO ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE**

San Francisco Architectural Heritage (Heritage) is the city's oldest not-for-profit organization dedicated to increasing awareness and advocating preservation of San Francisco's unique architectural heritage. Heritage has sponsored several historic resource inventories in San Francisco, including surveys of Downtown, the Van Ness Corridor, Civic Center, Chinatown, the

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<sup>3</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, *San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No. 11: Historic Resource Surveys* (San Francisco: n.d.), 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

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Northeast Waterfront, the Inner Richmond District, and Dogpatch. The earliest and most influential of these surveys was the *Downtown Survey*. Completed in 1977-78 for Heritage by Michael Corbett and published in 1979 as *Splendid Survivors*, this survey serves as the intellectual foundation for much of San Francisco's Downtown Plan. The methodology improved upon earlier surveys inasmuch as it consists of both intensive field work and thorough archival research. Buildings were evaluated using the Kalman Methodology, a pioneering set of evaluative criteria based on both qualitative and quantitative factors. A team of outside reviewers analyzed the survey forms and assigned ratings to each of the pre-1945 buildings within the survey area. The ratings range from 'A' (highest importance), to 'D' (minor or no importance).

The *Downtown Survey* consisted of an intensive-level survey of the Financial District, the Union Square Retail District, and the Market Street Corridor. These three districts make up what is known as the primary survey area. A small portion of the South of Market Area falls within this primary survey area, encompassing the area bounded by Beale Street to the east, Mission Street to the south, 4<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, and Market Street to the north. In addition, the primary survey area also included a narrow strip one property deep on both sides of New Montgomery Street that extends as far south as Howard Street. Approximately 40 percent of the current Transit Center District survey area falls within the primary survey area of the *Downtown Survey*. Nob Hill, the Tenderloin, Civic Center, and the entire South of Market Area, except for the areas outlined above, fall within the secondary survey area. Properties within the *Downtown Survey*'s secondary survey area were not surveyed in such depth as those within the primary survey area.

There are ten 'A'-rated buildings within the current Transit Center District survey area. The majority are substantial buildings designed by well-known architects and located along important streets. Two are located on Market Street, including the Matson Building at 215 Market and the P.G. & E. Building at 245 Market. Most other A-rated buildings are located along New Montgomery Street. These include the Palace Hotel at 2 New Montgomery, the Sharon Building at 57-61 New Montgomery, the Call Building at 74 New Montgomery, the Rialto Building at 116 New Montgomery, and the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Building at 134-40 New Montgomery. Further A-rated buildings in the survey area include the Wells Fargo Building at 85-91 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, the Philips-Van Orden Building at 234 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and the Aronson Building at 700 Mission Street.

In addition to the A-rated buildings, there are 21 B-rated buildings and 77 C-rated buildings (**Table 1**). B-rated buildings consist of individually significant buildings that are less architecturally significant than the A-rated buildings. Examples include the Monadnock Building at 681-5 Market Street or the Williams Building at 101-7 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. When *Splendid Survivors* was published, there were 21 B-rated buildings. Since then, seven or one-third of the total, have been demolished. The C-rated buildings are judged to be of contextual importance. The majority are one-to-four-story masonry commercial or loft buildings completed in the years following the 1906 Earthquake. The C-rated buildings are background buildings, and provide the "setting" for the A and B-rated buildings. Concentrations of C-rated buildings still stand along the 500 block of Howard Street, the 600 block of Mission Street, and the first two blocks of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets.

#### **D. ARTICLE 10 OF THE SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING CODE**

San Francisco City Landmarks denote buildings, properties, structures, sites, districts and objects that are of "special character or special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value and are an important part of the City's historical and architectural heritage."<sup>5</sup> Adopted in 1967 as Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code, the San Francisco City Landmark program protects listed buildings from inappropriate alteration and demolition through review procedures overseen by the San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Board. Properties listed as landmarks under Article 10 are deemed important to the city's history and "help to provide significant and unique examples of the past that are irreplaceable." In addition, these landmarks help to protect surrounding neighborhood development and in general enhance the educational and cultural

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<sup>5</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, *Preservation Bulletin No. 9 – Landmarks* (San Francisco: January 2003).

dimension of the city. As of December 2007, there were 255 individually landmarked buildings and eleven designated historic districts in San Francisco subject to Article 10. When Article 10 was established, the designation process used the Kalman Methodology, however in 2000, National Register criteria replaced the Kalman Methodology.

Definitively, only a fraction of the 255 city landmarks and eleven locally designated historic districts in San Francisco are located within the survey area. Individually listed landmarks include Hoffman's Grill at 619 Market Street (Landmark No. 144) and the Palace Hotel and Garden Court at 2 New Montgomery Street (Landmark No. 18).

***E. ARTICLE 11 OF THE SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING CODE/DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN***

The *Downtown Area Plan* is an element of the *San Francisco General Plan*, containing a set of objectives and policies to guide decisions affecting the city's downtown. According to the wording of the *Downtown Area 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."<sup>6</sup> Objective 12 of the *Downtown Area Plan* specifically refers to the conservation of resources that provide evidence of continuity with San Francisco's past.<sup>7</sup> Historical development, as represented by both significant buildings and by areas of established character, must be preserved to provide a physical and material connection to San Francisco's history. In order to achieve these aims, the authors of the *Downtown Area Plan* devised a rating system for evaluating historical resources. Based in part upon the methodology developed as part of Heritage's Downtown Survey, the *Downtown Area Plan* advocates three major policies for encouraging sensitive development in the downtown area:

- 12.1 Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural, or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other building and features that provide continuity with past development.
- 12.2 Use care in remodeling significant older buildings to enhance rather than weaken their original character.
- 12.3 Design new buildings to respect the character of older development nearby.<sup>8</sup>

Part of the implementation of these policies, the Planning Department requires the retention of the highest-quality buildings and preservation of their significant features. Thus, the *Downtown Area Plan* maintains a list of all "Significant" and "Contributory" buildings. Significant buildings are resources with "the highest architectural and environmental importance; buildings whose demolition would constitute an irreplaceable loss to the quality and character of the downtown." The *Downtown Area Plan* cites 251 Significant buildings. These resources have the highest level of significance but may be sensitively altered depending on their category. Contributory buildings are of a slightly lower level of significance. Owners of Contributory buildings are encouraged to retain them, but are not required to do so.<sup>9</sup>

Article 11 of the San Francisco Planning Code codifies ratings for individual buildings deemed significant or contributory. Buildings deemed significant are divided into Categories I and II; the difference being the extent of alterations allowed. Category I buildings are judged to be of individual importance and rated "excellent" in architectural design or "very good" in both architectural design and relationship to the environment. Category II buildings must meet the same standards, although additions are allowed in certain cases.

<sup>6</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, *Downtown Area Plan* <http://sfgov.org/planning/egp/dtown.htm> (accessed 30 December 2006).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*



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Contributory buildings are assigned ratings of Category III or IV. Category III buildings are defined to be of individual importance and rated “very good” in architectural quality. Located outside conservation districts, these resources may be deemed as either “excellent” or “very good” in relationship to the environment. By contrast, Category IV buildings are located within conservation districts; they are either buildings of individual importance or buildings of contextual importance.

Unrated or non-contributory buildings are assigned to Category V, a category that includes all other buildings in the C-3 Downtown District not otherwise designated.

There are 20 Category I buildings in the survey area. Most are prominent buildings such as the Sharon, Call, Rialto, and Pacific Telephone & Telegraph buildings. Others are less well-known but unusual or rare examples of a particular style or building type such as the Drexler Estate Building at 121 2<sup>nd</sup> Street or the Philips-Van Orden Building at 234 1<sup>st</sup> Street. There are only two Category II buildings in the survey area: the Palace Hotel and the William Volker Building at 631 Howard Street. The survey area contains seven Category III Buildings (**Table 1**).

Another important provision of Article 11 was the establishment of conservation districts. Section 1103 of the San Francisco Planning Code defines conservation districts:

Portions of the C-3 District may be designated as Conservation Districts if they contain substantial concentrations of buildings that together create sub areas of special architectural and aesthetic importance. Such areas shall contain substantial concentrations of Significant and Contributory Buildings and possess substantial overall architectural, aesthetic or historic qualities justifying additional controls in order to protect and promote those qualities.

There are now six conservation districts within downtown San Francisco; they include: the Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District, the New Montgomery-Second Street Conservation District, the Commercial-Leidesdorff Conservation District, the Front-California Conservation District, the Kearny-Belden Conservation District, and the Pine-Sansome Conservation District.

The only conservation district situated within the Transit Center District survey area is the New Montgomery-Second Street Conservation District. Approved by the Board of Supervisors in 1985, the New Montgomery-Second Conservation District was established because the area “possesses concentrations of buildings that together create a sub-area of architectural and environmental quality and importance which contributes to the beauty and attractiveness of the City.”<sup>10</sup> The conservation district is described in depth in Section 5 of Appendix F of Article 11 and delineated in **Figure 2**.

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<sup>10</sup> Ordinance 414-85, Approved September 17, 1985.



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**F. UNREINFORCED MASONRY BUILDING (UMB) SURVEY**

In response to the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, the San Francisco Landmarks Board initiated a survey of all known unreinforced-masonry buildings in San Francisco. Anticipating that earthquake damage and risk remediation would likely result in the demolition or extensive alteration of many older masonry buildings, the Landmarks Board sought to establish the relative significance of all unreinforced-masonry 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 buildings into three categories: Priority I, II, and 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.<sup>11</sup>

According to *A Context Statement and Architectural/Historical Survey of Unreinforced Masonry Building (UMB) Construction in San Francisco from 1850 to 1940*, there were 343 unreinforced-masonry buildings in Area 1 (Downtown), and 194 in Area 3 (South of Market). Most of the survey area falls within Area 1 with a smaller but substantial portion falling within Area 3, including the portion of the survey area south of Howard Street. A count of listed UMBs in areas 1 and 3 yields 100 UMBs in the survey area. Since 1990, approximately one third of these properties have been demolished.

**G. NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's most comprehensive inventory of historic resources. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Typically, resources over fifty years of age are eligible for listing in the National Register if they meet any one of four significance criteria (see below) and if they retain historic integrity. However, resources under fifty years of age can be listed if 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 may be considered 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;

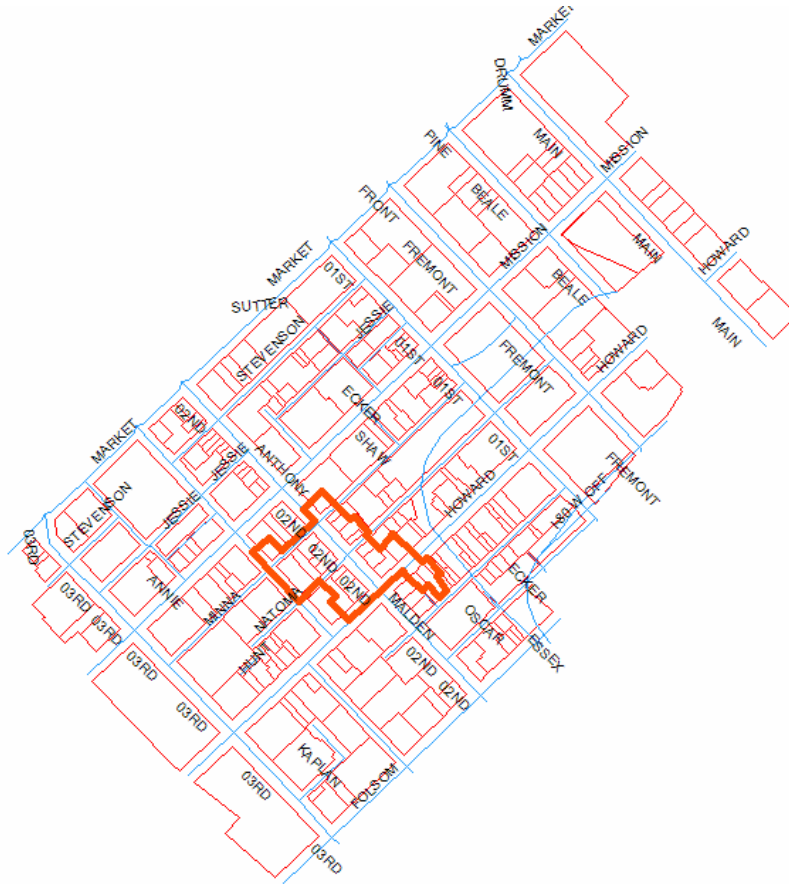
Criterion D (Information Potential): Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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<sup>11</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, *San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No. 11: Historic Resource Surveys* (San Francisco: n.d.), 3.

A resource can be determined significant to American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture at the national, state, or local level.

The San Francisco Planning Department treats National Register-listed properties as historic resources per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). There are only two individually listed National Register properties within the survey area: the Matson Building and Annex, at 215 Market Street; and the P.G. & E. Office Building and Annex, at 245 Market Street. The survey area also contains the Second and Howard Streets Historic District, a National Register historic district (**Figure 3**).



**Figure 3. Second and Howard National Register District  
(North is toward the top of the page)  
Source: KVP Consulting**

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**H. SECTION 106 AND OTHER TECHNICAL REPORTS**

Within the past three decades, hundreds of Section 106 Historic Property Survey Reports (HPSR), CEQA-mandated environmental impact reports (EIR) and City-required historic resource evaluations (HRE) have been prepared by consultants as part of projects within the survey area. According to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 any Federal undertaking or any undertaking that makes use of Federal funds or that applies for a Federal license must “take into account the effect of the undertaking on any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register.”<sup>12</sup>

Environmental review at the state level has been required since the inception of the California Environmental Quality Act in 1970. Modeled on the National Environmental Protection Act, CEQA was amended in 1992 to consider historic resources as an aspect of the environment able or likely to be affected by a potential undertaking. Since 2003, the Department of City Planning has required many project applicants to commission HREs for any property that falls within Category B—Properties Requiring Further Consultation and Review—as defined in the Planning Department’s *CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources* (Preservation Bulletin No. 16).

Kelley & VerPlanck requested a list of completed reports pertaining to prior projects in the survey area on file in the CHRIS system at the Northwest Information Center at Rohnert Park. We also checked the in-house archives of the San Francisco Planning Department and San Francisco Architectural Heritage to get a more specific sense of how many studies have been prepared for projects in the survey area. A complete inventory of these reports is beyond the scope of this historic context statement, but several of the more important studies are worthy of note. Some of the most extensively researched reports were prepared by the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Examples include the *I-280 Transfer Concept Program*, prepared by Caltrans in 1984; the *Mid-Embarcadero/Terminal Separator Project, San Francisco*, prepared by Caltrans in 1995; and the *Caltrain San Francisco Downtown Extension Project*, completed by U.S. DOT in 1998. In addition, hundreds of EIRs have been prepared for individual development projects in the survey area. Finally, several notable background studies have been prepared for significant projects in the area survey, such as Roger and Nancy Olmsted’s *Yerba Buena Center: Report on Historical Cultural Resources*, (1979).

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<sup>12</sup> Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f).

## IV. HISTORIC CONTEXT

### A. PREHISTORIC AND EARLY CONTACT ERA: PRE-1776

Prior to the era of European contact, California is believed to have been home to what author Malcolm Margolin has called “the densest Indian population anywhere north of Mexico.”<sup>13</sup> When the Spanish arrived during the final quarter of the eighteenth century, some 7,000 to 10,000 Native Americans inhabited the Bay Region. The Spanish referred to the indigenous inhabitants *costeños*, or “coastal peoples.” Today the name Ohlone is preferred by descendants of the indigenous people. The Ohlone spoke several languages of the Utian language family. Although mutually unintelligible, their language was related to the Coast and Bay Miwok languages spoken by their neighbors north and east of San Francisco Bay. The Ohlone who lived within what is now San Francisco spoke a dialect called Ramaytush.<sup>14</sup>

Ohlone society was based on the extended family unit, comprising on average fifteen individuals. The next larger unit was the clan, typically consisting of several related families living together in a single village. Families were divided into moieties—the Bear and the Deer—following typical practice of Native societies in California. Above the clan was the tribelet, which made up several villages, and comprising around 400-500 people under a single headman selected by the people. Each tribelet functioned as an independent political unit, although tribelets were able to cooperate with one another in wartime and in food gathering.<sup>15</sup>

The Ohlone were semi-nomadic people who inhabited small seasonal villages near streams and tidal flats where they had ready access to fresh water and food sources such as waterfowl, fish, and various kinds of shellfish (**Figure 4**). Hunting small terrestrial and marine mammals and gathering seeds, nuts, roots, shoots, and berries were also important sources within the Ohlone diet. Oak trees contributed acorns as one of the most important sources of nutrients to the Ohlone people as suggested by the presence of grinding rocks and *manos* and *metates* near most known Ohlone settlements.<sup>16</sup>



**Figure 4. Ohlone fishing**  
Source: Bancroft Library

It is uncertain when the Ohlone settled in what is now San Francisco. Colder and less hospitable than the Santa Clara Valley or the East Bay, the northern San Francisco Peninsula was probably settled at a later date than surrounding areas. The early history of the Ohlone is difficult to ascertain due to the fact that many prehistoric sites have been either built over or obliterated to make way for buildings during various phases of the city's history. The earliest known occupation sites in San Francisco are radio-carbon dated to 5,000 to 5,500 years ago, and prehistoric middens containing both burials and artifacts have been dated to 2,000 years ago.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Malcolm Margolin, *The Ohlone Way* (San Francisco: Heyday Books, 1978), 1.

<sup>14</sup> Allen G. Pastron, Ph.D. and L. Dale Beevers, *From Bullfights to Baseball: Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for the Valencia Gardens Hope VI Project* (Oakland: unpublished report, December 2002), 16.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* 17.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> “An “Unvanishing Story: 5,500 Years of History in the Vicinity of Seventh & Mission Streets, San Francisco” (Unpublished paper prepared by the Southeast Archaeological Center (National Park Center), <http://www.cr.nps.gov/seac/sfprehis.htm> (accessed 30 December 2006).

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According to several sources, the northern part of the San Francisco Peninsula was located within the Yelamu tribal territory of the Ohlone. The closest Ohlone village to the Transit Center District survey area was called *Chutchui* and was located on Mission Creek, not far from Mission Dolores. Residents of *Chutchui* moved seasonally to another village on San Francisco Bay called *Sitlintac* to harvest shellfish on Mission Bay. The exact location of either village is undocumented but both are known to have been located within two miles of the survey area.<sup>18</sup>

Although the Transit Center District survey area indeed may have been a location for native settlements, Early American-period construction has apparently removed all but the most deeply buried evidence. Test bores and deep excavations for new buildings erected in the survey area in the 1970s and 1980s revealed significant prehistoric materials. For example, in 1977, a test bore made at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Folsom streets revealed an obsidian scraper about twenty feet below the surface. In 1986, the firm Archeo-Tech excavated two previously unknown deeply buried shell mounds near the intersections of 1<sup>st</sup> and Mission (within the survey area) and 5<sup>th</sup> and Mission (two blocks west of the survey area). A third shell midden and eleven human burials were later found near 4<sup>th</sup> and Howard Streets, one block west of the survey area.<sup>19</sup>

## **B. EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT – SPANISH AND MEXICAN PERIODS: 1776-1846**

### *Spanish Period (1776-1821)*

The first known party of European explorers to encounter San Francisco Bay arrived in 1769 under the leadership of Don Gaspar de Portolá. An agent of the *Visitador General* of Spain, Portolá was instructed to “take possession and fortify the ports of San Diego and Monterey in Alta California.”<sup>20</sup> In search of Monterey Bay, which he failed to recognize, Portolá’s party strayed north to Montara Mountain and inadvertently “discovered” San Francisco Bay. Spanish explorers made several additional forays to the San Francisco Bay Region before the establishment of the first permanent settlements—Mission Dolores and the Presidio of San Francisco—in 1776 by Lieutenant Joaquín Moraga. The first mass was held in a brush chapel on June 29, 1776, near the lake the Spanish called *Laguna de Nuestra Madre de los Dolores*. A more permanent adobe mission was completed in September 1776. Work on the third and final mission church began in 1782.<sup>21</sup>

During the early days of Spanish occupation the survey area remained in a natural state. Much of the land east of what is now 1<sup>st</sup> Street was submerged tidal flats. Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets, the rest of the survey area was occupied by towering sand dunes except for a narrow valley filled with scrub oak and willow centered on what is now the intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Howard streets. Later called Happy Valley by American settlers, this lushly vegetated depression occupied a substantial portion of the survey area. West of 4<sup>th</sup> Street were extensive tidal marshes and freshwater creeks that emptied into Mission Bay. Prior to the Gold Rush, it seems unlikely that there was sustained activity in the survey area. Early accounts reference the occasional hunting or fishing expedition, and it is possible that vaqueros grazed sheep or cattle in Happy Valley, but Spanish settlement did not penetrate this part of San Francisco.<sup>22</sup>

### *Mexican Period (1821-1848)*

New Spain rebelled against Spanish rule in 1810 and became the independent nation of Mexico in 1821. Mexico inherited the remote territory of Alta California from Spain. Following the Mexican

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<sup>18</sup> Allen G. Pastron, Ph.D. and L. Dale Beevers, *From Bullfights to Baseball: Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for the Valencia Gardens Hope VI Project* (Oakland: unpublished report, December 2002), 18.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>20</sup> Z.S. Eldredge, *The Beginnings of San Francisco, from the Expedition of Anza, 1774 to the City Charter of April 15, 1850* (San Francisco: self-published, 1912), 31.

<sup>21</sup> Allen G. Pastron, Ph.D. and L. Dale Beevers, *From Bullfights to Baseball: Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for the Valencia Gardens Hope VI Project* (Oakland: unpublished report, December 2002), 32.

<sup>22</sup> Allen G. Pastron, Ph.D., *869 Folsom Street, San Francisco, California: Archival Cultural Resources Evaluation* (Albany, CA: unpublished report, September 1990), 17.

government's action in 1833 secularizing the Franciscan missions of California, native-born *Californios* and retired Spanish and Mexican soldiers began to form vast cattle ranchos from the ex-mission lands. The Mexican-period ranches produced prodigious amounts of tanned cattle hides and tallow, products in demand in both the United States and England. Liberalized Mexican trading regulations encouraged growing numbers of foreign traders to drop anchor in Yerba Buena Cove, trading manufactured goods for hides and tallow produced by local ranchers and, also in turn, supplying whaling ships.<sup>23</sup> The community of Yerba Buena developed into a small mercantile settlement serving this trade. It was inhabited by a polyglot population of Americans, English, Mexicans, French, and *Kanakas* from the Hawaiian Islands.

Meanwhile, forces beyond the borders of Alta California were conspiring to upset the easy status quo prevailing between the Mexican government and foreign traders. From 1835, the American government initiated negotiations with Mexico to acquire California. However, Mexico rebuffed American overtures. Meanwhile, American expansionism reached a crescendo with the election in 1844 of James K. Polk as President of the United States and war broke out between the United States and Mexico on May 12, 1846. After a year and a half of fighting, the Mexican government capitulated and on February 2, 1848, the two nations signed the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. By the terms of the treaty, Mexico ceded 525,000 square miles of its northern territories, including Alta California, to the United States in return for a lump sum payment of \$15 million and the assumption of \$3.5 million in debt owed to citizens of the United States by Mexico. On the eve of American conquest, the population of Yerba Buena numbered around 850 people housed in approximately 200 structures.<sup>24</sup> The pueblo played almost no part in the war. Nevertheless, on July 9, 1846, Captain John B. Montgomery landed at Yerba Buena and raised the American flag above the Custom House at Portsmouth Square. Mexican rule came to an end without a shot being fired in what is now San Francisco.<sup>25</sup>

### **C. EARLY AMERICAN SETTLEMENT: LAND SUBDIVISION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT: 1847-1865**

Before departing, Captain Montgomery appointed Lieutenant Washington A. Bartlett the first American *alcalde*, or mayor, of Yerba Buena. One of Bartlett's first official duties was to rename the settlement San Francisco on January 30, 1847. Another of Bartlett's priorities was to extend the boundaries of the growing community. He hired an Irish immigrant named Jasper O'Farrell to complete the survey. O'Farrell's plan, which enlarged the area of San Francisco to almost 800 acres. Anticipating the need for a direct route from San Francisco to Mission Dolores, O'Farrell laid out Market Street, a one-hundred-foot-wide thoroughfare running southwest from Yerba Buena Cove to the mission. The new street was oriented on a diagonal alignment to avoid the marshlands that ringed Mission Bay. For unknown reasons O'Farrell made the blocks south of Market Street four times larger than the "50-vara blocks" north of Market Street. Known as the "100-vara blocks," the blocks south of Market were aligned parallel to Market Street.<sup>26</sup>

O'Farrell's survey superimposed a grid of "paper" streets and blocks across all variation of topography in the South of Market Area, ranging from the 100' outcropping of Rincon Hill to the "water lots" overlaid on top of the shallow waters and tidal flats of Mission Bay and Yerba Buena Cove. O'Farrell's Official Map of San Francisco, published in 1849, depicts the street grid established in the South of Market, the first man-made gesture in the survey area and a primary determining factor in its subsequent development. From Yerba Buena Cove west to 1<sup>st</sup> Street, the street grid replicated the gridiron block pattern that existed north of Market Street. From 1<sup>st</sup> Street west to 5<sup>th</sup> Street, O'Farrell's plan consisted of large 100-vara blocks. Initially, the grid terminated at 5<sup>th</sup> Street because of the tidal marshes in the area (**Figure 5**).

<sup>23</sup> Oscar Lewis, *San Francisco: Mission to Metropolis* (San Diego: Howell-North Books, rev. ed. 1980), 22.

<sup>24</sup> Allen G. Pastron, Ph.D., *869 Folsom Street, San Francisco, California: Archival Cultural Resources Evaluation* (Albany, CA: unpublished report, September 1990), 20.

<sup>25</sup> Oscar Lewis, *San Francisco: Mission to Metropolis* (San Diego: Howell-North Books, rev. ed. 1980), 41.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.



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*Gold Rush*

The discovery of Gold at Sutter's Mill, in Coloma, in January 1848 unleashed a population explosion in San Francisco. News of the discovery took off only after the publisher of the *California Star*, Sam Brannan, strode through the streets of San Francisco crying out "Gold! Gold! on the American River!" The news spread quickly to ports in Central and South America, and eventually to Europe and the East Coast. By the end of 1848, thousands of gold-seekers from all over the world—dubbed "Forty-niners"—had come to San Francisco. Between 1848 and 1852, the population of San Francisco grew from less than one thousand inhabitants to almost 35,000.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Rand Richards, *Historic San Francisco. A Concise History and Guide* (San Francisco: Heritage House Publishers, 2001), p. 77.

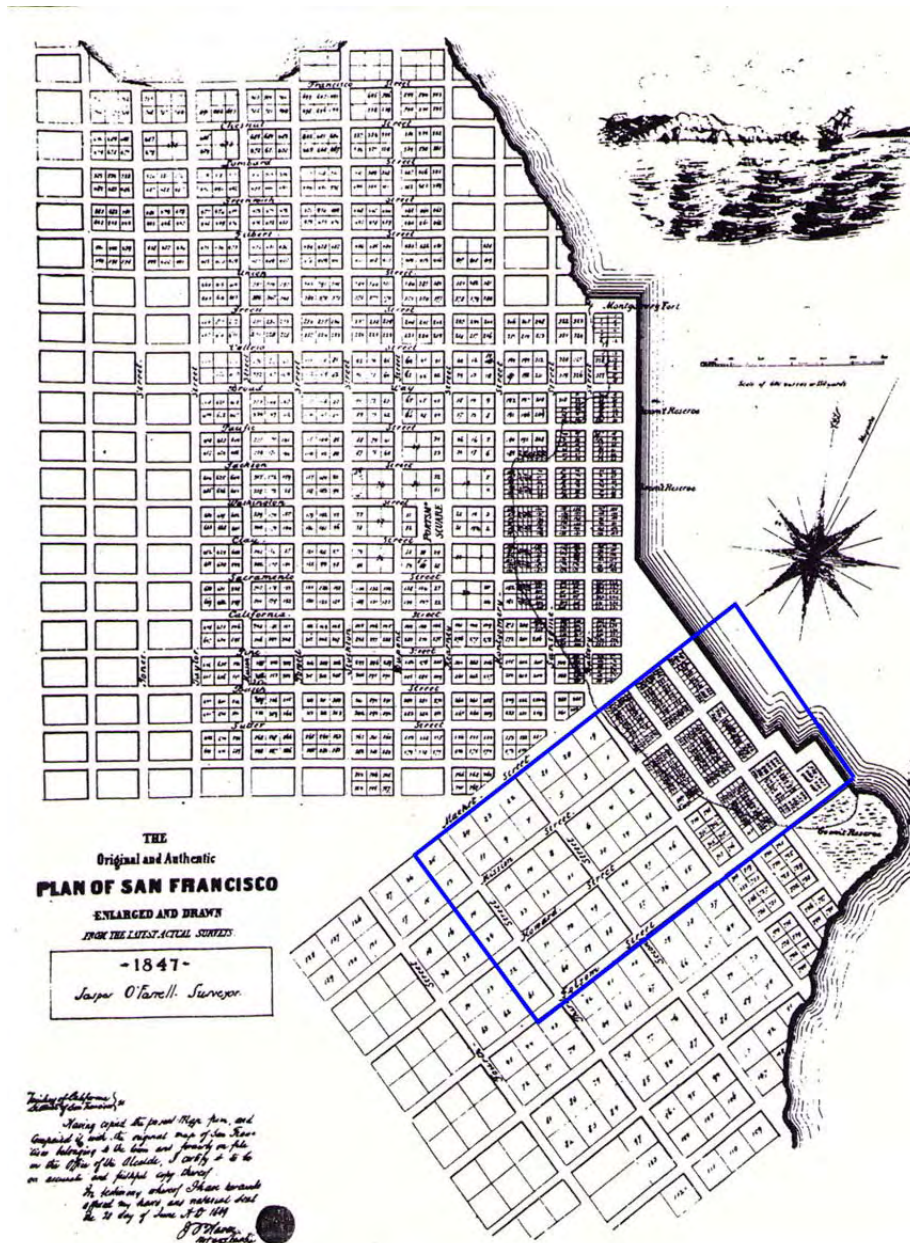


Figure 5. O'Farrell Plan of San Francisco, 1847  
Approximate boundaries of Transit Center District survey area overlaid in blue.  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

Real estate values soared as the population grew. Land close to Portsmouth Square came into increasing demand for stores, houses, gambling halls, theaters and saloons. A lot facing Portsmouth Square worth \$16.50 in the spring of 1847 sold for \$6,000 in late spring 1848, and by the end of the year had resold for \$45,000.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, development began to expand outward from Portsmouth Square. Barriers to expansion included Yerba Buena Cove, a shallow tidal mud flat only gradually filled in with beached ships and other fill. In addition, Telegraph and Nob Hills rose steeply to the north and west, blocking substantial urbanization there until the invention of the cable car in the 1870s.

<sup>28</sup> Oscar Lewis, *San Francisco: Mission to Metropolis* (San Diego: Howell-North Books, rev. ed. 1980), 55.

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### *Happy Valley*

Considering the rising cost of waterfront real estate around Yerba Buena Cove, it did not take long for American settlers to move south of Market Street and take possession of the most habitable sections of land. Protected by sand dunes from harsh onshore winds, the area enjoyed some of the best weather in San Francisco. Especially attractive was the well-watered declivity in the midst of the sand dunes bounded by Market, Howard, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets. Called “Happy Valley” by the Forty-niners who erected tents and temporary wood houses in the area, this squatter settlement gained a reputation as a pleasant –if rustic – place to live.<sup>29</sup> Forty-niner George F. Kent remembered Happy Valley:

A part of the city worthy of notice is Happy Valley so called—a large collection of tents pitched in a valley near the beach which may contain two thousand inhabitants, mostly new comers waiting to go to the mines...These locate in Happy Valley wherever they see fit. Any attempt to collect rent (there have been several such attempts made) is rejected as absurd. There appears to be a regular FREE SOIL movement carried out into pretty effectual operation, for half a mile above there any piece of land large enough to pitch a decent sized tent will rent for a very high price. In the valley, a variety of trades are carried on and there are a number of small shops with the sale of small articles and liquor.<sup>30</sup>

As Kent's statement suggests, the settlers were squatting on land recently purchased by W.D.M. Howard, Henry Mellus, and Joseph L. Folsom. These men, displeased with the squatters' settlements on their land, attempted to collect rents with assistance from the San Francisco Police Department.<sup>31</sup>

The character of the South of Market Area, known throughout the Gold Rush era as Happy Valley, continued to evolve rapidly. By the summer of 1850, residents had begun erecting more permanent stores and houses in the vicinity of 1<sup>st</sup> and Mission streets. An early settler, Stephen Sears Smith, described his own quarters:

I have a regular grocery store, with one corner parted off in which there is a good bed and where I sleep as sound as one need to ...The building is about ten feet from the water and on one side is a pile of Boards and on the other is a pile of Shingles. It is at the foot of Mission Street “Happy Valley” which is on the side of the city where most of the people live in tents...We have a tent where we cook and eat.<sup>32</sup>

Many contemporary accounts describe the incredible growth of Happy Valley during the Gold Rush; especially prominent are recollections of those who had initially settled in the area and then gone off. An account by one Samuel Upham describes Happy Valley upon his return from the gold fields:

San Francisco, during my absence of two months, had become so changed that I scarcely recognized it. Substantial frame buildings had superseded frail canvas tenements, and piers had been extended many hundred yards into the bay, at which vessels from the four quarters of the globe were discharging their cargoes. I visited the gold-diggers' encampment, Happy Valley, but that too was so changed, that I could scarcely recognize a familiar spot or countenance. A three story warehouse was being erected on the spot where I had pitched my tent two months previously. The saw and hammer of the carpenter could be heard in

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Allen Pastron, *The Archaeology of 100 First Plaza, San Francisco, California* (unpublished report prepared by Archeo-Tech for the Barker Interests Limited, n.d.), 17.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>32</sup> Letter from Stephen Sears Smith (April 28, 1850).

every square, and the voice of the crier and auctioneer at the corner of nearly every street.<sup>33</sup>

#### *Grading and Filling Operations*

The transformation of the South of Market Area from a temporary gold miners' encampment into a permanent neighborhood required substantial grading work. First, the sand dunes that divided Happy Valley from Market Street had to be removed. Prior to the adoption of the "steam paddy" in 1852, the laborious task of shoveling sand into wheelbarrows and wagons was done by manual laborers, many of whom were of Irish descent, known locally as "Paddies." The steam paddy, in turn, named for the laborers it displaced, sped up the process. The clearing of the last major sand dunes in Happy Valley occurred in 1858, although sand removal in the rest of the South of Market Area continued into the 1870s, when J.S. Hittell described the work:

[The steam paddy] at one move would dig up a cubic yard of sand or gravel (or nearly twice as much as could be hauled by a single horse and cart) and then swing it round by a crane over a railway car into which the load was discharged. The steam paddy was at work from 1852 till 1854, and from 1858 till 1873 almost constantly, sometimes moving two-thousand acres of it that needed leveling.<sup>34</sup>

Most of the sand and gravel was taken in horse-drawn carts or railroad cars to Yerba Buena Cove and used as fill to extend the street grid eastward into the bay.

The removal of the sand hills facilitated street grading in the survey area, which was transformed from a hilly district into a nearly level swathe. Due to often swampy nature of much of the ground, many of the early streets were paved with thick wooden planks. "Plank roads," as they were known, were expensive to build and maintain. To pay for them, city authorities granted franchises to entrepreneurs who would build the road in return for the right to charge tolls after the work was completed. For instance, in November 1850, the City awarded Charles Wilson a franchise to construct a plank road between downtown San Francisco and Mission Dolores along Mission Street. Completed in 1853 and following the alignment of present-day Mission Street, the Mission Plank Road was the first surfaced road in the survey area (**Figure 6**).<sup>35</sup>



**Figure 6. Mission Plank Road, 1853**  
Source: David Rumsey

#### *Early Industrial Development*

With the Gold Rush, the survey area was already evolving into San Francisco's primary proto-industrial district. Important pioneer foundries such as Union Iron Works, Vulcan Iron Works, Sutter Iron Works, the Alta Foundry, and Pacific Iron Works were established along 1<sup>st</sup> Street, which at that time faced Yerba Buena Cove. During the Gold Rush era, this compact industrial

<sup>33</sup> Diary of Samuel Upham (1857), 257.

<sup>34</sup> J.S. Hittell, *A History of the City of San Francisco and Incidentally the State of California* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft Co., 1878), 438.

<sup>35</sup> Gladys Hansen, *San Francisco Almanac* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1975), 36.

zone built mining equipment and machinery, steam engines and boilers, water wheels, gearing and mill work, and steamboat parts.<sup>36</sup> Interestingly, it was the epidemic of fires in Gold Rush San Francisco that gave birth to this pioneer iron foundry business. Before 1850, the high cost of raw materials (most of which had to be imported from the East Coast) made iron work economically prohibitive. The six major fires in San Francisco between 1850 and 1851 reduced much of the original pueblo to cinders. Responding to a surplus of iron scrap—remains of stoves, safes, and prefabricated iron walls and shutters—entrepreneurs established crude foundries and began converting it into valuable new finished goods. By 1875, there were forty-two foundries operating in the survey area. Altogether they supplied the entire West Coast with mining equipment, heavy machinery, and other manufactured items.<sup>37</sup> Not a single above-ground resource survives from this era.



**Figure 7. View from 2<sup>nd</sup> and Folsom streets, looking north, 1856**  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

#### *Early Residential Development*

By no means was Happy Valley solely an industrial district. As early as 1852, the South of Market had become the city's chief residential neighborhood. Before the introduction of cheap transit, most industrial workers walked to work. Catering to the demand for housing this created, speculators undertook to build inexpensive frame cottages and tenements. In November 1849, merchant William Howard took delivery of 25 prefabricated clapboard cottages and sold around half to Joseph L. Folsom, who assembled them near the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission streets. Other prefabricated houses went up along the mid-block alleys, including Minna, Tehama, and Natoma streets.<sup>38</sup> An early photograph taken in 1850 at the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Folsom streets in the survey area illustrates the predominantly residential character of the western part of the survey area (**Figure 7**).

<sup>36</sup> James M. Parker's *San Francisco City Directory 1852-53* (San Francisco: James M. Parker, 1852-53).

<sup>37</sup> Allen G. Pastron, Ph.D., *869 Folsom Street, San Francisco, California: Archival Cultural Resources Evaluation* (Albany, CA: unpublished report, September 1990), 25.

<sup>38</sup> Charles Lockwood, "South of the Slot," *San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle* (June 10, 1979), 75.

*South Park and Rincon Hill*

The South of Market Area was not solely a workingman's neighborhood. Two of the city's earliest enclaves for wealthy San Franciscans grew up in and near the survey area: one at South Park and the other on Rincon Hill. Established in 1852 at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Brannan streets, South Park was located several blocks south of the survey area. Rincon Hill, a portion of which occupies the southernmost portion of the survey area, was another early residential area in the South of Market Area. Attracted by good weather and views from the summit, several of San Francisco's pioneering captains of industry constructed large mansions, including John Parrott's Italianate-style residence at 620 Folsom Street (1854) and Milton S. Latham's house next door at 630 Folsom (1853) (**Figure 8**). Located on large lots with ample room for rose gardens or orchards, Rincon Hill became San Francisco's most desirable address until the construction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cut in 1869.<sup>39</sup> No above-ground resources survive from this era.



**Figure 8. Latham House, 1872**  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

*Institutions*

Civic and charitable organizations first began locating in Happy Valley to serve the area's growing working-class population during the early 1850s. Early institutions included the city's first "orphan asylum" in April 1851 and a new schoolhouse for District No. 1 (Happy Valley), established in November of the same year. According to an article in the December 27, 1851 issue of the *San Francisco Picayune*, the new school, run by a Mr. Denman and Mrs. Hyde, accommodated two hundred pupils. However, within a month, the school was overcrowded and a second school was soon built at Rincon Point.<sup>40</sup>

*Expansion of the Grid*

United States Coast Survey and Geodetic maps are useful for assessing the progress of development in the survey area between the Gold Rush and the Civil War. The 1853 Coast Survey Map, the first to include San Francisco, indicates that development was still concentrated around Portsmouth and Jackson squares, and the adjoining filled sections of Yerba Buena Cove. Market Street, which had not yet become the primary commercial and retail district of the city, still petered out into sand dunes near Larkin Street. The only passable route through the marshlands

<sup>39</sup> More information on the Second Street Cut is found on page 31 of this document.

<sup>40</sup> *San Francisco Picayune* (December 27, 1851).

to Mission Dolores remained Wilson's plank road along Mission Street. Development south of Market Street was in evidence but it was still concentrated within a relatively small area bounded by Market, 1<sup>st</sup>, Folsom, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets, an area closely corresponding to the boundaries of the Transit Center District survey area (**Figure 9**). The area east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street was still primarily unfilled tidal flats. Although a street plan had been laid out by surveyor William Eddy as early as 1850, the area west of 5<sup>th</sup> Street is shown on the map without graded streets or indeed, any other appreciable development.



**Figure 9. Part of the 1853 Coast Survey Map showing boundaries of the survey area**  
Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Annotated by author

### *Infrastructure*

By the end of the Gold Rush, the pace of residential and industrial growth slowed significantly in the survey area. Nonetheless, city authorities and private interests continued to build and improve infrastructure in the area. Significant changes occurring within the survey area between 1853 and 1857, included: the grading of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from Market Street to Steamboat Point, the initiation of horse-drawn omnibus car service between South Park and North Beach, the completion of the Folsom Plank Road from Yerba Buena Cove to Mission Dolores, and the enclosure of the southern part of Yerba Buena Cove from Market Street to Rincon Point behind a seawall along the line of present-day Steuart Street.<sup>41</sup> The last-named project marked the beginning of the development of the eastern portion of the survey area, most of which had remained submerged during the Gold Rush era. The 1854 Eddy Map shows the progress of filling within the survey area. The map also shows the growth in the number of narrow back alleys subdividing the large 100 Vara blocks into smaller and more easily developable units (**Figure 10**).

<sup>41</sup> Allen G. Pastron, Ph.D., *869 Folsom Street, San Francisco, California: Archival Cultural Resources Evaluation* (Albany, CA: unpublished report, September 1990), 30.

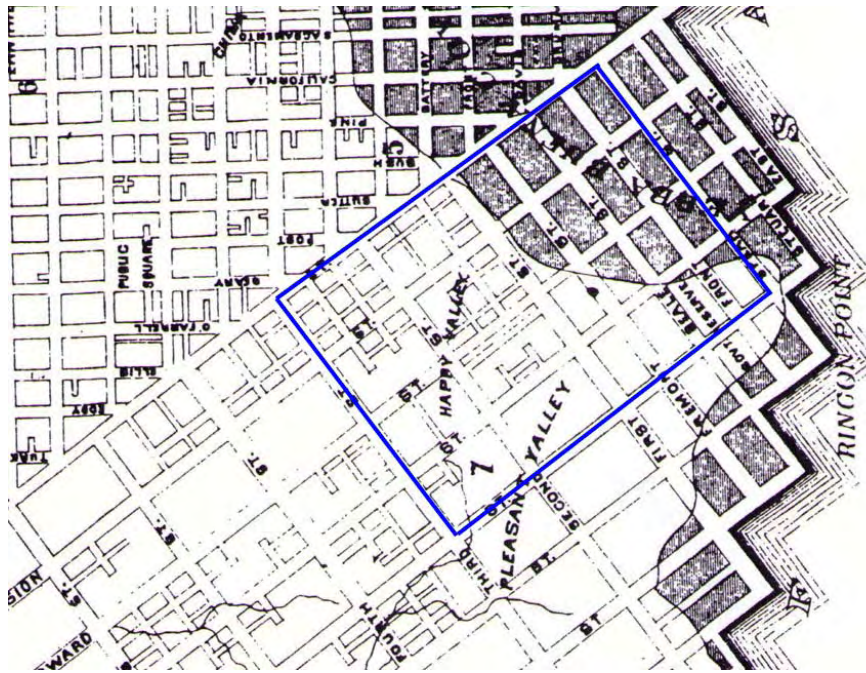


Figure 10. Part of the 1854 Eddy Map showing boundaries of the survey area  
Source: San Francisco History Center  
Annotated by author

During the 1850s, most development within the South of Market Area occurred within the survey area, which was the closest part of the entire neighborhood to downtown. It was not until 1860 that Market Street was graded west of 9<sup>th</sup> Street to make way for the new Market Street Railroad.<sup>42</sup> Occasional unbuildable marshland and sand dunes continued to impede construction, even within the urbanized survey area.

Obviously, provision of a dependable domestic water supply was a critical part of the development of San Francisco. Until 1930, San Francisco depended on the private Spring Valley Water Company for most of its water supply. The Spring Valley Water Company was very slow in completing water lines throughout much of the South of Market Area. Research conducted by architectural historian Anne Bloomfield indicates that most households within the survey area were not connected to water mains until the early 1860s, relying in the interim on private wells and water shipped in by barge from Sausalito.<sup>43</sup>

#### *Public Open Space and Recreation*

With a few exceptions San Francisco's pioneer city fathers generally did little or nothing to provide parks or other amenities to its residents, especially working-class residents. The South of Market Area was particularly ill-served. The 1854 Eddy Map of San Francisco shows only one public reservation in the entire neighborhood, a portion of a block bounded by Folsom, 6<sup>th</sup>, Harrison, and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets. Even much of this potential park was eventually taken over for private development. Meanwhile, the City provided not one public facility for the densely populated and increasingly working-class population of the survey area.

<sup>42</sup> Gladys Hansen, *San Francisco Almanac* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1975), 40.

<sup>43</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, "A History of the California Historical Society's New Mission Street Neighborhood," *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 376.



*Comstock Lode Boom*

Construction within the survey area and the rest of the South of Market began to take off again immediately before the Civil War, in great part owing to the discovery in 1859 of the Comstock Lode in Virginia City, Nevada. As land prices increased once again, multi-story brick and stone buildings began to take the place of the simple Gold Rush-era frame dwellings. Consider that between 1861 and 1862, W.M. Ladd built a row of eight brick houses on Folsom Street, between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets. Resembling brick rowhouses to be seen in the Back Bay of Boston, the Ladd houses had stylish bowed facades of pressed brick. Built for the middle class, each house had a kitchen, dining room, front and back parlors, and several bedrooms. They also had amenities generally not yet widespread outside homes of the wealthy, including kitchens with stoves and ice boxes, hot and cold running water and water closets.<sup>44</sup> None of these buildings survive within the survey area.

*“Tar Flat”*

The increasing number of foundries and other heavy industries in the survey area gradually gave lie to the bucolic-sounding Gold Rush-era nickname of Happy Valley. As industry crept out in every direction from the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Mission streets, the district became increasingly known by another name: “Tar Flat,” in reference to the noxious by-products generated by the Donahue Brothers’ gas works located at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Howard streets. Built in 1854, the plant manufactured illuminating gas for street lighting. The process of converting coal to gas was crude and inefficient, generating large amounts of tar sludge, a waste product unceremoniously dumped into the Bay at Fremont Street.<sup>45</sup> At low tide, the once-pristine Yerba Buena Cove was now covered in a gooey, foul-smelling tarry mess.

**D. INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT: 1866-1906***Immigration*

Much of San Francisco’s growth during the last quarter of the nineteenth century can be attributed to the large number of European immigrants who made their way West after the Civil War, particularly after the opening of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869. Many of these immigrants moved into the South of Market Area upon arrival in San Francisco. San Francisco had become in a short time a city of immigrants; by 1880 the city housed a higher percentage of foreign-born residents than any other U.S. city. According to U.S. Census data from that year, half the population were foreign-born, with four of every five San Franciscans born in another country or of foreign parentage. As late as 1900, this figure remained at three out of every four residents. The three largest immigrant groups during the nineteenth century were Irish, German, and Chinese, with the South of Market dominated by the Irish. By 1880, one in eight San Franciscans had been born in Ireland and a third of all city residents were of Irish descent. In the survey area, this figure was significantly higher, with the Irish comprising roughly half the population. Although many were poor, the Irish quickly established social and labor organizations, along with religious institutions, benevolent societies, fraternal orders, militias, fire companies, trade unions, political clubs, Irish Independence unions, and even temperance societies.<sup>46</sup>

*Religious Institutions*

Churches were important to Irish and other Catholic immigrants as a bedrock of traditional

<sup>44</sup> Charles Lockwood, “South of the Slot,” *San Francisco Sunda*

<sup>45</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, “A History of the California Historical Soc History (Winter 1995/96), 376.

<sup>46</sup> Robert W. Cherny and William Issel, *San Francisco: Presidio Today’s Learning*, 1988), 29.



**Figure 11. Methodist Episcopal Church (foreground) and Church of the Advent (background)  
Source: San Francisco History Center**

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culture and identity in the midst of a foreign land. St. Patrick's parish, the oldest Catholic parish South of Market and at the time the largest west of St. Louis, was established on June 9, 1851. In addition to the Roman Catholics, other Christian denominations constructed churches in the South of Market Area. The first Protestant church in the survey area was a white-painted Presbyterian chapel erected on the 600 block of Howard Street. The chapel was named after its benefactor, W.D.M. Howard, who had donated the land to the congregation.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, the American Methodist Episcopalians built a church at 645 Howard Street. The Episcopal Church of the Advent was located a block east of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Howard and New Montgomery streets (**Figure 11**). In addition to these mainline churches, the survey area housed smaller congregations, such as the First Universalists, Disciples of Christ, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and the San Francisco Spiritualists Union. There was also a small Jewish congregation convening at its new synagogue of Shaare-Tefilah.<sup>48</sup> None of these buildings remain standing in the survey area today.

#### *Infrastructure*

One of the most important privately financed works projects to occur South of Market after the Civil War was the Second Street Cut. Completed in 1869 by a consortium of investors, the project entailed widening and grading 2<sup>nd</sup> Street through the heart of the survey area and blasting a trench through Rincon Hill to enable horse-drawn vehicles to drive between Market Street and the Pacific Mail Wharf near Steamboat Point. The intended goal of the project was to raise the value of land along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street for industrial and commercial uses, even if in more immediate terms the project doomed the bucolic upper-class enclave on Rincon Hill. Historian J.S. Hittell describes the scene:

The cut or ditch, at one place sixty feet deep, has ugly steep banks, which have slid down in wet weather; the falling dirt has destroyed the sidewalks; the despoiled lot owners have refused to keep the pavement in repair; heavy teams have found it more convenient to pass through other streets in going and coming from the Pacific Mail wharf...The most active advocates of the scheme made nothing by it; and the direct expense of the "improvement" was three hundred and eighty five thousand dollars, while the loss to the citizens beyond all benefit was not less than one million dollars.<sup>49</sup>

Following completion of the Second Street Cut in 1869, the remaining wealthy residents of Rincon Hill fled the area for more desirable districts north of Market Street. Gradually, their mansions atop Rincon Hill were either torn down or converted to boarding houses.

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<sup>47</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, "A History of the California Historical Society's New Mission Street Neighborhood," *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 374.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* 377.

<sup>49</sup> J.S. Hittell, *A History of the City of San Francisco and Incidentally the State of California* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft Co., 1878), 379-80.



**Figure 12. Bird's-eye view of the South of Market, looking northwest toward the Palace Hotel, ca. 1880**  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

*“South of the Slot”*

During the 1870s and 1880s, the survey area's reputation as a solidly immigrant and working-class district became firmly established. Contemporary photographs reveal the changes that had come to the greater South of Market Area (**Figure 12**). Many of the once-expensive single-family houses had either been taken down and replaced by tenements or converted into rooming houses. First and 2<sup>nd</sup> streets acquired a mixture of boarding houses inhabited by sailors and industrial workers, saloons, a large gas works, groceries, and workshops of various types. The character of the survey area, still called “Tar Flat” or “South of the Slot,” in reference to the Market Street Railway cable car tracks running down the center of Market Street, is reflected in the writings of Jack London. London, who was born on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, described his erstwhile neighborhood in “South of the Slot.”

Old San Francisco, which is the San Francisco of only the other day, the day before the Earthquake, was divided midway by the Slot. The Slot was an iron crack that ran along the centre of Market Street, and from the Slot arose the burr of the ceaseless, endless cable that was hitched at will to the cars it dragged up and down. In truth, there were two slots, but in the quick grammar of the West time was saved by calling them, and much more that they stood for, “The Slot.” North of the Slot were the theatres, hotels, and shopping district, the banks and the staid, respectable business houses. South of the Slot were the factories, slums, laundries, machine-shops, boiler works, and the abodes of the working class.<sup>50</sup>

Conditions in the survey area were harsh. Overcrowding became the norm as workers who needed to live within walking distance of their jobs doubled and tripled-up in apartments and flats. The remaining mansions on Rincon Hill were converted into rooming houses for single men and cheap tenements were erected to house immigrant families. Raw sewage ran down the center of the still-as-yet unpaved streets and residents died in periodic epidemics of cholera, typhoid, and diphtheria. Many of the residents were single men, employed seasonally as miners, farm workers, fishermen, or sailors. In 1871, newspaper reporter Henry George observed that migrant workers “disappeared from the farms after the harvest into the flophouses of San Francisco—to come back the next season like so many ragged crows.” Many men, when they grew too old to work full time, worked odd jobs or begged. When they could no longer afford the flophouses, some would

<sup>50</sup> Jack London, “South of the Slot,” *Saturday Evening Post* (May 1909).

take up residence in the lumber yards at Steamboat Point or in the scrap metal shacks at the City Dump south of Townsend Street.<sup>51</sup>

### *Commercial Development*

Commercial services within the survey area clustered along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and around major intersections including 2<sup>nd</sup> and Mission, New Montgomery and Mission, and 1<sup>st</sup> and Howard streets. Most shopkeepers lived in the area, frequently above their shops, and often belonged to the same ethnic and socio-economic groups as their customers. Serving as a virtually self-contained city for its residents, the South of Market contained everything necessary to sustain daily existence, including hundreds of saloons, groceries, dry goods stores, bakeries, butchers, shoemakers and repairers, seamstresses, public bathhouses, doctors and dentists (many of whom probably had little professional training), ethnic and social organizations, houses of prostitution, and undertakers.<sup>52</sup>

### *Industries*

The industries that took root in the survey area during the 1850s continued to evolve and expand during the 1860s and 1870s. Most depended on access to water for transportation, cooling, and waste disposal and some of the larger industries began to move south and east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street as Yerba Buena Cove was filled in search of large waterfront sites.

Others, such as Union Iron Works, left the South of Market altogether in search of large industrial sites at Potrero Point or Hunters Point. One traditional heavy industry, the Selby Smelting and Lead Company, remained within the boundaries of the survey area. In 1864, Selby Smelting and Lead Company erected the Selby Shot Tower, a 200' structure built for the purpose of manufacturing bullets and shot. This structure, which sat on the southeast corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Howard streets, was the South of Market's most prominent industrial structure for almost four decades until it was destroyed in the 1906 Earthquake (**Figure 13**).<sup>53</sup>



**Figure 13. Selby Shot Tower, 1<sup>st</sup> and Howard Streets, 1868**  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

Sanborn maps reveal that east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, the survey area was almost entirely devoted to industrial enterprises, including lumber mills, flour mills, foundries, machine shops, carriage makers, and tool makers. Some of the more well-known companies included Fulton Iron Works and San Francisco Gas Light Company at Fremont and Howard streets, Risdon Iron Works at Beale and Howard streets, and Pacific Iron Works at 1<sup>st</sup> and Natoma streets.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Charles Lockwood, "South of the Slot," *San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle* (June 10, 1979), 77.

<sup>52</sup> San Francisco City Directories.

<sup>53</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, "A History of the California Historical Society's New Mission Street Neighborhood," *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 374.

<sup>54</sup> 1886 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps for San Francisco, CA.

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### *Residential Hotels*

As mentioned previously, many of the industrial workers in the survey area during the last quarter of the nineteenth century were single males without families. Most depended on inexpensive single-room occupancy hotels for places to live. Some of these hotels provided room and board while others only provided a place to sleep. During the 1870s, the South of Market contained fully one-quarter of the boarding houses and one-half of the lodging houses in the city, most of them within the survey area. City directories from the 1870s noted “numerous small hotels and about fifteen hundred boarding and lodging houses in the city. An unusually large number have been erected during the past few years—notably on Mission from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> and on various other streets, especially Market.”<sup>55</sup> Typically of wood-frame construction, the ground floor level of these hotels usually consisted of several commercial storefronts and a small lobby/office for the hotel. The upper floors were typically occupied by a warren of small guest rooms. The less expensive hotels simply provided an open room with rows of beds or even just places to “flop,” hence the term “flophouse.”<sup>56</sup> Many of the hotels were run by women and some were named to attract particular ethnic groups or people from a particular part of the United States. Examples in the survey area include the German Hotel at 362 Howard Street (German-speakers), the Union Hotel at 315 Howard Street (Unionists), and St. David’s House at 715 Howard Street (Welsh). None of these buildings still stand. One observer, describing the intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission streets in 1878, wrote:

The scene is a long busy street in San Francisco. Innumerable small shops lined it from north to south; horse cars, always crowded with passengers, hurried to and fro; narrow streets intersected the broader one, these built up with small dwellings, most of them rather neglected by their owners. In the middle distance were other narrow streets and alleys where taller houses stood, and the windows, fire-escapes, and balconies of these added great variety to the landscape, as the families housed there kept most of their effects on the outside during the long dry season.

All the most desirable sites were occupied by saloons, for it was practically impossible to quench the thirst of the neighborhood. There were also in evidence barbers, joiners, plumbers, grocers, fruit-sellers, bakers, and vendors of small wares, and there was the largest and most splendidly recruited army of do-nothings...[I]n many cases the shops and homes...were under one roof, and children scuttled in and out, behind and under the counters and over the thresholds into the street.<sup>57</sup>

### *Schools*

The author of the passage above was Kate Douglas Wiggin, author of *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*. Wiggin, fresh from college with a teaching degree, came to San Francisco with the mission of establishing a free kindergarten “...in some dreary, poverty-stricken place in a large city, a place swarming with unmothered, undefended, under-nourished child-life.” Her efforts were successful and in September 1878, Wiggin established the first free kindergarten in the West. Called Silver Street Free Kindergarten, it was located off 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, about five blocks south of Market, just outside the boundaries of the survey area.<sup>58</sup> There were also several public and parochial schools in the survey area, including Jefferson Public School at 25 Tehama Street and St. Vincent’s Catholic School at 671 Mission Street. There was also a “colored” school at 2<sup>nd</sup> and

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<sup>55</sup> “South of Market Street: A Brief Guide to its Architecture,” *Heritage Newsletter* (Volume XIII No. 2): 7.

<sup>56</sup> Paul Groth, *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 199).

<sup>57</sup> Quoted in Anne B. Bloomfield, “A History of the California Historical Society’s New Mission Street Neighborhood,” *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 382.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

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Howard streets, indicating the presence of a small African-American population.<sup>59</sup> None of these schools still stand.

#### *Labor Agitation*

As a concentrated area of workingmen, the South of Market Area became home to several labor organizations and was often the venue for strikes and demonstrations. During the 1870s, the Workingmen's Party, led by teamster Denis Kearney, maintained its headquarters in the South of Market at Union Hall, on Howard Street, between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> streets. Armed with the slogan: "The Chinese Must Go!" Kearney attracted many members among his fellow Irish working-class residents. Stumping from the empty "sand lots" of the South of Market Kearney exploited the Panic of 1873 and the ensuing depression to blame widespread unemployment on the Chinese and the capitalists who employed them.<sup>60</sup>

The Irish also dominated local Democratic Party politics with figures such as Bill Higgins, Sam Rainey, and Christopher "Blind Boss" Buckley. Despite efforts from the city's elite to dilute Irish voting power, the demographics were generally in their favor and during the latter part of the nineteenth century and up until the 1906 Earthquake, San Francisco's Irish and Irish-Americans dominated the political scene from their strongholds in the South of Market and the Mission District.

#### *Ethnic Diversity*

It is important to keep in mind that although the South of Market was heavily Irish, it was not exclusively so. Unlike Eastern cities with their monolithic ghettos, San Francisco's residential districts were rarely (with the notable exception of Chinatown) exclusively the provinces of one particular ethnic group. Research performed by the late Anne Bloomfield has revealed that the South of Market was ethnically mixed. Her analysis of the 1880 Census schedules for a particular census tract near the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission in the survey area reveal that the area's population was a little over one-third Irish-born. Including native-born children, persons of Irish descent comprised nearly half the population, which was true for most of the South of Market. Almost one-quarter of the total population of this census tract was native-born from elsewhere in the United States. The remaining population—comprising about one quarter of the total—were born in nations other than Ireland or the United States, including Germany, Austria, England, Scotland, Canada, Italy, Mexico, China, and various Scandinavian nations.<sup>61</sup>

#### *New Montgomery Street*

The survey area was not only about industry and working-class politics. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century a portion of the district evolved into a prosperous southerly extension of the downtown commercial district. During the 1870s, speculators watched as San Francisco's downtown commercial and financial district moved south from Jackson Square along Montgomery, Sansome, and Kearny streets. Unfortunately, Jasper O'Farrell's 1847 survey made expansion south of Market Street very difficult because the north-south streets on either side of Market Street did not align. In the early 1870s, two wealthy San Francisco businessmen, Asbury Harpending and banker William Ralston, began buying properties on the south side of Market Street and made plans to extend Montgomery Street south of Market. They envisioned the extension, which they called New Montgomery Street, as an upscale office, banking, retail, and hospitality district. Ralston envisioned the street eventually extending all the way south to his properties at Hunters Point. The two men bought up all the land on either side of the proposed street as far south as Howard Street and began demolishing buildings to construct the new street. In order to ensure consistent development patterns, they established design guidelines to ensure

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> "South of Market Street: A Brief Guide to its Architecture," *Heritage Newsletter* (Volume XIII No. 2), 7.

<sup>61</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, "A History of the California Historical Society's New Mission Street Neighborhood," *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 378.

uniform building heights and cohesive façade materials and ornament, an early example of city planning in San Francisco, albeit for private gain.<sup>62</sup>



**Figure 14. New Montgomery Street, 1885**  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

New Montgomery Street was developed largely along the lines envisioned by Harpending and Ralston, although neither man was able to convince property owners south of Howard Street to sell, effectively stopping the street where it now terminates, only two blocks south of Market. Prominent structures soon arose on the sites of former frame houses and industrial buildings, including the Palace Hotel, which opened for business on October 5, 1875 on the corner of Market and New Montgomery streets. Designed by New York architect John P. Gaynor, the Palace was the largest and most well-appointed hotel in the United States. The Grand Hotel, also designed by architect John P. Gaynor, opened nearby. The block of New Montgomery Street between Mission and Howard streets acquired three elegant brick commercial buildings, including the Grand Army of the Republic Hall (GAR), the Olympic Club, and the Armory Block. All three buildings conformed to a unified design scheme of classically detailed facades and mansard roofs (**Figure 14**). Other important buildings came to New Montgomery Street, including the U.S. Army Quartermaster's Depot and the New Metropolitan Market.<sup>63</sup> None of these buildings still exist.

The New Montgomery project elevated real estate values in the adjoining areas along Mission, Howard, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> streets, leading to the gradual replacement of lower-value industrial and residential structures with far more substantial commercial, entertainment, and civic structures. One of the most impressive of these projects was the Grand Opera House which opened at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission on January 17, 1876. The luxury hotels and the 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 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets attracted several large wholesale furniture, carpet, and bedding businesses.<sup>64</sup>

By 1900, the survey area was entirely built out and urban in every respect. According to the 1899 Sanborn Map, the general pattern of development included of a large concentration of substantial masonry commercial buildings along Market Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets and along New Montgomery and the numbered cross streets as far south as Howard Street. These more

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 379.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 380.

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expensive buildings were interwoven among wood-frame tenements and hotels as one moved further away from Market Street. Meanwhile, industrial plants and warehouses dominated the area east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street as far as Steuart Street.

#### *Socio-economic Trends in the South of Market*

By the turn of the twentieth century, the U.S. Census recorded that the residential population of the survey area had grown poorer and more culturally diverse than it had been in 1880. This state of affairs resulted both from the exodus of many long-term residents to the Mission District and other outlying areas and the growing influx of foreign-born immigrants. An examination of a sample census tract near 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission streets in 1900 reveals that all residents (about 500 persons) rented. Ninety-three percent of all residents were either adults or working teenagers, and only about a quarter had children. Sixty percent were single and of the 31 percent who were married, almost one-third lived apart from their spouses. Half were foreign-born. Of the total population of the tract, 10 percent were born in Ireland, 12 percent in Germany and another 12 percent from the rest of continental Europe. Four percent were Canadian and 6 percent British. Only a handful were not of European descent, with eighteen African-Americans, seven Japanese, five Chinese and three Mexicans. Of the remaining 50 percent of residents that were native-born, 21 percent were born in California and the remaining 29 percent were born in another state.<sup>65</sup>

The employment prospects for residents of the survey area were not all that good at the turn of the twentieth century. In the same census tract examined above, unemployment ran upwards of one quarter of the resident workforce, although this figure included seasonally unemployed workers such as maritime and agricultural workers. According to the census schedules, approximately two-thirds of the workforce consisted of manual workers, either skilled or unskilled. Clerks comprised 7 percent of the workforce, and small proprietors comprised 14 percent of the total. Professionals, including lawyers, musicians, accountants, teachers and other educated workers comprised the remaining 12 percent of the population. The survey area was a heavily transient place. In each of three five-year periods between 1885 and 1900, only 21 percent of the population remained at one address, while 40-45 percent of the population moved elsewhere in the city, with the remaining either dying or leaving the city altogether.<sup>66</sup>

The Depression of 1893 harshly affected the lives of the residents of the survey area. The legions of unemployed and underemployed foraged for food and money as best they could in the absence of government assistance. Private and religious organizations stepped in to assist. The Salvation Army was one of the first charitable organizations to set up operations in the survey area, at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission streets. The Salvation Army also established a wood yard where hungry or homeless individuals might chop wood in return for a meal and lodging. Associated Charities established another wood yard nearby on Main Street and the Episcopal Church organized a school, parish church, dispensary, mothers' group, sewing school, gymnasium, nursery and a home for working boys. Other charitable organizations included free medical clinics, various missions dedicated to reforming prostitutes,<sup>67</sup> ethnic fraternal organizations, orphanages, and clinics to assist alcoholics and opium addicts.

#### *1906 Earthquake and Fire*

On April 18, 1906, San Francisco was devastated by a great earthquake. The South of Market Area was especially hard hit by the temblor, which liquified the extensive filled ground, and the dozens of fires that broke out as a result of broken gas mains. The fires quickly grew out of control, fed by the densely packed frame buildings. The water mains had also broken and fire fighters soon found themselves powerless to stop the flames. The entire neighborhood was consumed within six hours of the quake. The death toll in the South of Market Area, estimated in the thousands, was much higher than the rest of the city, where many of the cheaply built hotels

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 383.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 384.



and boarding houses collapsed on their inhabitants. According to the research of Gladys Hansen, the number of those killed in the South of Market was drastically undercounted by officials deliberately seeking to minimize the perception of widespread death and destruction.<sup>68</sup>

#### *Disaster Survivors*

The 1906 Earthquake and Fire destroyed virtually every building and structure in the survey area (**Figure 15**). However, the shells of several buildings remained standing throughout the survey area, including the Atlas Building at 602 Mission, the Aronson Building at 700 Mission, the Monadnock Building at 685 Market Street, the Call-Spreckels Building at 26 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, the Palace Hotel at 2 New Montgomery Street, the Rialto Building at 100 New Montgomery, and the Wells Fargo Building at 85 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Only one building appears to have emerged from the earthquake completely unscathed, the small two-story brick Burdette Building (extant), located on the northwest corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Mission Streets. According to an article in the June 18, 1906, edition of the *San Francisco Morning Call*, the building survived with its windows unbroken and interior stock intact because it was sheltered from the flames behind the much larger Atlas Building next door.<sup>69</sup>

#### **E. RECONSTRUCTION: 1907-1929**

##### *Recovery*

Unlike certain parts of the city, such as North Beach, where reconstruction occurred quite rapidly after the 1906 Earthquake, much of the South of Market Area – including the survey area – took a decade or longer to fully recover. In 1907, a booster organization published a map showing which areas of the city had been rebuilt. The map, which highlighted all parcels with new construction, temporary structures, or wrecked buildings scheduled to be repaired, indicated that most of the



**Figure 15. Post-1906 Earthquake Destruction in the South of Market**  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

South of Market remained vacant. The recovery of the entire city to pre-quake prosperity took at least a decade. Wrecked buildings had to be demolished and the ruins carted away, insurance claims settled, title questions resolved, land resurveyed, building permits acquired, and materials and contractors secured (**Figure 16**). In many ways, the survey area was uniquely affected by the disaster due to uncertainty over whether pre-quake land uses, in particular wood-frame residential construction, would be allowed to be rebuilt.<sup>70</sup> The end result of several of these factors resulted in a strikingly different neighborhood by the early 1920s. Some of the specific factors are discussed in more detail below.

<sup>68</sup> Gladys Hansen, *Denial of Disaster* (San Francisco: Cameron & Company, 1989).

<sup>69</sup> "Burdette's Building is Intact Amid Ruins," *San Francisco Call* (June 18, 1906).

<sup>70</sup> Stephen Tobriner, *Braced for Disaster: Earthquake-Resistant Architecture and Engineering in San Francisco, 1838-1933* (Berkeley, CA: Bancroft Library and Heyday Books, 2006), 200.

### Insurance Claims

After the quake, many national insurance companies simply refused to pay customer claims in San Francisco. Some argued that the earthquake was an “act of God” not covered by their policies. Other insurance companies were simply unable to pay the claims and went out of business, leaving many commercial and industrial property owners in San Francisco without any money to rebuild. Eventually, San Francisco’s business and civic leaders applied pressure on the most solvent insurance companies to pay fair settlements, although the resolution of claims took several years.<sup>71</sup>

### Fear of Future Disaster

In the wake of the disaster, San Francisco’s business community launched an all-out public relations blitz to convince potential investors that the destruction visited on San Francisco was the result of the fires (which could happen anywhere) and not the earthquake itself. Regardless, many Eastern businessmen questioned whether San Francisco was a safe place to do business.

Outside investment was necessary to rebuild San Francisco, and it took some time before investors were convinced that future earthquakes would not be a menace to stable



Figure 16. Clearing of Debris near Third and Mission, 1906  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

property values, further delaying the reconstruction of the South of Market.<sup>72</sup>

### Fire Limits

A third factor in the slow pace of recovery was the long-running controversy over whether to extend the fire limits south of Market Street. Following several disastrous fires during the 1850s, city authorities forbade wood-frame structures in the downtown districts, including the south side of Market Street and along the first two blocks of 2<sup>nd</sup>, New Montgomery, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> streets, extending as far south as Howard Street. Within the survey area, a substantial portion of which lay within the fire limits, most pre-quake commercial buildings had been built of masonry as a result of functional requirements and insurance regulations. After 1900, the survey area, increasingly viewed as a southern extension of downtown, acquired several notable steel-frame masonry buildings, the exteriors of which survived the earthquake. Beyond the fire limits, the survey area had been a much more heterogeneous place before the earthquake, with frame cottages and tenements and industrial buildings of different structural types. To make their investments more secure, many industrialists wished to prevent the reconstruction of frame dwellings in the South of Market after the disaster. In the summer of 1906, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, under pressure from homeowners, opposed the extension of the fire limits to the entire South of Market, settling instead for a blanket prohibition on flammable roofing materials. Although the industrialists lost the argument, the uncertainty caused many residential

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

property owners to sell to real estate syndicates who assembled residential lots into larger commercial and industrial lots.<sup>73</sup>

### *Reconstruction*

Reconstruction of the survey area began with an initial flurry of building activity occurring between 1906 and 1913, with more construction occurring after the First World War between 1918 and 1920, and culminating with a major real estate boom in the mid-1920s. The 1915 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps covering the survey area illustrate substantial changes in comparison with the 1899 maps. The industrial area east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street was approximately 60 percent reconstructed, including many one and two-story heavy-timber frame industrial buildings, most of which were clad in corrugated iron or masonry to reduce the risk of fire. A wide range of businesses occupied these new buildings, including pre-quake-era heavy industries such as Main Street Iron Works at 163 Main Street, F.T. Garratt & Co. Brass and Bell Foundry at 289 Fremont Street, Selby Smelting & Lead Co. at 201 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and many smaller machine shops. There were also several major food processing facilities, the most notable of which was Folger Coffee Company, located in a five-story brick warehouse (extant) at 200 Spear Street. Within the survey area there are only a few remnants of the immediate post-1906 industrial area east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Examples include the Hills Brothers Teas, Coffees & Spices warehouse, a heavy timber-frame brick warehouse built in 1908 at 177 Fremont Street (extant); and the Marine Electric Building, a cast iron-frame brick building built in 1907 at 195-97 Fremont Street (extant) (**Figure 17**).

West of 1<sup>st</sup> Street along Mission and Howard and the intersecting numbered streets, the 1915 Sanborn Maps illustrate many substantial new and reconstructed steel and heavy timber-frame loft buildings housing light manufacturing, paper companies, printers and binderies, and wholesale warehouses. Some were pre-quake survivors such as the Wells Fargo Building at 71-85 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, which was restored in 1907 (extant). By 1908, the Aronson Building, which still stands at 700 Mission Street, was outfitted with a new interior and in 1910, the Rialto Building was recommissioned (extant). Others were newly constructed. Perhaps the first masonry loft building completed after the disaster was the Greenwood Estate Building at 545 Mission Street. Planned in May 1906, this five-story brick building, constructed to house a paper company, is the last of its type on the 500 block of Mission (**Figure 18**). Most of these buildings were designed in the American Commercial style with



Figure 17. Marine Electric Building, 2007  
Source: KVP Consulting

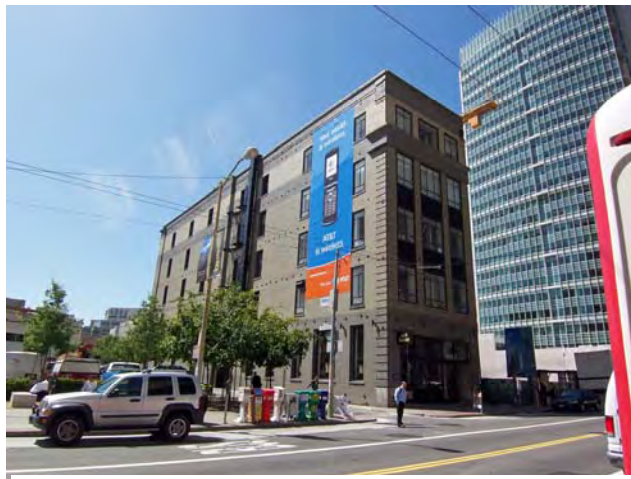


Figure 18. Greenwood Estate Building, 2007  
Source: KVP Consulting

<sup>73</sup> Stephen Tobriner, *Braced for Disaster: Earthquake-Resistant Architecture and Engineering in San Francisco, 1838-1933* (Berkeley, CA: Bancroft Library and Heyday Books, 2006), 200.

spare Renaissance Revival ornamentation.

The most valuable real estate in the survey area remained along Market and New Montgomery streets. Much of the land in this area remained in the hands of wealthy investors, family estates, and realty companies such as the Sharon Estate Company. Formed in 1885 by Francis G. Newlands after the death of Nevada Senator William Sharon (former business partner of William C. Ralston), the Sharon Estate rebuilt the Palace Hotel in 1909, the Sharon Building in 1912 (**Figure 19**) and many of the more significant buildings that remain on New Montgomery Street.<sup>74</sup> The Palace and the Sharon Building still stand, as do most of the post-quake buildings along New Montgomery Street.

The transformation of much of the survey area into a southerly extension of downtown was reflected in the large number of skyscrapers built along both Mission and Market streets. Market Street acquired several new and repaired pre-1906 skyscrapers between 1906 and 1910. Extant examples include the Metropolitan Trust and Savings Bank, built in 1907 at 625 Market Street; the Hearst Building, built in 1909 at 691 Market Street; and the Spreckels Building, rebuilt in 1907 at 703 Market Street. The intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission evolved into the most important intersection in the survey area, bracketed on three corners by important early skyscrapers, including the rebuilt Aronson Building on the northwest corner (extant); the Williams Building on southeast corner (extant), and the Gunst Building (demolished) on the southwest corner.<sup>75</sup>



Figure 19. Sharon Building, 2007  
Source: KVP Consulting

The initial flurry of post-quake reconstruction was followed by a brief recession. By the First World War, construction had picked up again, with several substantial new office buildings and hotels constructed in the survey area. Examples include the new Call Building, built in 1914 at 74 New Montgomery Street (extant); and the Santa Fe Building, constructed in 1917 at 601 Market Street (extant). After subsiding for several more years, the market picked up again in the early 1920s. Two of the most important surviving high rise buildings were constructed during this period: the Matson Building at 215 Market (1921) and the PG & E Building, built in 1922 at 245 Market Street (**Figure 20**).

#### *Civic Infrastructure*

Investors lobbied city authorities to reconstruct the survey area's infrastructure as rapidly as possible. In November 1908, the South of Market Improvement Association lobbied the City to clean up the remaining earthquake debris, repave the streets in basalt and bitumen, re-establish all public transit lines, and improve the physical infrastructure of the area. In an article published in the November 16, 1908, edition of



Figure 20. Matson and P G & E Buildings, 1945  
Source: San Francisco History Center

<sup>74</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, "A History of the California Historical Society's New Mission Street Neighborhood," *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 385.

<sup>75</sup> Michael Corbett, *Splendid Survivors* (San Francisco: California Living Books, 1978), various.

the *San Francisco Call*, association secretary Oliver G. Lansing discussed the need for improved lighting in the South of Market.<sup>76</sup> Headquartered in the Williams Building at 101-07 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, the association, which consisted of some of the neighborhood's largest property owners, including Joseph Rothschild, E.R. Lilienthal, Robert O. Parker, Charles Schlessinger, Samuel N. Rucker, E.W. Crellin, and others, laid out its goals in the December 11, 1909, edition of the *San Francisco Call*. The association sought improved postal facilities; better gas, water and electricity service; extended public transportation routes and service, more efficient police and fire protection, more favorable insurance rates and other incentives to speed up the reconstruction of this part of the city.<sup>77</sup>

The 1915 Sanborn Maps shows very little new civic construction had been completed by this time. Examples that do appear include the U.S. Postal Service Post Office Station "K" (extant), at 83 Stevenson Street (extant). Designed by Willis Polk and built in 1909 as a central pneumatic delivery hub for downtown San Francisco, the building is a one-story, heavy-timber frame structure (**Figure 21**). In 1920, the Municipal Railway built a substation next door at 79 Stevenson Street (extant). The only other civic building that appears on the 1913-15 Sanborn Map is San Francisco Fire Department's Engine House No. 4/Water Tower No. 1, located at 676 Howard Street. This facility is no longer extant although a later fire house still occupies the parcel.



**Figure 21. U.S. Postal Service Station "K", 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting

#### *Residential Reconstruction*

Throughout the greater South of Market Area, residential structures built after 1906 fall into three major categories: three to six-story wood-frame or masonry apartment buildings and residential hotels, three-story frame flats, and small single-family cottages. Residents of the hotels and boarding houses tended to be seasonal workers or the elderly, while the cottages and flats more often housed families and their boarders. Thanks to rising real estate values and more stringent insurance regulations, very little new single-family construction appeared in the survey area after the 1906 Earthquake. According to the 1913-15 Sanborn Maps, there were only a few three-story frame flats built within the survey area. Only one survives today: a three-story, Mission Revival style frame flat built in 1913 at 568 Folsom Street (**Figure 22**). The only heavily residential area within the survey area was 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, where a row of three and four-story masonry residential hotels occupied both sides of the street between Mission and Folsom streets.



**Figure 22. 568 Folsom Street**  
Source: KVP Consulting

<sup>76</sup> "Plans Campaign to Aid District," *San Francisco Call* (November 16, 1908).

<sup>77</sup> "To Improve South of Market Street," *San Francisco Call* (December 11, 1909).

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Examples included the Hotel Alta at 165 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (demolished), the Golden Eagle Hotel at 253 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (demolished), and the Hotel Jessie at 96 Jessie Street. With the exception of the façade of the Hotel Jessie and the recently rehabilitated Planters Hotel at 606 Folsom Street (1907) no residential hotels exist today.

#### *Post-1906 Socio-economic Trends*

The 1906 Earthquake and Fire dramatically changed the socio-economic characteristics of the survey area. The exclusion of residential construction caused its population to plummet. Between 1900 and 1910, the population of the South of Market declined from 62,000 to 24,000.<sup>78</sup> The population that remained was largely white, single, and male. These characteristics did not change much until the Second World War. As foreign immigration declined during the first quarter of the twentieth century, the proportion of American-born residents increased within much of the South of Market. An analysis of the 1920 Census reveals that a census tract within the vicinity of 3<sup>rd</sup> 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). Of this group, only 12 percent were born in California, with 52 percent born elsewhere in the United States. The remaining third of the population was foreign-born, comprised of Scandinavians at 8 percent, Germans and Irish at 6 percent each, British (including Scottish) at 5 percent, and other Europeans at 7 percent. Only five individuals of the total population were born outside Europe or North America.<sup>79</sup>

In regard to occupation, the population of this particular census tract was diverse, with 34 percent employed in the skilled industrial trades, 6 percent in semi-skilled industrial trades, 16 percent in office work, 10 percent employed in the nearby hotels, and 20 percent employed in a variety of seasonal unskilled or semi-skilled occupations ranging from farm work to logging, mining, janitorial services, and night watch duties. Many of these individuals worked intensively for part of the year but found themselves at loose ends during the winter. When seasonal work came to an end, many workers in the region made their way to San Francisco to rent inexpensive quarters in the South of Market, where their money would stretch farther.<sup>80</sup> Operating on the margins of mainstream, middle-class society, many of these individuals were responsible for the creation of much of the region's physical infrastructure and generated much wealth for Western businesses and property owners, but rarely did they get to share in its prosperity.

The businesses and institutions that grew up to serve the residential population of the South of Market after 1906 were concentrated within two corridors. Residential hotels, cafeterias, second-hand clothing stores, pawn shops, saloons, gambling parlors, pool halls, public baths, a movie house, barber shops, and newsagents were concentrated along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, between Market and Folsom streets. Meanwhile, employment offices (residents called it "the slave market"), missions, and other social service agencies were located along Howard and Folsom streets.<sup>81</sup> Within the survey area, the Kip Cannon Memorial Mission and Day Nursery was located at 246 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (no longer extant). Most of the other missions were located along Howard Street, west of 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **F. GREAT DEPRESSION AND WORLD WAR II: 1930-1945**

##### *Remodels and Public Works*

The survey area achieved build out by 1930. The building boom of the mid-to-late 1920s resulted in the construction of several buildings as infill projects on the few remaining vacant parcels. In some cases, older buildings were demolished and replaced with new larger buildings, in particular close to Market Street. The Great Depression slowed new construction to a halt, limiting work to façade remodels for the most part. Important buildings erected during this period include the Timothy Pflueger-designed Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company Building at 134-40 New

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<sup>78</sup> "South of Market Street: A Brief Guide to its Architecture," *Heritage Newsletter* (Volume XIII, No. 2): 7.

<sup>79</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, "A History of the California Historical Society's New Mission Street Neighborhood," *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 388.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

Montgomery Street (1925), the Philips & Van Orden Building at 234 1<sup>st</sup> Street (1929), and the William Volker Building at 625 Howard Street (1929 and 1939) (**Figure 23**).<sup>82</sup>

During the 1930s, many private property owners no longer possessed the financial wherewithal to build anew. As a result, several of the most important Depression-era construction projects in the survey area were remodels. One of the most significant is the Atlas Building, a ten-story office building located at 602 Mission Street (extant). Erected in 1904, the original ornate Renaissance/Baroque style building was damaged in the 1906 Earthquake and Fire and subsequently repaired. By 1931, the heavy terra cotta ornament was beginning to fail. Consequently, the building owners hired architect John V.D. Linden to remove the existing façade materials and reface the building with fluted terra cotta and simplified Art Deco ornament.<sup>83</sup> Another building in the survey area that was remodeled in this fashion was the Spreckels Building. Designed in a florid Venetian Renaissance style by the Reid Brothers in 1898, damaged in 1906, and repaired afterward, the building looked tired by the late 1930s. Crumbling sandstone trim made it a hazard as well. Consequently, in 1937, the owners hired architect Albert Roller to reface it in concrete and replace the dome with a new six-story vertical addition. The building was given a stripped-down Moderne styling (**Figure 24**).<sup>84</sup>



**Figure 23. William Volker Building, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting



**Figure 24. Central Tower**  
Source: KVP Consulting

The only major new construction projects to occur in the survey area during the Depression were public works projects associated with the completion of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge (Bay Bridge) in 1936. The most important of these was the Transbay Terminal Building. Designed jointly by Timothy Pflueger and Arthur Brown, Jr., the Transbay Terminal was built to serve as the primary transit depot for East Bay commuters. Linked to the Oakland-Bay Bridge by a looping, reinforced-concrete viaduct, the Transbay Terminal allowed the suburban Key System trains that traveled over the bridge to drop off and pick up passengers in downtown San Francisco. The Transbay Terminal was designed to handle as many as 35 million people annually. In its heyday at the end of World War II, the terminal handled 26 million passengers annually. After the war ended and gas rationing was eliminated, the Terminal's use began to steadily decline. In 1958, the lower deck of the Bay Bridge was converted to automobile traffic only, the Key System dismantled, and by 1959, the Transbay Terminal was converted into a regional suburban bus depot.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Michael Corbett, *Splendid Survivors: San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage* (San Francisco: California Living Books, 1978).

<sup>83</sup> Vincent Rainey, "Modernizing a Twenty-five Year Old Office Building," *Architect & Engineer* (October 1931), 61-4.

<sup>84</sup> "Central Tower-A New Note in San Francisco's Skyline," *Architect & Engineer* (August 1938), 14-22.

<sup>85</sup> "Building Bay Bridge Railroad Terminal," *Architect & Engineer* (June 1938), 43-46.

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The construction of the Transbay Terminal and viaducts for the Key Route and vehicular on-ramps led to substantial physical changes in the survey area. Dozens of buildings had to be demolished and lot lines reconfigured to make way for the structures. Ultimately, portions of seven blocks (Assessor's Blocks 3718, 3719, 3721, 3736, 3737, 3738, and 3739) were directly impacted by the construction.<sup>86</sup> The introduction of the Transbay Terminal and the vehicular off-ramps also make the survey area more easily accessed (and visible) to a large percentage of the Bay Area's population, increasing its desirability for redevelopment.

#### *Interwar Socio-economic Trends*

The Depression, brought on by the collapse of the Stock Market in 1929, made it very difficult for the remaining residents of the survey area to earn a living. With many local businesses running on a reduced workforce, men found themselves competing for increasingly scarce work. Although the passage of the first New Deal work relief programs in 1933 created work for some, many of the residents of the survey area were older and some already crippled by a lifetime of hard work, poor nutrition, and heavy alcohol use. Although some men turned to religious missions for assistance, others avoided them because a free meal often came with an unwanted sermon. State and federal relief programs were often of little use either, rejecting older and less healthy individuals as being "unemployable." Some outside observers became alarmed at the sight of clusters of these men standing on street corners or hanging about in front of gambling halls and saloons in an area that popularly came to be known as "Skid Road" (**Figure 25**). However, some local residents remembered things differently. Peter Mendelsohn, a merchant seaman who later opposed the Redevelopment Agency's efforts to replace his neighborhood with the Yerba Buena Center in the 1970s recalled:

The Second World War brought great changes to the South of Market, and indeed, the rest of San Francisco. Due to its many war plants, shipyards, and military bases, the San Francisco Bay region became known as the "Arsenal of Democracy." War workers lured by the prospect of relatively well-paying jobs and perhaps a change of scenery inundated San Francisco, Oakland, Richmond, South San Francisco, and other industrial communities ringing the Bay. Many of the newcomers were Dust Bowl refugees from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas. Others were African Americans from Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi seeking relief from enduring poverty and Jim Crow laws. In addition, Latin American immigrants from El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Mexico and Asian immigrants from the Philippines began to establish communities in the area. Whatever their motives, the new migrants swelled the population of the South of Market and changed the cultural and ethnic composition of the area. In 1940, the entire South of Market was only 5 percent non-white, but by 1950 the figure had reached 14 percent.<sup>87</sup>

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 South of Market was a working-class neighborhood...The men were floaters; 40% were seamen, stewards, engineers and deck-hands; the rest waiters, maintenance men, and part-time longshoremen...People spent their days sitting, dreaming, who knows what?...they always lived in the same hotel, though, because you like to live with your buddies. Drinking, talking, gossiping, playing cards or dominoes, the people had a sense of the neighborhood as their home...<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1948-50.

<sup>87</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, "A History of the California Historical Society's New Mission Street Neighborhood," *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 389.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 389.





**Figure 25. Men on “Skid Road,” 1940s**  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

#### **G. POST-WAR REDEVELOPMENT: 1946-1984**

##### *The Recent Past*

The survey area has been shaped to a significant extent by historical patterns and events that include the past fifty years, a period referred to by preservationists as the “Recent Past.” Typically excluded from surveys due to a perceived lack of historic significance, the vast changes occurring in the survey area within the Recent Past warrant their inclusion in this survey, along with the resources they have generated. Several such crucial events include the approval of the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area in 1966, the Urban Design Plan of 1971, and the Downtown Plan of 1985. Organized opposition to the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area evolved as one of the most formidable and successful examples nationally of resistance to urban renewal. Both the 1971 Urban Design Guidelines and the 1985 Downtown Plan are important planning instruments in America, meeting National Register Criteria Consideration G for exceptional importance.<sup>89</sup>

##### *Background to Urban Redevelopment*

In the years following World War II, city authorities began to envision a different future for the survey area, and indeed the rest of the South of Market Area. Since the achievement of build-out in the late 1920s, little new construction had occurred aside from the Transbay Terminal and its associated viaducts. After the war, the South of Market, in particular the western portion of the survey area, resumed its longstanding role as a refuge for poor and working-class single men, many of whom eked out a living through casual employment. By 1953, citing economic stagnation, poverty, and increasing crime, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency declared a large portion of the South of Market an urban renewal zone. As later envisioned by developer Ben Swig in 1955, the “San Francisco Prosperity Plan” sought to leverage by federal urban renewal dollars redevelopment of the area bounded by Mission, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Harrison, and 5<sup>th</sup> streets with a civic arena, convention center, and 7,000-car parking garage (**Figure 26**).<sup>90</sup> Upon inspection of the area, San Francisco Planning Director Paul Opperman found little actual blight, suggesting Swig’s motives were guided more by self-interest than community altruism. More candid in his

<sup>89</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1990, rev. 1998).

<sup>90</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco* (San Francisco: Glide Publications, 1974), 23.

observations than Swig, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency chief M. Justin Herman in 1970 summed up the prevailing attitude toward urban renewal in the South of Market: “This land is too valuable to permit poor people to park on it.”<sup>91</sup>



**Figure 26. Ben Swig and Associates unveil Yerba Buena Center**  
Source: San Francisco Public Library

The South of Market Area's value lay in its proximity to San Francisco's Central Business District (CBD). Its generally large lot sizes, lower property values, and accessibility to regional transit and freeways made the South of Market, and in particular the survey area, an attractive location for new office buildings, cultural institutions, and retail. South of Market redevelopment was justified in large part by the poverty of its residents and the poor housing stock that characterized much of the area, in particular the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street corridor, where “bums and winos” were in plain view of suburban commuters. Local businessmen viewed the residents of the South of Market as being politically powerless, allowing their residential hotels, restaurants, and bars to become easy targets for redevelopment.<sup>92</sup> Advocates of redevelopment soon came to realize that the residents of the South of Market, many of whom were veterans of 1930s-era labor struggles, were formidable opponents. Before examining this story in greater detail it is important to touch on the larger context of CBD expansion into the survey area.

#### *The Office and the Central Business District*

In common with other American cities, San Francisco developed a Central Business District (CBD) in the late nineteenth century. Nationwide, CBDs came into existence as the scale of business activity and the size of corporations increased enormously. With such increases, the traditional practice of conducting administrative activities either in relatively undifferentiated parts of production facilities— or in semi-public spaces such as cafes, saloons, markets, the street, or public squares—became increasingly impractical. The architectural remedy was the office, a specialized space for administrative activities. At first, offices could easily be fitted into production, storage, or sales buildings. However, as expanding businesses rapidly bureaucratized their

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>92</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco* (San Francisco: Glide Publications, 1974), 13.

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operations, clerical and administrative functions required ever greater increases in personnel and the need for separate spatial accommodations followed.<sup>93</sup>

With communication still largely dependent on face-to-face meetings, business people still needed to remain physically proximate to other business people, especially others in related industries, and professional service firms, as well as clients. This dictated that business offices tended to be concentrated in small areas. In San Francisco, as early as the 1860s a financial district was in place around the intersection of California and Montgomery streets, anchored by the Bank of California Building, which by the latter part of the nineteenth century, had emerged as the core of the emerging CBD. At this time the survey area, a part of the larger South of Market neighborhood, had become a mixed zone of industry and wholesaling, and low status residences.<sup>94</sup>

### *High Rise Buildings*

Concurrently, a revolution in building technology was taking place, motivated in part by evolving technological factors, including the increasing use of iron and eventually steel framing, which allowed far greater building heights. Thus office space could be vastly increased without commensurate land purchases, and without moving beyond the CBD. Businesses embraced the new technology and began to expand upwards. Instead of traveling horizontally to a meeting, one could now travel vertically using the newly invented and convenient passenger elevator.<sup>95</sup>

But the ensuing building boom was not driven entirely by practical considerations. From the beginning, the ability to construct tall buildings played to motives of cultural display and personal or corporate pride. Western culture had long expressed importance and power through tall structures, most notably with the cathedrals and church towers of Europe and the Americas, but also in municipal and state buildings when those institutions gained importance during the Renaissance and early modern period. In most cases, the exaggerated height elements of these earlier buildings did not contain functional space, for the required thickness of masonry walls precluded that. Instead, the vertical composition might utilize uninhabitable attics, spires, or narrow towers, simply to amplify the height.

Steel frame construction allowed tall buildings to provide usable space throughout their height. It also permitted palpable increases in sheer volume, with resulting concerns about tall and bulky buildings blocking light and air. In 1916, New York City adopted the earliest zoning regulations to apply city-wide as a reaction to construction of the Equitable Building, which still stands at 120 Broadway. The building towered over neighboring residences, completely covering its entire site, blocking most windows of neighboring buildings and diminishing sunlight in the affected area. These laws soon became the blueprint for zoning practice in the rest of the country, namely as the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act accepted almost without change by most states. New York City went on to develop more complex sets of zoning regulations, pioneering the use of floor-area-ratios (FAR), which, by prescribing a maximum ratio of floor space in the building to total area of the lot resulted in “wedding cake” buildings that rose in tiers, each one stepped inward.<sup>96</sup>

In San Francisco, although the main CBD arose north of Market Street, several taller buildings were located on Market Street itself and nearby New Montgomery Street. The first metal framed “skyscraper” in the city was the ten-story DeYoung, or Chronicle building (1889), at Market and Kearny streets. By the time of the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, it had been joined by the 19-story Spreckels/Call building (1896), opposite at the southwest corner of Market and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets. The

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<sup>93</sup> Olivier Zunz, *Making America Corporate 1870-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

<sup>94</sup> Brian J. Godfrey, “Urban Development & Redevelopment in San Francisco,” *Geographical Review*, Vol. 87, No.3 (July 1997).

<sup>95</sup> Larry R. Ford, *Cities and Buildings; Skyscrapers, Skid Rows, and Suburbs* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1994).

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

Hearst/Examiner building soon followed on the southeast corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Market, all three forming “Newspaper Angle” (**Figure 27**). These buildings were actually of mixed use. In addition to housing all operations of their respective mass circulation newspapers – from production through distribution, as well as administrative functions – they also contained rental offices, since the newspaper operations did not yet require all the new space. The companies probably found the Market Street location convenient for rapid distribution of multiple daily editions, as well as more central than the financial district for the business of news gathering. Both the DeYoung and the Spreckels buildings substantially survived the 1906 cataclysm. While they required major rebuilding, both remain today, even if considerably altered. The Spreckels building and the replacement Hearst building (1909) are both within the survey area.

#### *The Rebuilding Generation*

The chiefly masonry building stock of San Francisco’s pre-1906 CBD was almost entirely destroyed by the Earthquake and Fire of 1906. During the rebuilding period, the area was reconfigured with taller and more modern structures. This process took place surprisingly rapidly—by about 1910, much of the downtown north of Market Street was reestablished. But it had grown in the rebuilding, both vertically and horizontally. During this time, given the financial devastation accompanying the physical destruction, larger organizations with greater fiscal resources, essentially those populating the CBD, were able to acquire more land from those less well-situated. This



Figure 27: Newspaper Angle (ca. 1904), DeYoung building left, Examiner Building center, Call Building right

resulted in an enlargement of the granular structure of the streetscape and spread the CBD into adjacent land-use areas. In consequence, the warehouse district shifted southward from the Embarcadero waterfront into the South of Market District, while the retail district, previously centered along Grant Avenue, migrated westward to the area around Union Square.<sup>97</sup>

#### *The Long Generation*

Although generally taller than those they replaced, buildings from this period were not as high as those that came later, particularly those from the nationwide building boom of the 1920s. Within the survey area, the Matson Building (1921) and the Pacific Gas & Electric Building (1925), side by side on Market Street, housed operations for two of the most important corporations in the city. The Pacific Telephone Building (1925), home of another major local corporation, broke new ground, with both its spectacular twenty-six stories of Moderne immensity and its new location in the wilds South of Market Street (**Figure 28**). Others, outside the survey area, included the 22-story Standard Oil Building (1921), the 22-story Sutter Building (1927), the 31-story Russ Building (1927), the 22-story Shell Building (1929), the 26-story 450 Sutter Building (1930), and the 22-story Mills Building Annex (1930).<sup>98</sup>

It has been suggested that, despite, or perhaps because of, the rapid pace of rebuilding, the physical fabric that emerged in such work displayed great architectural coherence, one that arose

<sup>97</sup> Brian J. Godfrey, “Urban Development & Redevelopment in San Francisco,” *Geographical Review*, Vol. 87, No.3 (July 1997).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

“from a consensus of classical order and rationality shared by the architects and patrons rather than from any central authority.”<sup>99</sup> According to another historian:

San Francisco was one of the most beautiful of the cities of this era, largely because it was built almost at once. The period was profoundly influenced by the City Beautiful Movement, an aspect of the widespread municipal reform efforts of the time in planning and architecture. The combination of the nearly total building of the downtown between 1906 and 1931 and the influence of the City Beautiful Movement created a city that was architecturally very cohesive, and, in a sense, the fullest flowering of that great age of city-building.<sup>100</sup>

Predictably, the onset of the Great Depression brought building activity to a near halt in CBDs across the country. In San Francisco, the city that was completed in 1931 lasted through some 25 years of Depression, War, and recovery with very little change.<sup>101</sup>

As mentioned, one important project of the 1930s that affected the survey area powerfully was the construction of the Bay Bridge and Transbay Terminal—which at the same time fundamentally altered geographical relationships within the larger Bay area. Easier road access to the city, still the center of population and finance, made cheap suburban land more attractive to industry than the cramped, expensive space South of Market, particularly the heavy industrial zone east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street within the survey area. Later, as industry revived after World War II, it tended to move out to these suburban areas, many of which also offered a less accommodating environment for labor unions.

More broadly, postwar economic and political forces were modifying the social underpinnings of the existing CBD. The basis of San Francisco’s economy was shifting from a mix of industry and finance to “transactional,” that is the exchange of information—which takes place primarily in offices of the service sector of the economy. The shift began to be noticeable in the immediate post-World War II period and gradually escalated until it reached a point described by Chester Hartman in his book, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco*:

Although total employment in the city rose substantially during the 1960s and 1970s (even with total population falling nearly 10 percent in the same period), jobs in the manufacturing and wholesale trade sectors dropped sharply in numbers—and even more as a proportion of total employment—and were replaced by jobs in the real estate, insurance, retail trade, office, and financial sectors. By the mid-1970s, San Francisco was second only to New York City among U.S. cities as a center of international commerce and banking. By the



**Figure 28. Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Building**  
Source: San Francisco History Center

<sup>99</sup>Gray Brechin, “*San Francisco: The City Beautiful*,” in *Visionary San Francisco*, edited by P. Polledri (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1990).

<sup>100</sup>Michael Corbett, *Splendid Survivors: San Francisco’s Downtown Architectural Heritage* (San Francisco: The Foundation for San Francisco’s Architectural Heritage, 1979).

<sup>101</sup>Ibid.

mid-1990s, only 15 percent of the city's total workforce of 513,300 fell into the category, "production, construction, operating, materials handling" (the blue-collar jobs), while 8 percent were "managers and administrative occupations"; 25 percent were "professional, paraprofessional, technical"; 11 percent were "sales and related occupations"; 24 percent were "clerical administrative support"; and 16 percent were "service occupations."<sup>102</sup>

Thus, at the very time when industry was departing the city, there was a converging demand for office space.<sup>103</sup> Although this same historical transformation was enacted in places nationwide, it was more comprehensively successful in San Francisco, which had always been a financial center and headquarters for American business in the West and the Pacific Rim.

Nonetheless, in San Francisco as in most other American cities experiencing similar changes, this cycle of business change did not immediately result in construction of new office buildings. At first, space was still available in the buildings from the 1920s, many of which did not achieve full occupancy until the 1950s. In addition, investors remained reluctant to finance the construction of major new buildings, partially due to the experience of the 1930s, when many owners of 1920s-era building stock were bankrupted by their huge mortgages in the moribund rental market. Meanwhile, one available solution to office demand was to convert vacated industrial or retail buildings to office space.<sup>104</sup> This occurred in many older buildings within the survey area, in particular in the area east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, which was dominated by smaller one and two-story corrugated steel and brick industrial buildings.

#### *The Modernist Generation*

By the late 1950s, new office space began to be conceived and built in downtown San Francisco. The overwhelmingly favorite architectural mode was Corporate Modernism. This style derived from European Modernism of the first decades of the twentieth century by way of the International Style. It generally featured flat planes of glass and steel paneling, and unadorned orthogonal forms. The overall aesthetic may be seen, depending on one's viewpoint, as being either sleek or cold (or both). In San Francisco, the 1959 Crown-Zellerbach Building signaled the beginning of this new era. Its design, though widely admired, contrasted strongly with the prevailing Beaux Arts character of the existing post-1906 built



**Figure 29. 666 Folsom Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting

environment, as did the coarser pre-cast concrete detailing of the 1960s-era Brutalist style buildings that soon followed within the survey area, such as 666 Folsom Street (1970) (**Figure 29**). The term "Brutalist" comes from the French *béton brut*, or "raw concrete," used by Le Corbusier to describe his preferred material of choice later his career. Brutalist buildings are

<sup>102</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco* (San Francisco: Glide Publications, 1974), 13.

<sup>103</sup> Larry R. Ford, *Cities and Buildings; Skyscrapers, Skid Rows, and Suburbs* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1994).

<sup>104</sup> Brian J. Godfrey, "Urban Development & Redevelopment in San Francisco," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 87, No.3 (July 1997).

usually formed with striking repetitive angular geometries that reveal the textures of the wooden forms used to shape the material, which is normally rough, unadorned poured concrete. Both Corporate Modernism and subsequently Brutalism, like their Modernist forebears, explicitly rejected historicism and ornament. Practitioners of these styles also disdained contextualism, proud of their indifference to location, site, and climate. Their stylistic cousin, the Third Bay Region Tradition – sometimes called Northern California Modernism – was more concerned with its surroundings and with the use of texture and color to tone down the gloss of the Corporate Modern form.

Eventually, postwar building introduced an entirely new scale to the CBD. The Crown Zellerbach Building, at 20 stories, was not out of keeping with the 1920s generation, but by 1971 the new P.G. & E. Building at 77 Beale Street, within the survey area, attained 34 stories, or 492 feet tall. Such towers required a large footprint and the P.G. & E. Building covered what had been six separate lots on Mission Street (**Figure 30**). Thus, the granular structure of the streetscape was enlarged, with a resulting reduction of visual diversity and diminished pedestrian sensibility. This building also officially marked one of the first forays of the CBD south of Market Street, the first being the Bechtel Building at 50 Beale Street (1967).



**Figure 30. P G & E Building, 2008**  
Source: KVP Consulting

In other ways, these new structures violated tacit but time-honored local norms of urban design, in particular those that derived from the aforementioned “consensus of classical order and rationality shared by the architects and patrons rather than from any central authority.” Often mounted on blind podia concealing parking garages or isolated from the street by open but largely unusable plazas, the new buildings rejected the traditional façade line of the street. In part, the plazas were a byproduct of zoning regulations; they were often employed to satisfy Floor-to-Area Ratios (FAR) by leaving a calculated portion of the lot open but their effect on the street environment was complex and largely disruptive.

...small-space users such as cafes, specialty shops, and bars are included or excluded from the CBD depending upon whether spaces are provided for them somewhere within office buildings. For example, early skyscrapers tended to have bases flush with the sidewalk and relatively traditional frontages lined with shops. Later, as the tall building became the established downtown norm and as setbacks for plazas became common to conform to FAR lot coverage regulations, street-level doors disappeared. Today, the presence or absence of small shops is often a result of political decisions because governmental design guidelines can influence whether there will be a plethora of plazas or an abundance of arcades.<sup>105</sup>

### *The Contested Generation*

San Franciscans had grown fond of their traditional urban environment—most had known no other. Opposition to the new development began to grow. The San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA), established in 1948, became a major target for criticism due largely to its plan,

<sup>105</sup> Larry R. Ford, *Cities and Buildings; Skyscrapers, Skid Rows, and Suburbs* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1994).

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first announced in 1953, to seize twelve blocks south of Market Street for a convention center, sports stadium, and high-rise office buildings—an overt maneuver to facilitate the expansion of the CBD into an area historically characterized by industry and low-status residential hotels and boarding houses.<sup>106</sup> The resulting fracas lasted nearly thirty years, but finally resulted in the loss of at least 60 buildings considered historically or architecturally significant, and the eventual construction of the two-square-block Yerba Buena Center (YBC) and Moscone Convention Center.

In all, it has been estimated that approximately 4,000 people and 700 businesses were displaced, only a fraction of whom were re-housed in the South of Market. Further lawsuits and political power struggles delayed the completion of the Yerba Buena Center until the early 1980s when the first component of the project—the Moscone Convention Center (Moscone South)—was completed in 1981.<sup>107</sup> Rising successively in the heart of the South of Market in the following years were: Moscone North (1992), Yerba Buena Gardens—including Yerba Buena Center for the Arts—(1994), the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1995), the Children’s Center (1998), and Moscone West (2003).

Although most of the SFRA facilities themselves are outside the present survey, the YBC Plan Area encompassed parts of several blocks in the survey area, development on which was turned over to the SFRA rather than the Planning Department. The presence of the SFRA facilities has exerted a profound affect on the surrounding area as well. CBDs have always contained non-office structures, mainly hotels, entertainment venues, and in some cases retail stores, all intended to cater to and serve white collar business people and office workers, as well as visiting conventioners. The present convention center, a steadfast feature of the SFRA plan through thirty years and countless revisions, provides an expanded market for similar types of non-office establishments, and for better or worse exerts a gravitational pull that brings much of the survey area into its orbit.

Opposition to the YBC and redevelopment in general was fueled by several different concerns among varied segments of the public. One powerful cause fought by residents of the affected area was simply their own displacement. Another concern for some was the perceived increased role of the SFRA in reshaping the city to what came to be regarded as its own vision. There was also a widely felt sense of loss brought about by the demolition of familiar buildings. Less well articulated, but of great importance, was local unhappiness with the social changes implied by the redevelopment of the area from a domain of the working class to one of the middle and upper middle classes, a process now familiarly termed gentrification. But the most vocal opposition developed to the sheer height of new buildings, represented as the “Manhattanization” of San Francisco.

In a 1999 article, Dean Macris, Director of Planning between 1981 and 1992 (and again between 2004 and 2007) summarized the times thusly:

Between 1965 and 1981, office space in San Francisco doubled, reaching a total of 55 million square feet. Bulk and density rules adopted in 1968, along with a 1972 height map that implemented the policies of the 1971 Urban Design Plan guided this rapid growth. Though considered "cutting edge" at the time, the rules produced many buildings whose height, and boxy profiles contrasted starkly with buildings produced a generation earlier. Moreover, with finer-grained, older buildings being demolished to make room for new construction, the physical character of the city's core was rapidly, irrevocably changing. Voter initiatives

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<sup>106</sup> Chester Hartman, *Yerba Buena: Land Grab and Community Resistance in San Francisco* (San Francisco: Glide Publications, 1974), 13.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*



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limiting building height lost in 1971, 1972, and again in 1979 though by increasingly smaller margins.

Battles over the demolition of landmark-quality buildings mounted. The environmental impact reports for each new project documented, in increasing detail, the economic, social and aesthetic impacts of the new buildings. As the City Planning Commission, under the leadership of Toby Rosenblatt, grappled with the number of office project proposals being presented, it became more and more assertive in the use of its discretionary review powers to control the scale of buildings and mitigate their adverse impacts. However, it was clear that new planning policies and zoning regulations were urgently needed.<sup>108</sup>

#### *The 1971 Urban Design Plan*

As its title suggests, the Urban Design Plan (1971) was much broader in its geographic scope than the later Downtown Plan (1985). It was also broader in its prescriptions for the form of new development. The Downtown Plan, by contrast, greatly increased the reach and specificity of its pronouncements. Both of these documents attracted widespread attention in the professional and national press, as well as ferocious local political jousting. The creation of the 1971 Urban Design Plan had proceeded cautiously by way of several preliminary public surveys on topics such as a "social reconnaissance" by consultants who interviewed residents in thirteen different survey areas to determine the perception of their local environments. For example, a park users survey and a survey of street livability were both followed up by public meetings to discuss results. The document, once published, signaled the entry of city government into questions of design that had formerly been determined by the old tacit consensus of classical order and rationality shared by the architects and patrons.

The authors of the plan were well aware of the precedent they were setting, hence their careful solicitation of citizens' thoughts beforehand. Nevertheless, they cautioned in the introduction:

In the relationships between people and the environment, there are bound to be conflicts among interest groups and among individuals. Within each individual there also are conflicts...

It is the job of planning to identify and resolve or minimize these conflicts. In the process, certain rights and certain options will be limited. Furthermore, planning cannot operate at its best in a continuing atmosphere of extreme positions and deliberate pluralism.<sup>109</sup>

In its discussion of 'Major New Development,' sub-headed 'Human Needs,' the plan states (or understates):

In questions of scale, the height of buildings has received the greatest and most continuous public attention. San Francisco has established the most extensive system of legislated height controls in any American city, expressing its concern over building height in this manner since as early as 1927. Nevertheless, a citywide plan for building height has not existed prior to this time, and both residents and visitors have experienced stress and concern at the prospect that the appearance of the skyline may continue to change rapidly without further direction.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Dean Macris and George Williams, "San Francisco's Downtown Plan; Landmark Guidelines Shape City's Growth," in *SPUR Newsletter* (August 1999).

<sup>109</sup> Allan B. Jacobs, Director of Planning, *The Urban Design Plan for the Comprehensive Plan of San Francisco* (San Francisco: Department of City Planning, May 1971).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*

However, the document insists:

Tall buildings are a necessary and expressive form for much of the city's office, apartment, hotel and institutional development. These buildings, as soaring towers in a white city, connote the power and prosperity of man's modern achievements.....<sup>111</sup>

In its ensuing seventeen 'Fundamental Principles' and nine 'Policies', the 1971 document sought to guide the seemingly inevitable major changes in store for the built environment, encouraging tall, slender buildings situated near the crowns of hills to emphasize the natural terrain, others to improve orientation for travel, and still others to "help define districts and centers." Some of the locations suggested for buildings of up to 30 stories were actually in neighborhoods west of Twin Peaks, bastions of the single family residence.<sup>112</sup> For the present survey area, the plan posited no absolute height limits, but instead required that height be determined by the floor to area ratio (FAR) which was at that time set at 14:1.<sup>113</sup> The plan also encouraged provision of open space, while attempting to ensure that the resulting plazas were sunnier and more inviting than had previously been built. In practice, plazas and open spaces created during the reign of the plan were, in general, small or non-existent despite provisions to encourage the contrary. Several were elevated above street level, and as such were not fully accessible to the public.<sup>114</sup>

Within the survey area, the plan had few effects discernable today. Perhaps overall the greatest effect was simply a confirmation of the area as one suitable for high rise development. The resultant buildings essentially continued the march of non-contextual and physically disruptive Corporate Modern and Brutalism towers down the streets of the survey area, particularly east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street where land values were lower.

#### **F. PRESERVATION AND POSTMODERNISM: 1985-2000**

##### *The Downtown Plan*

The 1971 Urban Design Plan did not assuage public opposition to "Manhattanization." Although anti-high-rise ballot initiatives continued to lose at the polls, they continued nonetheless—in 1972, 1979, and 1983—and their margins of defeat continued to shrink.<sup>115</sup> In 1983, in a separate process, the Planning Department devised its own Downtown Plan, a comprehensive revision of the Planning Code that included design standards, reduced height and bulk allowances, stronger historic preservation guarantees, and explicit encouragement to shift new high rise development to the South of Market, including the present survey area.<sup>116</sup> The plan strategically reduced FARs but tactically permitted building heights of up to 550 feet in the survey area.

Its most visible affect on new construction, however, was stylistic. In the words of one reviewer:

Blaming the International Style for many of the city's woes, the plan banishes the style from San Francisco. [in favor of] A new slimmed-down high rise, inspired by the romantic skyscrapers of the 1920s.<sup>117</sup>

Further:

As an antidote to the alien impersonality of the International Style the Downtown Plan calls for pepping up the new high-rises with decoration and ornament and

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> San Francisco Planning Code, 1970.

<sup>114</sup> See 221 Main Street, 595 Market Street, 201 Mission Street, 101 Market Street, or 50 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

<sup>115</sup> Brian J. Godfrey, "Urban Development & Redevelopment in San Francisco," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 87, No.3 (July 1997).

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> David Winter, "The Downtown Plan," *ART News* (March 1984).

articulating building mass with cornices, stepped parapets and terraces, domes and hip and mansard roofs.<sup>118</sup>

The intent and direction of the plan were strongly influenced by the contemporary Postmodern movement – led by Robert Venturi and Charles Moore – which advocated a return to historic precedent in regard to design, albeit with a playful, or “whimsical” twist. In San Francisco, such policies led to a return of the 1920s-era ‘Wedding Cake’ silhouette, firm street walls rising in recessed tiers to slender summits. These and the plan’s other requirements have resulted in a distinctive type of building, one distinguishable from the glass and steel slabs of the preceding generation, and from the buildings of the post-1906 rebuilding era. Within the survey area, such designs include: 33 New Montgomery Street (1986), 100 First Street (1988), 455 Market Street (1988), and 71 Stevenson Street (1986) (**Figure 31**).

Another objective of the plan was to preserve and enhance the pedestrian environment. Regulations attempted to protect open spaces from shadowing and from downdrafts caused by tall buildings, and to discourage plazas and observation platforms in favor of active, public-serving uses at the ground level of most buildings.<sup>119</sup>

Another important aspect of the Downtown Plan was its designation of 250 architecturally significant buildings, most within the present survey area, as Category I, II, or III buildings, awarding them protection from demolition or significant alterations. Others were designated as members of conservation districts. An almost equal number were given partial protection, with certain restricted additions allowed. The Plan also liberalized the rules governing Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) to help compensate for preservation restrictions.<sup>120</sup> This allowed the owners of protected buildings to sell the right to further height development to the owner of another site, allowing that site to be built higher than regulations would ordinarily permit. These protective provisions, as well as the prescriptive provisions for new construction discussed above, have had a powerful shaping effect on the survey area.

Although the plan met with high praise in professional circles,<sup>121</sup> reactions elsewhere were less favorable:

Critics of high-rise development were not appeased by the Downtown Plan, despite the accolades it generally received from architects, planners, and the local press corps. Neighborhood activists suspected that the plan served as little more than a rationale for new construction to continue at a rapid pace.<sup>122</sup>

The plan did not forestall politically oriented agitation over the high rise development. Before approving the Downtown Plan, the Board of Supervisors, responding to public pressure, added



**Figure 31. 71 Stevenson Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Dean Macris and George Williams, “San Francisco’s Downtown Plan; Landmark Guidelines Shape City’s Growth,” in *SPUR Newsletter*, August 1999.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> David Winter and Sally Woodbridge, “Commentary: San Francisco Plan,” *Progressive Architecture* 66 (December 1985).

<sup>122</sup> Brian J. Godfrey, “Urban Development & Redevelopment in San Francisco,” *Geographical Review*, Vol. 87, No.3 (July 1997).

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an absolute annual limit of 950,000 square feet of new office space to its requirements. This led to the institution of the annual “Beauty Contests” in which all pending projects are reviewed to select those that will be allowed to proceed under the new absolute square footage limit, thus thrusting the Planning Department into an ever more prominent design role.

But even the amended Plan did not allay public fears of Manhattanization. In 1987, public initiative enacted Proposition M, which halved the annual square footage allowance and created “the most restrictive growth control measure of any large U.S. city.”<sup>123</sup>

### *Summary*

The older physical environment of the survey area has over time been strongly shaped first by unchallenged economic forces—the inevitable and quasi-total rebuild after the 1906 earthquake and the vigorous building campaign of the 1920s informed by unlegislated consensus, the public works projects of the Great Depression, and then by an increasingly pervasive political and governmental intervention that has prevailed in the post-World War II era. The latter included urban renewal programs, the Urban Design Plan of 1971, and the Downtown Plan of 1985, as well as general public pressure expressed in a series of voter initiatives which, even when they did not win at the ballot, exerted immense and effective pressure on public policy. As a result, at least four generations of expressed building types are clearly discernable; the Rebuilding Era, characterized loosely by Beaux-Arts styles; the 1920s Long Generation, still largely hewing to Beaux-Arts but on a larger scale; the Modernist Era, with its Brutalist stepchild; and the Downtown Plan Generation, vaguely Postmodern, but perhaps best seen as *sui generis*.

Whether driven by consensus or by government intervention, the built environment within the survey area has faithfully mirrored changing social characteristics of the evolving city of San Francisco. From its original industrial and workers’ housing character, it has been transformed into an addition of the expanding CBD as San Francisco became a world financial headquarters city, and then as a hotel, convention, and entertainment center in a global tourism/convention network. Through all these permutations, it has remained one of the key economic engines of San Francisco in its interactions with the region and the world beyond. Whatever the city is doing for a living, it is done here.

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<sup>123</sup> Richard DeLeon, “The Birth of the Slow Growth Movement and the Battle for Proposition M,” in *Left Coast City: Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1965-1991* (Lawrence, KA: University of Kansas Press, 1992).

## V. DEFINITION OF PROPERTY TYPES

### A. RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Within the greater South of Market Area, there can be found a number of different housing types ranging from large masonry apartment houses and single-room occupancy hotels (SROs) along Mission, Howard and 6<sup>th</sup> streets, to smaller wood-frame single, double, and Romeo flats, as well as single-family dwellings. Within the survey area, however, save for a row of residential hotels located along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street that were demolished as part of the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area during the 1970s, residential uses were generally absent from the area after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. In recent years, private developers have erected or are in the process of building high-rise condominium projects that have reintroduced residential uses to the survey area. The section below describes the few remaining historic residential buildings in the survey area.

#### *Residential Hotels*

Residential hotels were erected in large numbers in the South of Market from the 1860s until the early 1920s. Although residential hotels have long existed for wealthy individuals (such as the St. Francis Hotel on Union Square), residential hotels of the type described here, especially single-room occupancy hotels have traditionally been associated with the working-class. The 1906 Earthquake and Fire destroyed nearly all the residential hotels of the South of Market with great accompanying loss of life. After the disaster, many of these were rebuilt along Mission and Howard streets



**Figure 32. Planters Hotel, 606 Folsom Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting

and numbered north-south streets, particularly 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Most post-quake residential hotels were rebuilt in masonry and almost all include commercial space on the first floor. Unlike an apartment building a residential hotel typically has just one entrance to aid in surveillance. The entrance often leads to a small lobby, which contains a desk for the attendant and mail boxes for the residents. Stairs or elevators provide access from the lobby to the guest rooms on the upper floors. In the South of Market, facades of residential hotels typically feature an irregular grid of window openings reflecting the arrangement of rooms. Floor levels are demarcated by intermediate cornices and the building is usually capped by a wood or sheet metal cornice and a flat roof. Stylistically, nearly all are designed in the Renaissance-Baroque style with mass-produced classical ornament used to embellish the box-like nature of the building. Today, there is just one residential hotel in the survey area, the Planters Hotel, built in 1907 at 606 Folsom Street **(Figure 32)**.

### *Flats*

Flats are found in almost all of San Francisco's older residential neighborhoods. Typically built of wood (although some are faced in brick), flats in San Francisco are often recognizable by their recessed porches sheltering individual entrances for each unit. Most flats in San Francisco (except for Romeo flats) contain two or three units, with each flat occupying an entire floor. While most flats consist of a single stack of units, some are comprised of two parallel stacks connected at the center (double flats), or if land allows this module can be expanded to include additional stacks comprising triple, quadruple or even quintuple flats. Flats in San Francisco are often built atop a raised concrete or brick foundation/podium where either a garage (if built after the First World War) or an additional residential unit may be located. Flats are designed in any architectural style, although Renaissance-Baroque, Mission Revival, Arts and Crafts, and Colonial Revival are all popular. Flats are a relatively common residential building type in the South of Market at large but there is only one surviving example within the survey area.

### *Romeo Flats*

The so-called "Romeo Flat" appears to be unique to San Francisco. Similar to conventional flats, Romeo Flats are multi-story residential buildings. The typical single Romeo Flat features a central stair flanked by a pair of flats, resulting in a floor plan of two narrow flats on each floor instead of one large flat. The stair, which can either be open or enclosed, takes up less room than the two stairs needed to access the middle and upper units in conventional flats, allowing the builder to increase the unit count. Romeo Flats are easily recognizable because the fenestration of the central bay aligns not with the flanking flats but instead with the interior stair landings. Unlike conventional flats, which are organized as modules of even-numbered bays (usually two bays) with a resulting rhythm of AB, or if double flats: ABBA, Romeo Flats are grouped in modules of three bays, creating a rhythm of ABA. Units in Romeo flats are typically smaller than conventional flats and most consist of narrow floor plans. Most units in the South of Market appear to have been built in the five years following the 1906 Earthquake and Fire when housing demand was at its most severe. In the survey area, the only remaining example is a Mission Revival style Romeo Flat, built in 1913 at 568 Folsom Street (**Figure 33**).



**Figure 33. 568 Folsom Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting

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**B. COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS**

After the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, the South of Market was rebuilt as a mixed-use light industrial/commercial district, with the result being that today commercial buildings account for an overwhelming majority of all building types in the survey area. Multi-story, masonry loft buildings, traditionally built to accommodate light manufacturing, warehousing, and wholesale distribution uses, are predominant at the core of the survey area, an area bounded by Market, 1<sup>st</sup>, Folsom, and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets. Smaller scale, one-and two-story light industrial and automotive repair facilities were historically concentrated east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and along the southern edge of the survey area. In recent years, many of these have been demolished to make way for new office buildings or surface parking lots. Most commercial buildings in the South of Market are concrete or brick, designed in the Renaissance-Baroque mode, and were planned to be easily reconfigured for new uses. Consequently, few contain interior partitions or other specialized features that would render conversion to new purposes difficult.

*Single-story Commercial/Light Industrial Buildings*

Single-story masonry commercial buildings are common in the South of Market but increasingly rare in the survey area due to high land values not justifying their retention. Typically built for specialty manufacturing or automotive repair, this building type typically consists of a flat-roofed office wing – one structural bay deep – facing the street and a larger undifferentiated work space behind, often accessible from a mid-block alley. The office wing typically has a flat roof and the work space a trussed bowstring, gable, or sawtooth roof. Built of concrete or brick (and very occasionally, wood), this building type commonly bears at least one vehicular opening on the primary façade and often additional loading docks on side or rear elevations. Stylistically, most single-story commercial buildings are utilitarian, although some feature spare Renaissance-Baroque detailing. Today, there are only nine single-story commercial buildings remaining within the survey area. A good example of this type is the Louis Lurie Building, erected in 1921 at 525 Howard Street (**Figure 34**). More typical of this building type is a small one-story (with a two-story office section at the front) machine shop, built in 1923 at 90 Tehama Street (**Figure 35**).



**Figure 34. Louis Lurie Building, 525 Howard Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting



**Figure 35. 90 Tehama Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting

### *Loft Buildings*

Commercial loft buildings are the most common historic building type in the survey area. The term “loft” refers to a multi-story, multi-purpose, masonry building containing unpartitioned office or general-purpose commercial space suitable for a range of uses including storage, wholesale display, or light manufacturing. The defining quality of a loft building is its flexibility. With office and showrooms located at the front, the rest of each floor typically consists of unpartitioned floor space with thick concrete floors to withstand heavy loads, high ceilings for storage and machinery, and large window openings to allow ample light deep into the interior. Commercial loft buildings in the survey area are of two structural types. The first type, commonly built between 1906 and 1913, is a load-bearing brick structure with an internal heavy, “slow-burning” timber frame to support floors and roof. Steel frame and concrete construction techniques came into their own after the First World War because of their obvious strength and durability, ability to span large distances without intermediate supports, and relative cheapness to construct. Commercial loft buildings were once common in every part of the survey area but redevelopment has generally restricted them to an area bounded by Mission, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Howard, and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets, with outliers on 1<sup>st</sup> and Folsom streets. Built over a forty-year span, loft buildings are designed in many different styles, ranging from the American Commercial style and Renaissance-Baroque styles in the 1910s and 1920s, to Art Deco in the 1930s and Streamline Moderne in the 1940s. A particularly good example of an intact brick and heavy timber frame commercial loft building is the Crellin Estate Building, put up in 1912 at 585 Howard Street (**Figure 36**). An excellent (and rare) example of a later concrete “daylight” frame commercial loft building designed in the Art Deco style is the Philips & Van Orden Building, built in 1929 at 234 1<sup>st</sup> Street (**Figure 37**).





**Figure 36. Crellin Estate Building at 585 Howard Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting



**Figure 37. Philips Van Orden Building, 234 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting

### *Warehouses*

Warehouses are storage buildings whose chief function is to accommodate irregularities of seasonal and market fluctuations in inventory. Warehousing involves the storage, processing, and distribution of goods, as well as occasionally light manufacturing. Warehouse design in San Francisco has traditionally been guided by three interrelated factors: security from fire and theft, economics, and advances in construction technology. Security from fire and theft was paramount and was generally achieved through the use of heavy masonry walls, slow-burning timber frames, and iron fire doors and shutters. The second factor is economics and attempts to maximize the amount of goods that can be stored in a building at any one time. The aim of this type of construction was to “pencil out” as a business venture warehouses had to be able to accommodate enough goods to ensure a sufficient return on investment in both land and construction costs. Anything that consumed valuable space, such as columns or partition walls, ate into the potential profitability of the building. Technology is the third factor. Originally dependent on load-bearing masonry construction techniques, warehouse builders quickly adopted newer steel frame and concrete construction techniques to maximize building heights and minimize the thickness of walls and floors and the number of interior partitions. Within the South of Market Area, most purpose-built warehouses date from the immediate post-quake era and are designed in the American Commercial style, with minimally detailed load-bearing masonry walls, flat roofs, regular fenestration capped by jack-arch window and door openings, and slow-burning heavy timber framing. There are only two purpose-built warehouses in the survey area, both located on Jessie Street to serve businesses along nearby Market Street. A particularly good example is the Warring-Wilkinson Building, built in 1909 at 96 Jessie Street (**Figure 38**).



**Figure 38. Warring-Wilkinson Building, 96 Jessie Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting

*Tall Commercial Buildings (Pre-World War II)*

The core of the survey area, an area bounded by Market, Spear, Howard, and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets, contains quite a large number of tall, steel-frame commercial buildings. Higher than five stories, tall commercial buildings were typically built on prominent corner lots on major east-west streets like Market and Mission. New Montgomery, an important southerly extension of the CBD, also possesses several tall commercial buildings. The combination of steel framing and the passenger elevator promoted the construction of downtown commercial buildings throughout the United States during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In San Francisco, the earliest high-rise commercial building was the De Young/Chronicle Building, completed in 1889. Within the survey area, the first high-rise commercial building was the Spreckels/Call Building, built in 1896 at 703 Market Street. Publisher George Hearst followed suit with the Hearst Building at 691 Market Street. Other important tall commercial buildings constructed before the 1906 Earthquake include the Rialto Building at 116 New Montgomery Street (1902), the Wells Fargo Building at 85 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1902) (**Figure 39**), and the Aronson Building at 700 Mission Street (1903). Steel frame tall commercial buildings generally fared well during the 1906 Earthquake and most were repaired and quickly restored to service. New tall commercial buildings constructed occurred after the quake, such as the Williams Building at 101 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (1907), largely adhered to the pre-quake formula of an internal steel frame and brick or ashlar cladding.

The 1920s witnessed the construction of two especially important tall commercial buildings within the survey area: the Matson Building at 215 Market Street (1921) and the splendid Beaux-Arts Pacific Gas & Electric Building next door at 245 Market (1922) (**Figure 40**). This decade also saw the first skyscraper erected south of Mission Street, the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Building at 134 New Montgomery Street (1925). These three buildings departed from the traditional Renaissance-Baroque styling of earlier tall commercial buildings and made use of terra cotta cladding instead of brick.



**Figure 39. Wells Fargo Building, 85 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 2007**  
Source: KVP Consulting



**Figure 40. Pacific Gas & Electric Co. Building**  
Source: KVP Consulting

*Tall Commercial Buildings (Post-World War II)*

Built in response to growing demand for new downtown office space during the early 1970s, a series of new high rises went up along Market Street, in particular in the former industrial area east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Of improved steel-frame construction, the earliest wave of postwar tall commercial buildings, built after the adoption of the Urban Design Plan in 1971, dispensed altogether with both historicist ornamentation and masonry cladding. Most were designed in either the Corporate Modern style with smoked glass and anodized aluminum cladding and window systems, such as the Charles Schwab Building at 211 Main Street (1973) (**Figure 41**), or in a modified Brutalist style, such as the office building with pilotis and strip windows at 221 Main Street (**Figure 42**). Following the adoption of the Downtown Plan in 1985, which effectively put an end to the boxy skyscrapers of the 1970s, the survey area witnessed an influx of new steel-frame skyscrapers clad in granite and other more traditional materials. Designed anew with stepbacks and setbacks and incorporating explicitly decorative elements, often with historicist themes or references, most of the 1980s and 1990s-era tall commercial buildings were designed in what one considers today to fall under a Postmodern rubric. A good example of this style within the survey area is 100 First Plaza, built in 1988 at 100 1<sup>st</sup> Street (**Figure 43**).



**Figure 41. 211 Main Street**  
Source: KVP Consulting



**Figure 42. 221 Main Street**  
Source: KVP Consulting



**Figure 43. 100 First Plaza**  
**Source: KVP Consulting**

**C. INSTITUTIONAL**

As a part of the city reconstructed after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire as an extension of San Francisco's CBD, the survey area contains few buildings that do not directly serve commercial uses. For the purposes of this survey, institutional buildings are defined as government buildings like libraries, schools, and police and fire stations; religious buildings such as churches, synagogues, and temples; or fraternal organizations such as ethnic mutual benevolent societies, labor unions, and social clubs. Institutional uses do not always have to be housed in specially designed buildings; frequently they are placed in existing buildings built for other uses. Architecturally, institutional buildings cannot be easily defined as they can be built of any material and in any style. Within the survey area, most institutional buildings are low-rise buildings. The San Francisco branch of the Federal Reserve at 101 Market Street (1982) is the only government office building located in the area. There is also a former Postal Service facility at 83 Stevenson Street (1909). Local government buildings in the area include a MUNI substation at 79 Stevenson Street (1920) and the SFFD's engine house at 676 Howard Street (ca. 1950). There are no religious buildings in the survey area. The most prominent building constructed for a fraternal organization is the Marine Firemen's Hall at 240 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1957) (**Figure 44**).



**Figure 44. Marine Firemen, Oilers and Watertenders Union Hall, 240 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 2007**

**Source: KVP Consulting**

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## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. SIGNIFICANCE AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Preparation of a historic context statement such as this requires us to identify attributes, historical associations, and levels of integrity requisite to list members of property types in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and/or the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). Most resources in the Transit Center District survey area do not rise to the level of individual eligibility for either register, although there are certainly major exceptions such as the Palace Hotel, the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Building, and the Matson Building. Individual property research has revealed associations with important events or individuals in the case of some of the less visually prominent buildings, such as the Greenwood Estate Building at 545 Mission Street. But for the most part the significance of the core of the survey area resides in its overall unity of design, which itself reflects important historical patterns that have shaped the neighborhood. With the exception of a few buildings that escaped destruction, the core of the survey area is a product of the post-1906 reconstruction of downtown San Francisco. Rebuilt between 1906 and 1929 as a district of masonry commercial loft buildings, the buildings that survive from this era create a cohesive district of two-to six-story masonry I buildings of similar scale, massing, setbacks, materials, fenestration pattern, style, and architectural detailing. The survey area also contains several important postwar buildings that reflect the influence of later context of urban renewal and postwar urban planning. Several of these buildings, such as the Thomas Lile Building at 145 Natoma Street, appear eligible for individual listing in the California Register.

National Register criteria are set forth above on page 10. The California Register is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed or eligible properties are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties can also be nominated by local governments, private organizations, or citizens. These include properties identified in historical resource surveys with a California Historical Resource Status Code of "1" to "5," and resources designated as local landmarks through city or county ordinances. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on the National Register. 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 (Events):* 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 (Persons):* Resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
- *Criterion 3 (Architecture):* 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 order to be determined eligible for listing in the National Register, resources less than fifty years of age must be shown to have "exceptional importance." This is not the case with the California Register. According to the California Office of Historic Preservation:



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In order to understand the historic importance of a resource, sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with the resource. A resource less than fifty years old may be considered for listing in the California Register if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand its historical importance.<sup>124</sup>

The survey area contains 56 individually significant buildings including those already listed in the National Register or the California Register or those that have been determined eligible for listing in either register. In addition, KVP Consulting has identified several previously unidentified properties that appear to be individually significant. Some of the individually significant properties are located within the boundaries of the proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District documented in the attached DPR 523 D form. Several others are located beyond the boundaries of the proposed district. These are identified on the attached DPR 523 B forms with California Register Status Codes of 1S, 2S2, 3S, or 3CS and are listed in **Table 2**. The locations of all individually significant properties both inside and outside the district are indicated in **Figure 45**.

### ***B. POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS***

#### *New Montgomery and Mission Potential Historic District*

Freeway construction, urban renewal, and private real estate development have taken their toll on the pre-World War II resources of the survey area, particularly east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, where most of the post-1906 Earthquake industrial buildings have been replaced with modern high-rise office buildings and surface parking lots. Recent development since 1985 has eroded much of the surviving commercial loft inventory between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets. Presently, the areas that retain the highest degree of integrity remain within and around the locally designated New Montgomery-Second Conservation District and the partially overlapping Second and Howard National Register District. Encompassing both of these districts is an intact collection of early twentieth-century commercial loft and office buildings, tall commercial buildings, hotels, and ancillary buildings that display a high level of integrity. This potential district, which we call the New Montgomery and Mission Historic District, is fully documented on the accompanying DPR 523 D Form. Consisting of 123 individual parcels encompassing 89 contributing resources and 37 non-contributing resources, the district appears eligible for listing in the California Register under Criteria 1 (Events) and 3 (Design/Construction). Consisting primarily of masonry commercial loft buildings, office buildings, and light industrial buildings constructed or reconstructed between 1906 and 1929 – the district’s period of significance – its boundaries are depicted in **Figure 45**.<sup>125</sup>

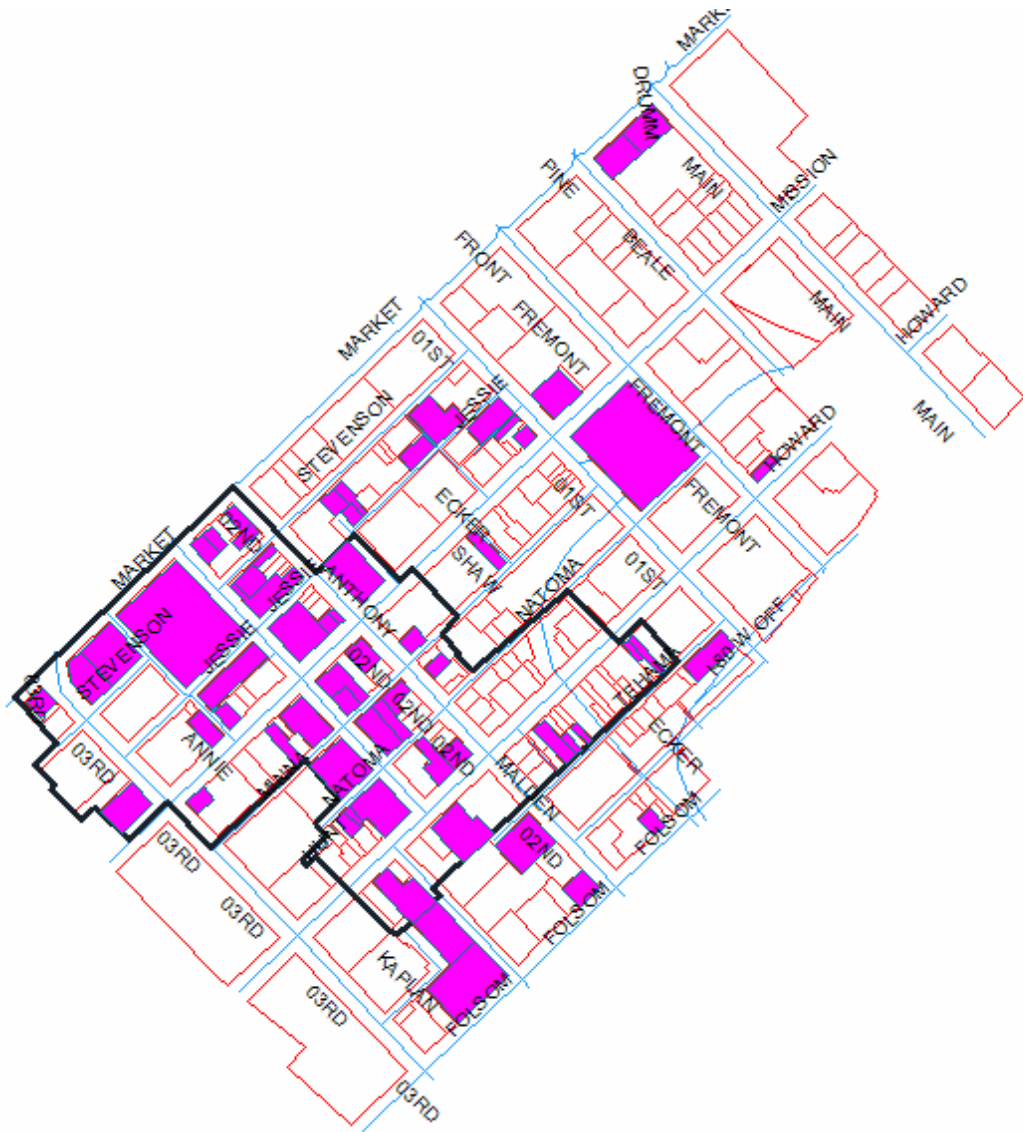
#### *First and Mission Potential Historic District*

Another relatively intact cluster of early twentieth-century masonry loft buildings continues to exist along both sides of 1<sup>st</sup> Street between Stevenson and Mission streets. Comprised of seven buildings: 38 1<sup>st</sup> Street (1908), the Langley & Michaels Building at 50 1<sup>st</sup> Street (1917), the Neustadter Brothers Building at 62 1<sup>st</sup> Street (1917), the Marwedel Building at 76 1<sup>st</sup> Street (1908), the Treadwell Building at 82 1<sup>st</sup> Street (1908), the Brandenstein Building at 88 1<sup>st</sup> Street (1907), and the C.C. Moore/Terminal Plaza Building at 440 Mission Street (1920), the district is an outlier of the larger New Montgomery and Mission historic district. Since the late 1960s, intervening development has severed this small enclave from the rest of the district. Presently, all but one (440 Mission Street) are earmarked for demolition as part of the proposed 50 1<sup>st</sup> Street project.

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<sup>124</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistant Series No. 7, How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historic Resources* (Sacramento, CA: California Office of State Publishing, 4 September 2001) 11.

<sup>125</sup> The total number of resources (126) exceeds the total number of parcels (123) because several parcels contain more than one structure.



**Figure 45. Map showing location of individually significant properties and boundaries of the proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District**  
Source: KVP

Several of the buildings, including the Neustadter and Brandenstein Buildings, were developed by members of San Francisco's influential German-Jewish community. All were utilized for light manufacturing, office, and general commercial uses. Four were built not long after the 1906 Earthquake, two during the First World War, and one at the beginning of the 1920s-era building boom. In regard to type and style, all are masonry commercial loft buildings designed in the American Commercial style with varying amounts of Renaissance Revival ornamentation. The only exception is 440 Mission, which features Gothic-inspired detailing. Two of the buildings have been extensively remodeled (38 and 50 1<sup>st</sup> Street) and consequently no longer retain sufficient integrity. Four appear individually eligible for listing in the California Register: 56 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 76 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 88 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and 440 Mission Street.

As a district, this cluster of seven buildings comprises a rare enclave of early twentieth-century commercial loft buildings within an area of the South of Market that has been and will continue to

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be redeveloped with modern high-rise office and condominium projects. The enclave shares a common history with the larger proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District and the only reason it is not included within the larger district is that the intervening structures that once connected them have been demolished. National Register guidelines do not allow for the creation of a discontinuous district that includes similar resources cut off from each other by demolition or new construction. Based on the enclave's lack of significance as a distinct historic district, KVP recommends that the individual significance of several of the buildings be taken into account in response to proposed projects that may impact these properties.

#### *Potential Heavy Timber Frame Masonry Commercial Building Discontinuous District*

Planning Department staff asked KVP to examine the possibility of documenting a discontinuous historic district comprised of heavy timber-frame brick commercial buildings. We considered this district but encountered logistical problems when we began to document it. First, there are several brick buildings with steel frames that closely resemble buildings with heavy timber frames. Second, there are other buildings which utilize combined steel and wood frames and several where the method of framing is not known. While it seems logical to include all of these buildings, it soon becomes difficult to draw the line between buildings whose primary character-defining feature is their framing and those that are simply run-of-the-mill steel frame structures with brick curtain walls. Finally, any discontinuous district that consists of heavy timber-frame or steel-frame brick buildings is likely to extend beyond the boundaries of the Transit Center survey area. Accordingly, we did not move forward with documenting this district.

### **C. AREAS REQUIRING FUTURE WORK**

#### *Registration*

Development pressures in San Francisco's South of Market are certain to effect significant changes in the district in the upcoming years. In the interest of preserving the most intact contiguous section of early twentieth-century commercial fabric, it is our recommendation that the proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District be listed as a California Register historic district. The district may also be nominated for listing in the National Register of Historical Places. Stricter integrity requirements of the National Register might result in the boundaries being adjusted but listing would allow property owners to take advantage of Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits, a powerful and potentially lucrative preservation incentive. Although listing in either register will not in and of itself prevent the demolition or alteration of historic resources, designation will acknowledge the status of district contributors as historic resources under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

#### *Expanded Conservation District*

An even more effective strategy would be to expand the boundaries of the existing locally designated New Montgomery-Second Conservation District. Expanding the district to include all or some of the proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District would place all development proposals within the area under the purview of the San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board.<sup>126</sup> Furthermore, owners of individually significant buildings (Categories I-III) would be able to leverage their properties' historic status through the sale of development rights (TDRs).

#### *Current Projects and their Impacts*

Currently there are at least nine proposed projects proposed within the Transit Center survey area that exceed current height limits. They include a 1,200' tower on the site of the Transbay Terminal at 1<sup>st</sup> and Mission streets, a 1,200' tower at 50 1<sup>st</sup> Street, an 850' tower at 350 Mission Street, an 800' tower at 177 Fremont Street, a 500' tower at 509 Howard Street (Foundry Square), a project of unspecified height at 217 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, a 435' tower at 222 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, a 670'

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<sup>126</sup> As it stands, the San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board has jurisdiction over properties located with the New Montgomery-Second Conservation District and all individual properties designated as belonging to Categories I-III in Article 11 of the Downtown Plan.

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tower at the rear of the Palace Hotel at 2 Montgomery, and a project at 41 Tehama Street. These projects, which are all either on file or in the pre-application phase, will result in the demolition of several individually significant and/or contributing buildings.

- Transbay Terminal Tower, 1<sup>st</sup> and Mission streets: The construction of a new transit terminal for AC Transit and Caltrain and the proposed 1,200' Transit Tower will result in the demolition of the Transbay Terminal, a National Register-eligible property and a contributing element to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, a National Register-eligible resource. The project will also result in the demolition of the Terminal Loop Ramp, another contributing element of the Bay Bridge district. The demolition of the National Register-eligible Transbay Terminal and Transbay Loop Ramp will constitute an adverse effect on the environment under CEQA.
- 50 1<sup>st</sup> Street: The construction of an 800' to 1,200' tower at this site will result in the demolition of six individual buildings on the west site of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, two of which are eligible for listing in the California Register: 62 1<sup>st</sup> Street and 88 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and one National Register-eligible property: 76 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The demolition of these buildings will remove the most significant concentration of early twentieth-century commercial buildings outside the boundaries of the proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District. The proposed project will constitute an adverse effect on the environment under CEQA.
- 350 Mission Street: The construction of an 850' tower will result in the demolition of the existing 1923 building on the site. Its demolition will not constitute an adverse effect on the environment because the heavily altered building is ineligible for California Register listing and therefore is not a historic resource under CEQA. The site is not located in a potential or listed historic district and would therefore not have an adverse effect on the environment.
- 177 Fremont Street: The construction of an 800' tower on this site will result in the demolition of two older but heavily altered properties: 177 Fremont (1908) and 183 Fremont (1907). The demolition of the two buildings will leave only six pre-World War II buildings remaining east of 1<sup>st</sup> Street within the Transit Center District survey area. However, the demolition will not constitute a significant adverse effect on the environment because the buildings are ineligible for California Register listing and therefore not historic resources under CEQA. The proposed tower is not in a historic district but it does adjoin the historic Marine Electric Building at 342 Howard Street and depending on how it is sited and designed, the project may have a significant impact on this building.
- 509 Howard Street: The construction of a 500' tower as part of the Foundry Square project will result in the demolition of 525 Howard Street, a one-story commercial building constructed in 1921. Its demolition will constitute an adverse effect on the environment because the building appears eligible for listing in the California Register as a contributor to the potential New Montgomery and Mission Historic District.
- 217 2<sup>nd</sup> Street: This project will result in the demolition of a historic 1912 commercial loft building currently located on the site. Its demolition will constitute an adverse effect on the environment because the building appears eligible for listing in the California Register as a contributor to the potential New Montgomery and Mission Historic District. This building is also proposed for demolition as part of the Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Extension project.
- 222 2<sup>nd</sup> Street: This project will result in the construction of a 435' tower on an empty lot within the potential New Montgomery and Mission Historic District. Constructed on the edge of the district, it is unlikely to have a significant adverse effect on the district as a whole.

- Palace Hotel Tower, 2 Montgomery Street: The construction of a 670' tower at the rear of the Palace Hotel will result in the demolition of a non-historic addition to the hotel, a San Francisco City Landmark and a property that is individually eligible for listing in the National Register. The Palace Hotel is also located within the New Montgomery-Second Conservation District and a contributor to the potential New Montgomery and Mission Historic District. The siting and design of the tower will be critical in determining its impact on the historic hotel property, as well as the surrounding district.
- 41 Tehama Street: This project will be constructed on several empty lots and the site of a 1906 machine shop that has been determined ineligible for listing in the California Register. This project is located outside the boundaries of any potential or listed historic district and would therefore not have an adverse impact on historic resources.

In addition to the Transbay Terminal and the Terminal Loop Ramp, the proposed Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension project will result in the demolition of eight privately-held buildings, all of which are located within the proposed potential New Montgomery and Mission Historic District, and three of which are contributors to the National Register-listed Second and Howard Historic District.<sup>127</sup> Contributors to the proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District include: 171 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1912), 191 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1906), 205 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1906), 217 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1912), 580 Howard Street (1906), 77-79 Natoma Street (1914), 83 Natoma Street (1924), and 90 Natoma Street (1913). Contributors to the smaller Second and Howard Historic District include: 171 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 191 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and 580 Howard Street.

The demolition of eight contributors to the proposed New Montgomery and Market Historic District will significantly impair the district's integrity. Not only will the absolute number of contributors be reduced; the demolition of these buildings will sever the entire southeastern corner of the district along Howard Street from the rest of the district. The net effect will be to reduce the number of district contributors from 89 to 67, out of 123 total properties. The demolition of three contributors to the Second and Howard National Register District will also sever the southeast corner from this district, reducing the number of contributors from 19 to 13 out of 22 properties. The core of the New Montgomery and Market Historic District would remain intact but the Second and Howard District would likely be de-listed due to reduced integrity. As shown by the list of buildings proposed for demolition as part of current and private projects, there are thirteen historic resources that will likely be lost and one National Register district that may be de-listed.<sup>128</sup>

#### *Soft Sites*

In addition to the buildings that are likely to be demolished as part of existing projects, it is possible that additional individual historic buildings within the survey area will be lost. Development pressures are intense and the value of the underlying land makes it difficult for property owners to retain buildings that contain less than half the developable square footage allowable on the site. The San Francisco Planning Department has completed a study of the survey area to determine "opportunity sites," in other words properties where the existing structure on the site occupies between 0 (vacant) and 30 percent of the total permitted developable square footage allowable within the existing zoning envelope for each site. The location of these parcels is shown on the map in **Figure 46**. As is evident from the map, most of the properties that fall within this category are small, two-to-five-story masonry commercial buildings or vacant lots. They are clustered in certain areas where older, smaller-scale buildings continue to predominate, such Howard Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets, the west side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Market and Mission streets, as well as several large parcels occupied by low-rise

<sup>127</sup> 217 2<sup>nd</sup> Street is already proposed for demolition as part of the 217 2<sup>nd</sup> Street project. Three of these properties: 171 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 191 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and 580 Howard Street are contributors to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Howard National Register District.

<sup>128</sup> Transbay Terminal, 62 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 88 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 76 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 525 Howard Street, 171 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1912), 191 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1906), 205 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1906), 217 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1912), 580 Howard Street (1906), 77-79 Natoma Street (1914), 83 Natoma Street (1924), and 90 Natoma Street (1913).

buildings, in particular the Marine Firemen And Oilers and Watertenders Union Hall at 240 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and the Golden Gate University campus at 532-36 Mission Street. Another category, consisting of properties that fall between 30 and 50 percent of their maximum developable square footage, encompasses a shorter list of buildings.

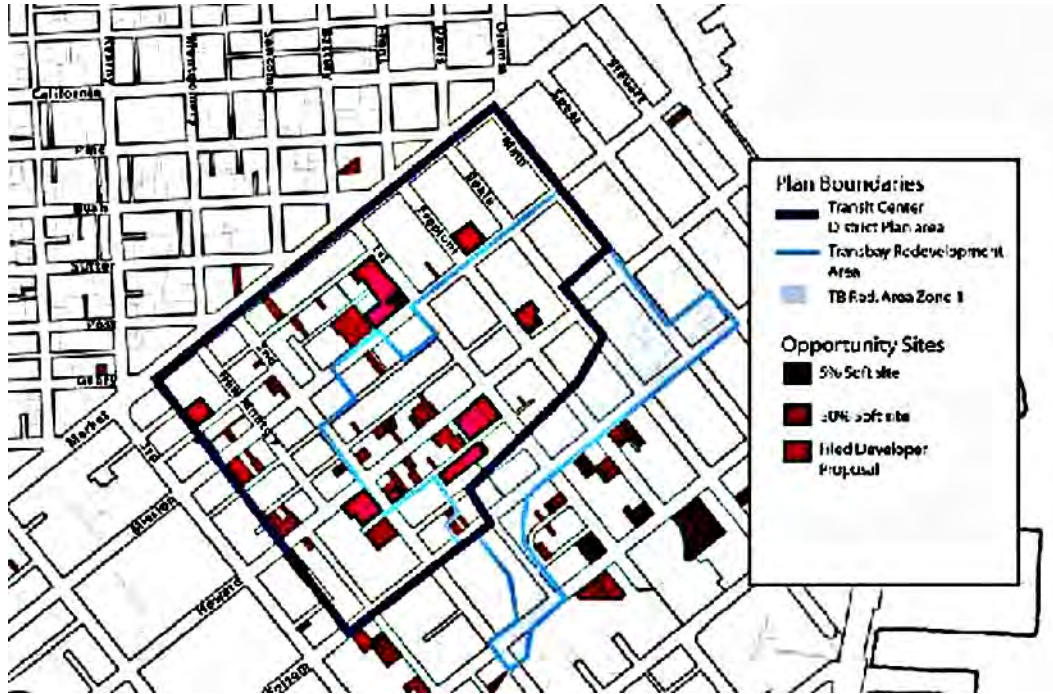


Figure 46. Map showing location of “soft sites” within the Transit Center District Plan Area

Source: San Francisco Planning Department

#### *Transit Center District Plan*

The San Francisco Planning Department has contracted with EDAW to prepare the Transit Center District Plan. Building on the 1971 Urban Design Element and the 1985 Downtown Plan, the Transit Center Plan continues to envision the Transbay Terminal/future Transit Center as the centerpiece of a “new downtown” south of Market Street. Since the Downtown Plan was published, several major changes have occurred to make the creation of a secondary node of high-rise commercial and residential development in this area feasible. The first of these was the demolition of the Embarcadero Freeway following the Loma Prieta Earthquake. Once cut off from downtown, Rincon Hill is presently undergoing a residential development boom of major proportion. The area between the Transbay Terminal and Rincon Hill where the freeway viaduct once stood is still a no-man’s land of surface parking lots. Increasing pressure to build new high-rise luxury condominiums in this area has increased the pressure to build similar projects within the Transit Center District survey area. Another major factor that is different than 1985 is the passage of Proposition H by San Francisco voters in 1999. This proposition calls for the extension of Caltrain’s commuter rail service from its existing depot at 4<sup>th</sup> and Townsend Street to a new transit center to be built on the site of the existing Transbay Terminal. Existing commuter bus lines and the California High Speed Rail (CHSR) line to Southern California—if built—will also terminate at the Transit Center. In response, the Transbay Joint Powers Authority was formed to

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administer the construction of the Transit Center and the so-called “Transit Tower” that will mark an increasingly important node of downtown San Francisco.<sup>129</sup>

The Transit Center District Plan will reexamine conditions south of Market Street to see how they have changed in response to market forces, infrastructure improvements (both projected and realized), and public policy goals. The primary impetus of the plan is to achieve the following goals:

- Evaluate the Plan Area’s potential for new development;
- Establish new height and bulk limits and other zoning regulations governing urban form;
- Create appropriate land use controls to capitalize on major transit investment in the downtown core;
- Set forth guidelines and standards to achieve a high-quality public realm and enhanced public amenities;
- Analyze the impacts of new development and propose measures that would help support transit and other public infrastructure improvements.

A centerpiece of the planning efforts for the Transit Center District Area Plan is the proposed Transit Tower, planned for TJPA-owned property on Mission Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and Fremont streets. The approved Transbay Redevelopment Plan considers a 550’ tower for the site; the Transit Center District Plan anticipates a much taller tower for the site, ranging from 800’ to 1,200’ high.<sup>130</sup>

Although the Transit Center District Plan is not complete, initial background studies hint at the general approach aiming for more density. According to diagrams prepared by the Planning Department, the greatest intensity of development and the highest structures are earmarked for an area centered at the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> and Mission streets and expanding outward from this point in a two-block radius. With current height and bulk limits, new construction can range from 80’ to 550’ depending on the height and bulk district. The Transit Center District Plan anticipates much higher construction in the area, with the tallest towers reaching as high as 1,200’. The Transit Tower will most likely be the tallest building in the area, but other towers nearly as high can be expected.

Although it is not possible to predict which sites that presently contain historic resources will be redeveloped, it is safe to say that buildings located within a 2-3 block radius of the Transbay Terminal will become the focus of new construction. Diagrams prepared by the San Francisco Planning Department of potential height and bulk districts in the area show height limits as high as 150’ to 850’ within these areas. Project sponsors will be limited in part by existing lot sizes and resulting restrictions on the floor-to-area ratios but it can be expected that lower scale commercial buildings will be especially vulnerable to redevelopment if larger parcels can be assembled from contiguous properties, especially those located outside existing historic and conservation districts.

#### *Mitigation*

In instances where demolition or significant alterations may occur, it is important to mitigate the effects to a less-than-significant level where feasible. In addition to standard mitigation measures we recommend that the City require project sponsors to undertake meaningful measures that more effectively mitigate the impact of their undertakings. Historic resource mitigation measures are typically developed on a case-by-case basis, providing the opportunity to tailor them to the characteristics and the significance of the resource and the impacts to it. The more commonly

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<sup>129</sup> City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, *Request for Proposals: Environmental Impact Analysis and Report for the Transit Center District Plan and Transit Tower* (San Francisco, San Francisco Planning Department, July 23, 2007), 1-2.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

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adopted mitigation measures consist of 1) documentation of the affected resource, typically to the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS); 2) preparation of a salvage plan for significant features and materials; or 3) making a commemorative plaque. While in some instances these mitigation measures are judged to reduce the adverse effects to a less-than-significant level, they often do not alter the loss to community character and collective history. Section 15126.4(b)(2) of the Public Resources Code is clear in this regard: "In some circumstances, documentation of an historical resource, by way of historic narrative, photographs or architectural drawings, as mitigation for the effects of demolition of the resource will not mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effect on the environment would occur."

While HABS-level recordation is valuable, pitfalls include the lack of awareness of and access to the records created and public loss to the streetscape. To better address these concerns we suggest the institution of more "creative" mitigation measures that better compensate for the loss of the resource. According to CEQA case law, mitigation measures "must be enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally binding instruments." Furthermore, there "must be an essential nexus between the mitigation measure and a legitimate governmental interest."<sup>131</sup> In addition to HABS-level recordation, which records the resource through archival drawings and large-format black and white photography, we encourage the City to require project sponsors to undertake one or more of the following measures.

### **Avoiding the Impact**

Given the enormous development pressures and the uniqueness of the Transit Center District survey area, the City should seek first and foremost to avoid the impact altogether by modifying the project. Certain resources are simply too important to be demolished or altered and standard mitigation measures will not reduce the effect to a less-than-significant impact. In these cases, it may be necessary to require the project sponsor to redesign the project to avoid the resource altogether or to incorporate the resource into the project. A successful example of this strategy is the incorporation of the Williams Building into the St. Regis Tower project at the southeast corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission streets.

### **Minimizing the Impact**

Project impacts may also be minimized by modifying the project to retain elements of the resource in place. Although façade retention, sometimes known as "façadism" is one way this may be achieved, this strategy has come under increased criticism as a less-than-effective way to mitigate project-specific impacts. An example of this approach is the former Hotel Jessie façade. Before the hotel was demolished, the project sponsor was required to attach the façade to the Jessie Street elevation of the new Paramount project at the northeast corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission streets. The façade has been preserved but it is evident that it is simply attached to the rear of a modern high-rise project. Nevertheless, the primary significance of the Hotel Jessie was its façade and the high-quality elevation maintains its historic presence on this block of Jessie Street.

### **Compensating for the Impact**

Depending on the significance of the resource, the City may require the project sponsor to fund permanent displays or artwork commemorating the history and significance of the demolished resource. The display should be permanently publicly accessible and preferably located on site. In addition to commemorating the significance of an individual resource, the display should discuss larger themes in the development of the district, in particular the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, industry, and themes centering on labor, immigration, and redevelopment. The City could also require project sponsors to contribute funds to pay for ongoing survey work in other neighborhoods heavily impacted by new development or to fund thematic surveys that center on contexts relating to the Transit Center District survey area. Project sponsors could be required to establish a revolving fund to pay for the restoration of altered historic facades within the

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<sup>131</sup> *California Public Resources Code, "CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, Chapter 3)" Section 15126.4 (2) and (4)(a).*



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immediate vicinity of the project. Although not sufficient alone to mitigate the effects of demolishing a historic resource, the City may ask project sponsors to contribute to a fund to erect signage for indicating boundaries of existing historic districts.

### **Salvage**

For any project that involves demolition of a historic resource, the City should identify features and materials worthy of retention and require the project sponsor to allow a salvage contractor to remove these features and materials prior to demolition. If certain features or materials are suitable, they should be re-used in the replacement building. The disposal of demolition debris is one of the most wasteful byproducts of development and it is critical to divert as much of this from the waste stream as possible. Examples of reusable features and materials include: salvageable heavy timber framing, doors and windows, built-in cabinetry, shelving and moldings; wood flooring, sheet metal cornices and moldings, light fixtures, marble and stone partitions and paneling, and iron and steel for scrap.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

It is anticipated that the completion of the proposed Transit Center and Tower and other major projects in the next decade will dramatically change the appearance of the Transit Center District survey area, resulting in the demolition of many significant and contributing early twentieth-century commercial loft buildings. It is the purpose of the Transit Center District Survey to identify individually significant buildings and districts that represent the important historic contexts that have led to the development of the area. Kelley & VerPlanck has analyzed the area extensively and documented a California Register-eligible historic district that incorporates the existing New Montgomery-Second Conservation District and the Second and Howard National Register District. The proposed district encompasses the most significant concentration of early twentieth-century commercial and light industrial buildings remaining in the South of Market. Largely intact streetscapes such as 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Market and Howard and Mission Street between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> street retain the essence of pre-World War II downtown San Francisco. Such enclaves of historic masonry loft buildings are increasingly rare and consequently worthy of preservation. Although many of these buildings do not appear to be individually eligible, they form the “setting” for the landmark-eligible “jewels” that are also located throughout the survey area. We have also identified several significant post-World War II resources that inform our understanding of post-war planning trends and the effects of urban renewal.

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**APPENDIX**

- A. TABLES
- B. DISTRICT FORM
- C. DPR 523 A AND B FORMS

**TABLE 1-EXISTING SURVEY RATINGS WITHIN STUDY AREA**

	PARCEL NUMBER	ADDRESS	NAME	76 SURVEY SUMMARY RATING	HERITAGE RATING	ARTICLE 10	ARTICLE 11	LISTED IN NR	NR STATUS CODE
<b>BLOCK</b>									
<b>3706</b>	001	703 Market Street	Central Tower		B		III		3S
	093	700 Mission Street	Aronson Building		A				7
<b>3707</b>	001	601-5 Market Street	Santa Fe Building	1	B				3S
	002	20-8 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Schwabacher Building		B				3S
	N/A	30 Second Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				3S
	002A	609-11 Market Street	Commercial building		C				
	004	36-40 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Morgan Building		C				
	005	42-6 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial building		C				
	006	48-50 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Kentfield & Esser Bldg.		C				
	007	52-4 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial building		C				
	008	60-64 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial building		C				
	009	70-2 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial building		C				
	010	76 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial building		C				
	011	84-8 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial building	1	C				
	012	90-6 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial building		C				
	013	602-6 Mission Street	Atlas Building		C				
	014	79 New Montgomery Street	Crossley Building		C		I		3S
	019	652-4 Mission Street	Commercial building		C				
	020	658-64 Mission Street	Textile Building	3	C		III		
	021	666 Mission	Hundley Hardware/CHS	1	C				
	022	674-8 Mission Street	SFRA (Demo)	*1	C				
	023	680-2 Mission Street	SFRA (Demo)	*1					
	032	163-65 Jessie Street	Hess Building		C				
	N/A	167 Jessie Street	Hotel Jessie (Altered)		C				
	033	74 New Montgomery Street	Old Call Building	3	A		I		3S
	035	57-61 New Montgomery Street	Sharon Building	4	A		I		3S
	044	111-27 Stevenson Street	Palace Garage		B		I		3S
	051	681-5 Market Street	Monadnock Building	3	B		I		3S
	052	2 New Montgomery Street	Palace Hotel	4	A	No. 18	II		3S
	057	691-9 Market Street	Examiner Building		B		I		3S
	057	17-29 Third Street	Dave's		C				
	058	33-51 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	Parking garage	*1					
	061	623-31 Market Street	Metropolis Trust Bldg.		B				3S
	062	619 Market Street	Hoffman's Grill	*1	B	No. 144			
	062	17-29 New Montgomery Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				
	063	71-7 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	Breen's Fine Foods (Demo)		B				2D1
	063	81-85 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	Commercial building		C				

**TABLE 1-EXISTING SURVEY RATINGS WITHIN STUDY AREA**

	PARCEL NUMBER	ADDRESS	NAME	76 SURVEY SUMMARY RATING	HERITAGE RATING	ARTICLE 10	ARTICLE 11	LISTED IN NR	STATUS CODE
	N/A	621 Market Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				
<b>3708</b>	003	38-40 First Street	Commercial building		C				
	007	76-80 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Marwadel Building		C				2S2
	006	62 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Neustadter Building		C				6Y2
	008	82-4 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Commercial building		C				
	009	500 Mission Street	Brandenstein Building		C				6Y2
	010	511 Mission Street	Brick commercial building		C				
	011	516 Mission Street	Printing Arts Building	0	C				
	N/A	526 Mission Street	Western Pacific Bldg. (Demo)		C				
	N/A	532-36 Mission	GG University (Demo)		C				
	N/A	554-60 Mission Street	Daziel Building (Demo)		C				
	N/A	562-72 Mission Street	DN & E Walter Co. Bldg. (Demo)		B				
	N/A	39-47 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Wentworth-Smith Building (Demo)		C				
	019	85-99 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Wells Fargo Building	2	A		I		2D2
	022	One Ecker Street	Warehouse	2	B		I		3S
	023	40-6 Jessie Street	Concrete loft		C				
	028	71 Stevenson Street	Garage (Demo)		C				
	N/A	64 Jessie	Concrete loft (Demo)		B				
	031	77 Stevenson Street	MUNI Bldg.		C				
	032	96 Jessie Street	Warring Building	2	C		III		3S
	034	83 Stevenson Street	California Farmer Building	*1	B		III		
	038	55 Stevenson Street	Standard Varnish Works		C				
	039	53 Stevenson Street	Office building (Demo)	1	C				
	040	39 Stevenson Street	Warehouse (Demo)		C				
	057	555 Market Street	2 towers: 20 & 30 stories	*3					
	095	73 Jessie Street			C				3S
<b>3709</b>	N/A	50-60 Fremont Street	Commercial Building (Demo)		B				
	N/A	57 Jessie Street	Diner (Demo)		C				
	N/A	400 Mission Street	Commercial Building	N/A	C				
	008	440-54 Mission Street	Terminal Plaza Building		B				3S
	011	41 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Blake, Moffitt & Towne Bldg. (Demo)		B				
	N/A	51-63 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Golden Gate Bldg. (Demo)		C				
	012	9-15 Market Street	Sheldon Building (Demo)		B				3S
	019	50 Fremont Street	Commercial Building						
<b>3710</b>	020	333 Market	Embarcadero Garage						6
<b>3711</b>	019	245 Market Street	PG & E Building	*4	A		I	Y	
	019	215 Market Street	Matson Building	*4	A		I	Y	
<b>3712</b>	N/A	101-05 Market Street	Office building (Demo)	2	B				2S2
	N/A	115-21 Market Street	Lincoln Hotel (Demo)		C				
	N/A	125-31 Market Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				



**TABLE 1-EXISTING SURVEY RATINGS WITHIN STUDY AREA**

	<b>PARCEL NUMBER</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>76 SURVEY SUMMARY RATING</b>	<b>HERITAGE RATING</b>	<b>ARTICLE 10</b>	<b>ARTICLE 11</b>	<b>LISTED IN NR</b>	<b>STATUS CODE</b>
<b>3717</b>	013 & 014	103-11 Main Street	Industrial building <b>(Demo)</b>	*1					
	019	120 Howard Street	Bank of America						6
	021	150 Spear							6
<b>3719</b>	001				<b>B</b>				6Y2
	003	147 Fremont Street	Commercial Building						6Y2
	008	342-56 Howard Street	Marine Electric Building	*1					
	009	193 Fremont Street							6
	010	183 Fremont Street							6
	011	177 Fremont Street	Commercial Building	1	C				4S
	017	101 Fremont Street							6Y2
	018	324 Howard Street							6
<b>3720</b>	001	401-25 Mission Street	Transbay Terminal	2	B				3S
	008								4S
<b>3721</b>	001	500 Howard Street	Commercial Building <b>(Demo)</b>	*0					
	002	110 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Commercial Building <b>(Demo)</b>	*2	C				
	003	116 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Bonestall Building <b>(Demo)</b>		C				
	005	118-24 First Street	Commercial building <b>(Demo)</b>		C				
	009				<b>C</b>				1D
	013	524 Howard Street	Bay Bridge Garage <b>(Demo)</b>	*2	B				3S
	014	530 Howard Street			C				6
	015	55 Natoma Street			<b>C</b>				6
	016	546 Howard Street							6
	019	562 Howard Street			<b>C</b>				6Y2
	020	568 Howard Street	Janssen Building <b>(Altered)</b>	1	<b>B</b>				6Y2
	022	191 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial Building					Y-D	1D
	023	181 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial Building					Y-D	1D
	025	171 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	The Electrical Building					Y-D	1D
	029	77 Natoma Street			<b>C**</b>				6Y2
	048	163 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Marcus Modry Building	1	<b>C**</b>			Y-D	1D
	049	149 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial Building					Y-D	1D
	050	141-5 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Hunt-Mirk Building				I	Y-D	1D
	051	133 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial Building					Y-D	1D
	068	535-9 Mission Street	Goodyear Building <b>(Demo)</b>						
	070	571 Mission Street	Mohrdick Building <b>(Demo)</b>	*1					
	071	121 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Drexler Estate Building	2			I	Y-D	1D
	081	551 Mission Street	Commercial Building <b>(Demo)</b>	*1					
	082	545-7 Mission Street	Greenwood Est. Building		C				6Y2
	083	531 Mission Street							6Y2
	092	580 Howard Street						Y-D	1D
	108	83 Natoma Street			<b>C</b>				6Y2

**TABLE 1-EXISTING SURVEY RATINGS WITHIN STUDY AREA**

	PARCEL NUMBER	ADDRESS	NAME	76 SURVEY SUMMARY RATING	HERITAGE RATING	ARTICLE 10	ARTICLE 11	LISTED IN NR	STATUS CODE
	119				C				6
	N/A	549-51 Mission Street	Commercial building (Demo)		B				
	N/A	553 Mission Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				
	N/A	565-7 Mission Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				
	N/A	571-3 Mission Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				
	N/A	575-9 Mission Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				
	N/A	583-5 Mission Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				
	N/A	589-91 Mission Street	Commercial building (Demo)		C				
<b>3722</b>	001	601-9 Mission Street	Stevenson Building		C				
	003	132 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Morton Cook Building	1			I	Y-D	1D
	004	144-54 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Bothin R.E. Building					Y-D	6X2
	005	156-60 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Byron Jackson Building					Y-D	1D
	006	116 Natoma Street	N. Clark & Sons Building	2			I	Y-D	1D
	007	137-59 New Montgomery Street	Commercial Building		C			Y-D	
	008	134-40 New Montgomery Street	Pacific Telephone & Telegraph	*4	A		I		1D
	013	147 Natoma Street	Underwriters' Building	3			I		
	014	145 Natoma Street	Office building	3					
	016	168-70 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial Building					Y-D	1D
	017	176 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Commercial Building					Y-D	6X2
	019	182-98 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Knickerbocker Building					Y-D	1D
	020	606-12 Howard Street	Commercial Building					Y-D	1D
	022	170-80 New Montgomery Street	Furniture Exchange		C				3S
	027	15 Hunt Street			C**				
	063	101-7 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	Williams Building	*3	B				
	067	663-71 Mission Street	Grant Building		C				
	068	657 Mission Street	McLaughlin Building		C				
	069	645-7 Mission Street	Veronica Building	1	C		I		
	070	641-43 Mission Street	Commercial building		C				
	071	116 New Montgomery Street	Rialto Building	3	A		I		3S
	072	111-21 New Montgomery Street	Standard Building		C				1D
	073	617-23 Mission Street	Koracorp Building		C				3S
<b>3735</b>	005	625-31 Howard Street	William Volker Building	3	C		II		3S
	009 & 010	608-10 Folsom Street	Commercial Building	1					
	041	657 Howard Street	Thirsty Bear	3					
	053	611 Howard Street	Palmer Building (Demo)	*0					
<b>3736</b>	001	501 Howard Street	Commercial Building (Demo)	*0					

**TABLE 1-EXISTING SURVEY RATINGS WITHIN STUDY AREA**

	PARCEL NUMBER	ADDRESS	NAME	76 SURVEY SUMMARY RATING	HERITAGE RATING	ARTICLE 10	ARTICLE 11	LISTED IN NR	STATUS CODE
	006	234 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Philips Van Orden Building	1			I		3S
	083	527 Howard Street			C				
	086	555 Howard Street			C				6
	091	72 Tehama Street	Brizard & Young Building				III		2S2
	095	217 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	Crane Co. Building	0					
	098	589-91 Howard Street	Commercial Building		C			Y-D	6
	099	583-7 Howard Street	Crellin Est. Building		C**		III	Y-D	1D
	100	577-79 Howard Street	Commercial Building					Y-D	1D
	107	557 Howard Street	Graphic Reproduction		C				6
	110	547 Howard Street			C**				6
	112	531 Howard Street			C				3S
	114	525 Howard Street	Philips & Van Orden?		C				6
	123								6Y2
<b>3737</b>	023	231 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Brick Commercial Building				I		
<b>3738</b>	012	215 Fremont Street	Butler Building						6
<b>3740</b>	001	200 Spear Street	Folger Coffee ( <b>Demo</b> )	*2	A				1S
	033	201 Main Street	Bechtel Offices	*2					6

\* Denotes buildings not listed in City Historic Resource Database printout provided to Kelley & VerPlanck. Most appear to be the result of either demolition or lot mergers.

**TABLE 2: INDIVIDUALLY SIGNIFICANT PROPERTIES OUTSIDE THE PROPOSED NEW MONTGOMERY AND MISSION HISTORIC DISTRICT**

<b>Address</b>	<b>APN</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Construction Date</b>	<b>Property Type</b>	<b>Existing Status Code</b>	<b>KVP Status Code(s)</b>
62 1 <sup>st</sup> . St.	3708006	Neustadter Bros. Building	1917	Commercial	None	3CS
76 1 <sup>st</sup> St.	3708007	Marwedel Building	1908	Commercial	2S2	2S2
88 1 <sup>st</sup> St.	3708009	Brandenstein Building	1907	Commercial	None	3CS
231 1 <sup>st</sup> St.	3737030	Thomson Machine Works	1906	Industrial	2S2	2S2
234 1 <sup>st</sup> St.	3736006	Phillips & Van Orden Building	1929	Industrial	2D2	3CS
240 2 <sup>nd</sup> St.	3735055	Marine Firemen And Oilers And Watertenders Union Hall	1957	Community Center: Union Hall	None	3CS
572 Folsom St.	3736025	J.E. Bier Building	1912	Industrial	None	3CS
606 Folsom St	3735008	Planters Hotel	1907	Residential	None	3CS
666 Folsom	3735013	A T & T Headquarters	1964	Commercial	None	3CS
40 Hawthorne St.	3735017	A T & T Annex	1964	Commercial	None	3CS
342 Howard St.	3719009 & 3719018	Marine Electric Company Building	1907	Industrial	3S	3S, 3CS
16 Jessie St.	3708022	One Ecker	1906	Industrial	3S	3S, 3CS
40 Jessie St.	3708023	Babcock & Wilcox Warehouse	1913	Industrial	None	3CS
96 Jessie St.	3708032	Warring-Wilkinson Building	1909	Industrial	None	3CS
215 Market St.	3711019	Matson Building	1921	Commercial	1S	1S
245 Market St.	3711019	P G & E. Building	1922	Commercial	1S	1S
425 Mission St.	3720001	Transbay Terminal	1939	Railway/bus terminal	3S	3S, 3CS
440 Mission St.	3709008	C.C. Moore Building	1920	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CS
545 Mission St.	3721082	Greenwood Estate Building	1906	Industrial	6Y	3CS
79 Stevenson St.	3708031	Market St. Railway Substation	1920	Industrial	None	3CS
83 Stevenson St.	3708096	U.S. Post Office Station K	1909	Government building	3S	3S, 3CS

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\*NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder)

New Montgomery and Mission Historic District

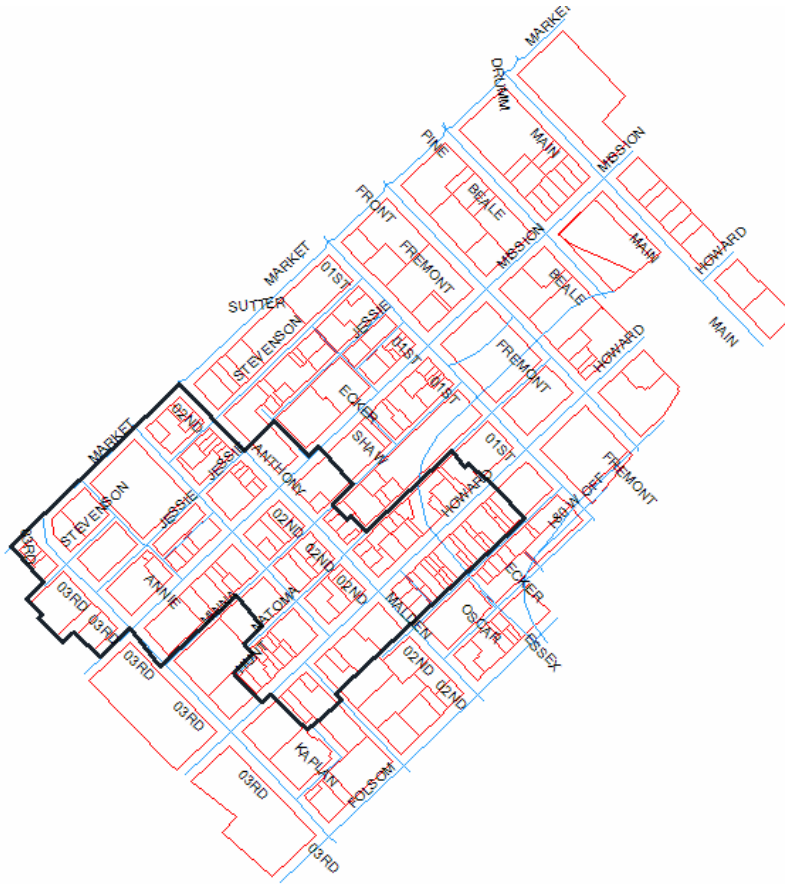
D1. Historic Name South of Market Area

D2. Common Name: Transit Center District

**\*D3. Detailed Description** (Discuss overall coherence of the district, its setting, visual characteristics, and minor features. List all elements of district.):

The New Montgomery and Mission Historic District is located within the eastern part of the South of Market Area in downtown San Francisco. The proposed district is comprised of 123 parcels (89 of which are contributors) located within an area bounded by Market Street to the north, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the east (including the properties on the east side of 2<sup>nd</sup>) with an easterly extension along both sides of Howard Street, Tehama Street to the south, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the west (**Figure 1**). The land is generally level although the terrain slopes gently uphill south of Howard Street. The district is entirely built-out and urban in character with no public parkland or open space within its boundaries aside from Mark Twain Plaza, which occupies a portion of the Annie Street right-of-way.

Developed primarily between the years of 1906 and 1930, the district is highly cohesive in regard to scale, building typology, materials, architectural style, and relationship to the Street. More than two-thirds of the contributing buildings are three-to seven-story brick or concrete commercial loft buildings constructed during the five years after the 1906 Earthquake. In regard to massing, most buildings are either square or rectangular-plan, some with interior light courts to allow sunlight and air into interiors of the buildings. Nearly all cover their entire parcels and their primary façade(s) typically face the Street. Larger and more distinctive buildings generally occupy prominent corner lots, particularly along Market and Mission Streets. Most of the contributing buildings are designed in the American Commercial style and feature facades divided into a tripartite arrangement of a base, shaft, and capital. The base is the location of retail storefronts and the primary public entrance, and sometimes a vehicular loading dock. The shaft typically contains two or more undifferentiated floors expressed on the exterior as a grid of punched double-hung wood or steel casement windows. The capital, if present, is often comprised of a highly ornamented attic story capped by a sheet metal or terra cotta cornice. Ornamentation of district contributors is most often Renaissance-Baroque with later examples of Spanish Colonial Revival and Art Deco. Toward the southern portion of the district, particularly along Tehama Street, there are small-scale machine shops of concrete, brick, and wood-frame construction. Several feature two-story office wings facing the Street and a one-story, gable-roofed workspace to the rear. Ornamentation on these building is typically minimal.



**Figure 1. Boundaries of the proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District**  
**Source: KVP Consulting**

**\*D4. Boundary Description** (Describe limits of district and attach map showing boundary and district elements.):

The proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District is roughly L-shaped and centered on the intersection of New Montgomery and Mission Streets in San Francisco’s South of Market Area. The proposed district is composed of 123 parcels encompassing 89 contributing resources and 37 non-contributing resources.<sup>1</sup> The contributors are identified on the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 A (Primary) forms created as part of the accompanying Transit Center District Plan Survey. A list of all contributors is also included in **Table 1** below.

**\*D5. Boundary Justification:**

The boundaries of the New Montgomery and Mission Historic District encompass five contributing buildings constructed between 1898 and 1905, and 84 contributing buildings built between 1906 and 1929. The boundaries were drawn to capture the highest concentration of contributing and contiguous resources. The boundaries omit several enclaves of historic commercial loft buildings located east of the proposed historic district along 1<sup>st</sup>, Jessie, Fremont, and Folsom Streets. However, all individually significant buildings, including several Recent Past resources, have been fully documented on DPR 523 B (Building, Structure & Object) forms included in the accompanying Transit Center District Plan Survey. The district boundaries encompass a variety of building types, ranging from the grand Palace Hotel at Market and New Montgomery to several modest machine shops along Tehama Street. What ties this area together is what comes between: a swath of intact three-to seven-story masonry commercial loft buildings that line much of 2<sup>nd</sup>, Mission and Howard Streets. The eastern boundary has been drawn to include as many intact resources as possible, excluding post-1930 construction. The southern boundary excludes later commercial development and transportation infrastructure south of Tehama Street. The western boundary continues south from the intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Market

<sup>1</sup> The total number of resources (126) exceeds the total number of parcels (123) because several parcels contain more than one structure.

before jogging east at Minna Street to exclude the Yerba Buena Center Redevelopment Area. The northern boundary is Market Street, the traditional boundary dividing the Financial District from the vast South of Market Area.

**Table 1-Historic District Contributors**

Address	APN	Name	Construction Date	Property Type	Existing Status Code	KVP Status Code(s)
20 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707002	Schwabacher Building	1914	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
36 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707004	Morgan Building	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
42 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707005	Unknown	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
48 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707006	Kentfield & Esser Building	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
52 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707007	Unknown	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
60 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707008	Unknown	1906	Commercial	None	3CD
70 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707009	Unknown	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
76 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707010	Unknown	1908	Commercial	None	3CD
84 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707011	Unknown	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
85 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3708019	Wells Fargo Building	1898 (rebuilt 1907)	Commercial	2D2	2D2, 3CB
90 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3707012	Burdette Building	1905	Commercial	None	3CB
121 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3721071	Drexler Estate Building	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CB
132 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3722003	Morton Cook Building	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CB
133 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3721051	Morton L. Cook Building	1906	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
141 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3721050	Hunt-Mirk Building	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CB
144 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3722004	Bothin Real Estate Building	1908	Commercial	6X	3CD
149 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3721049	Bothin Real Estate Co. Building	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
156 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3722005	Byron Jackson Building	1908	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
163 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3721048	Marcus Modry Building	1906	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
168 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3722016	Unknown	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
171 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3721025	The Electrical Building	1912	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
182 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3722019	Knickerbocker Building	1909	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CB
191 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3721022	Andrew Downey Building	1906	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
205 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3736095	Unknown	1906	Commercial	None	3CD
217 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3736095	Crane Co. Building	1912	Commercial	None	3CD
17 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	3707057	Dave's	1910	Commercial	None	3CD
26 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	3706001	Call Building	1898 (rebuilt 1908 and 1938)	Commercial	3S	3S
86 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	3706093	Aronson Building	1903 (rebuilt 1906)	Commercial	2D	3S, 3CB
525 Howard Street	3736114	Louis Lurie Building	1921	Industrial	7	3CD
527 Howard Street	3736083	Unknown	1906	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
530 Howard Street	3721014	Bothin Real Estate Co.	1908	Commercial	7	3CD
531 Howard Street	3736112	Mercedes Building	1906	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
543 Howard	3736111	Unknown	Ca. 1925	Commercial	7	3CD
547 Howard Street	3736110	Greeley Building	1907	Commercial	7	3CD
555 Howard Street	3736086	Aaron Kahn Building	1911	Commercial	7N1	3CD

Address	APN	Name	Construction Date	Property Type	Existing Status Code	KVP Status Code
557 Howard Street	3736107	Graphic Reproduction Building	1922	Commercial	7	3CD
571 Howard Street	3736102	E. J. Brooks & Co. Building	1924	Commercial	None	3CD
577 Howard Street	3736100	Taylor Building	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
580 Howard Street	3721092	Dahl-Beck Building	1906	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
583 Howard Street	3736099	Thomas P. Crellin EStreet Building	1912	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CB
589 Howard Street	3736098	Lent Building	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CD
606 Howard Street	3722020	Merritt Building	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CB
625 Howard Street	3735005	Volker Building	1929	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
651 Howard Street	3735042	Unknown	1908	Commercial	None	3CD
657 Howard Street	3735041	SF News Co. Building	1922	Commercial	None	3CB
658 Howard Street	3722012	Boston Rubber Co. Building	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
667 Howard Street	3735039	Sharon Estate Building	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
15 Hunt Street	3722027	Hemphill Building	1906	Commercial	None	3CD
163 Jessie Street	3707032	Hess Building	1912	Commercial	None	3CD
601 Market Street	3707001	Santa Fe Building	1917	Commercial	2S2	2S2, 3CB
609 Market Street	3707002A	Unknown	1914	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CD
619 Market Street	3707062	Hoffman's Grill	1913	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CD
625 Market Street	3707061	Metropolis Trust & Savings Bank	1907	Commercial	2S2	2S2, 3CB
685 Market Street	3707051	Monadnock Building	1906	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
691 Market Street	3707057	Hearst Building	1909	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
83 Minna Street	3721052	John G. Rapp Machine Shop	1911	Industrial	None	3CD
142 Minna Street	3722058	Unknown	1910	Industrial	None	3CD
601 Mission Street	3722001	Stevenson Building	1907	Commercial	None	3CB
602 Mission Street	3707013	Atlas Building	1906	Commercial	None	3CB
611 Mission Street	3722076	Koret Building	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
617 Mission Street	3722073	Crellin Building	1908	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
641 Mission Street	3722070	Unknown	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
647 Mission Street	3722069	Veronica Building	1907	Commercial	None	3CB
657 Mission Street	3722068	McLaughlin Building	1907	Commercial	None	3CD
658 Mission Street	3707020	Textile Building	1906	Commercial	None	3CB
663 Mission Street	3722067	Grant Building	1909	Commercial	None	3CD
678 Mission Street	3707021	Hundley Hardware	1922	Commercial	2D	2D, 3CB
693 Mission Street	3722257	Williams Building	1907	Commercial	2D	2D, 3CB
55 Natoma Street	3721015	Federal Security Co.	1908	Commercial	7	3CD
77-79 Natoma Street	3721029	Unknown	1914	Industrial	6Y	3CD
83 Natoma Street	3721108	Beck Electric Supply	1924	Industrial	6Y	3CD
90 Natoma Street	3721047	Unknown	1913	Industrial	None	3CD
116 Natoma Street	3722006	N. Clark & Sons Building	1910	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CB



Address	APN	Name	Construction Date	Property Type	Existing Status Code	KVP Status Code
147 Natoma Street	3722013	Underwriters Fire Patrol Building	1909	Commercial	None	3S, 3CB
161 Natoma Street	3722011	Emerson Mfg. Co.	1918	Industrial	None	3CD
2 New Montgomery Street	3707052	Palace Hotel	1909	Hotel	3S	3S, 3CB
39 New Montgomery Street	3707035	Sharon Building	1912	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
74 New Montgomery Street	3707033	Call Building	1914	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
77 New Montgomery Street	3707014	Crossley Building	1907	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
100 New Montgomery Street	3722071	Rialto Building	1901 (rebuilt 1906)	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
111 New Montgomery Street	3722072	Standard Building	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CB
134-40 New Montgomery Street	3722080	Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Building	1925	Commercial	None	3S, 3CB
137 New Montgomery Street	3722007	Greenwood Block	1907	Commercial	1D	1D, 3CB
170 New Montgomery Street	3722022	SF Furniture Exchange	1920	Commercial	3S	3S, 3CB
111 Stevenson Street	3707044	Palace Garage	1911	Garage	3S	3S, 3CB
72 Tehama Street	3736091	Unknown	1906	Industrial	2S2	2S2, 3CB
74 Tehama Street	3736092	Unknown	1906	Industrial	None	3CD
78 Tehama Street	3736093	Unknown	1908	Industrial	None	3CB
90 Tehama Street	3736094	Unknown	1928	Industrial	None	3CD

**Table 2-Non-contributors**

<b>Address</b>	<b>APN</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Construction Date</b>	<b>Property Type</b>	<b>Existing Status Code</b>	<b>KVP Status Code(s)</b>
101 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3721089	101 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	2000	Commercial	None	6Z
120 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3722002	Unknown	1907	Commercial	None	6Z
176 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3722017	Parking Lot	N/A	Vacant	None	6Z
181 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3721023	Adolph Gasser	1911	Commercial	6X	6Z
201 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3736097	Parking Lot	None	Vacant	None	6Z
222 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	3735063	Parking Lot	None	Vacant	None	6Z
000 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	3706114	Parking Lot	None	Vacant	None	6Z
32 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	3706003-2	Call Annex	1910	Commercial	None	6Z
50 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	3706074	Hotel Argent	1983	Hotel	None	6Z
51 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	3707058	Hearst Parking Center	1970	Garage	None	6Z
125 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	3722257	Street Regis Tower	2005	Residential	None	6Z
000 Howard Street	3722023	Parking Lot	None	Vacant	None	6Z
000 Howard Street	3736089	Transbay Viaduct	1939	Transportation	None	6Z
546 Howard Street	3721016	Parking Lot	None	Vacant	None	6Z
562 Howard Street	3721019	562 Howard Street	1909	Commercial	6Y	6Z
568 Howard Street	3721020	F. C. Jansen Building	1909	Commercial	6Y	6Z
575 Howard Street	3736101	575 Howard Street	1906	Commercial	None	6Z
633 Howard Street	3735050	633 Howard Street	1910	Commercial	None	6Z
645 Howard Street	3735047	645 Howard Street	1922	Commercial	None	6Z
648 Howard Street	3722022	Gold Club	1923	Commercial	None	6Z
660 Howard Street	3722026	660 Howard Street	1906	Commercial	None	6Z
663 Howard Street	3735040	663 Howard Street	1972	Commercial	None	6Z
645 Mission Street	3707018	645 Mission Street	1906	Commercial	None	6Z
652 Mission Street	3707019	SPUR	1909	Commercial	None	6Z
680 Mission Street	3707063	Paramount	2002	Residential	None	6Z
000 Natoma Street	3721015A	Transbay Viaduct	1939	Transportation	None	6Z
000 Natoma Street	3721031	Parking Lot	None	Vacant	None	6Z
85 Natoma Street	3721109	Natoma Street Lofts	2001	Residential	None	6Z
145 Natoma Street	3722014	Thomas Lile Building	1971	Commercial	None	3CS
33 New Montgomery Street	3707062	33 New Montgomery	1986	Commercial	None	6Z
90 New Montgomery Street	3707016	90 New Montgomery Street	1988	Commercial	None	6Z
199 New Montgomery Street	3722083	199 New Montgomery	2004	Commercial/ Residential	None	6Z
000 Tehama	3736083A	Parking Lot	None	Vacant	None	6Z
48 Tehama Street	3736084	Parking Lot	None	Vacant	None	6Z
50 Tehama Street	3736085	Parking Lot	None	Vacant	None	6Z
60 Tehama Street	3736088	60 Tehama	1984	Commercial	None	6Z

<b>D6. Significance: Theme</b>	Commercial/Industrial Development	<b>Area</b>	South of Market: New Montgomery & Mission Historic District
	<b>Period of Significance</b>		1906-1930

(Discuss district's importance in terms of its historical context as defined by theme, period of significance, and geographic scope. Also address the integrity of the district as a whole.)

### **Summary Statement of Significance**

The New Montgomery and Mission Historic District appears eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 1 (Events) and Criterion 3 (Design/Construction) with a period of significance of 1906 to 1930. The district appears eligible under Criterion 1 in part due to its association with the reconstruction of San Francisco's South of Market Area after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. Although there are five buildings constructed before 1906 within the proposed historic district, only one survived completely intact—the Burdette Building—built in 1905 at 90 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Otherwise, the area was entirely rebuilt after the earthquake, justifying 1906 as the beginning of the period of significance. By 1930, the district was built out, justifying 1930 as the end of the period of significance. The 1906 Earthquake and Fire is arguably the single-most important event to have occurred in San Francisco's history. Although much of the rest of the South of Market took many years to recover, the area comprising the New Montgomery and Mission Historic District, an important southerly extension of San Francisco's central business district since the 1870s, was rebuilt quite rapidly, with more than two-thirds of the district contributors constructed or repaired between 1906 and 1910.

The New Montgomery and Mission Historic District appears eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3 as the largest and most intact concentration of masonry commercial loft buildings in San Francisco. As mentioned above, more than two-thirds, or 62 of 89 contributors, were rebuilt or constructed anew in a brief four-year period between 1906 and 1910. With some notable exceptions, such as the Rialto or Spreckels buildings, most newly constructed buildings in the area were two-to-seven-story steel or heavy timber-frame brick structures designed in the American Commercial style with Renaissance-Baroque ornament. Buildings from this immediate post-quake era continue to line Mission Street between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street between Market and Howard Streets, and Howard Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets. Smaller industrial and warehouse buildings from this era also exist in pockets along the narrow mid-block Streets including Natoma and Tehama Streets. Fourteen buildings, mostly larger and more expensive commercial buildings, were constructed along New Montgomery and Market Streets between 1911 and 1915. Examples include the Sharon and Call buildings which today remain as some of the most architecturally significant commercial buildings ever constructed in downtown San Francisco.<sup>2</sup> The 1920s-era building boom added another seven contributing buildings to the district, including such notable landmarks as the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Building at 130 New Montgomery Street (1924) and the Volker Building at 625 Howard Street (1929).

### **Historic Context**

An extensive historic context describing the development of the entire survey area is contained in the accompanying Transit Center District Survey Context Statement. This district form explores the development of the subject historic district during the period of significance. Although the recovery of the greater South of Market Area to pre-quake levels took more than a decade, the proposed New Montgomery and Mission Historic District—which had functioned as a southerly extension of the central business district since the 1870s—recovered quite rapidly. Before reconstruction could begin, wrecked buildings had to be demolished and the ruins carted away, insurance claims settled, title questions resolved, land resurveyed, building permits acquired, and materials and contractors secured. Owners of buildings damaged but not entirely destroyed had to decide whether to salvage the remaining structure or rebuild anew.

### **Reconstruction**

Reconstruction of the proposed historic district began with an initial flurry of building activity between 1906 and 1913, with more construction occurring after the First World War between 1918 and 1920, and culminating with a major real estate boom in the mid-1920s. The 1913-15 Sanborn maps covering the proposed district illustrate substantial changes in comparison with the 1899 maps. West of 1<sup>st</sup> Street along Mission and Howard and the intersecting numbered Streets, the 1913-15 Sanborn maps illustrate many substantial new and reconstructed steel and heavy timber-frame loft buildings housing light manufacturing, paper companies, printers and binderies, and wholesale

<sup>2</sup> Only two contributing buildings were constructed in district during the rest of the decade, the Emerson Manufacturing Co. Building at 161 Natoma Street (1918) and the San Francisco Furniture Exchange at 170 New Montgomery Street (1920).

warehouses. Some were pre-quake survivors such as the Wells Fargo Building at 71-85 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, which was restored in 1907. By 1908, the Aronson Building, which still stands at 700 Mission Street, was outfitted with a new interior. The Sharon Estate, owners of the Palace Hotel at Market and New Montgomery, decided to demolish the shell of the original 1873 hotel and replace it with an entirely new modern structure designed by the New York firm of Trowbridge & Livingston in 1909. In contrast, the owners of the more heavily damaged Rialto Building, constructed in 1902 according to plans drawn up by Meyer & O'Brien, decided to repair their fire-gutted building (**Figure 2**).

Many more buildings within the historic district were newly constructed between 1906 and 1910. The vast majority were designed in the American Commercial style with spare Renaissance-Baroque ornamentation. Substantial concentrations of these buildings, most ranging between three and seven stories and of steel or heavy timber frame construction, went up in rapid succession along 2<sup>nd</sup>, Howard, and Mission Streets. Although built on a budget, most were architect-designed and of high-quality if mass-produced materials. Examples include the Kentfield & Esser Building at 48 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1907), the Drexler Estate Building at 121 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (1907), the Mercedes Building at 531 Howard Street (1906), and the Veronica Building at 647 Mission Street (1947) (**Figure 3**).

As before the earthquake, the most valuable real estate in the district included the parcels along Market and New Montgomery Streets. Much of the land in this area remained in the hands of wealthy investors, family estates, and realty companies such as the Sharon Estate Company. Formed in 1885 by Francis G. Newlands after the death of Nevada Senator William Sharon (former business partner of William C. Ralston), the Sharon Estate rebuilt the Palace Hotel in 1909, the Sharon Building in 1912 (**Figure 4**), and many of the more significant buildings along New Montgomery Street.<sup>3</sup> The Palace and the Sharon Building still stand, as do most of the post-quake buildings along New Montgomery Street.

The continued integration of the historic district into the central business district between 1906 and 1929 is reflected in several skyscrapers built along both Mission and Market Streets between 1906 and 1910, including the Metropolitan Trust and Savings Bank at 625 Market Street (1907), the Hearst Building at 691 Market Street (1909), and the Spreckels Building at 703 Market Street (1898, rebuilt 1907). The intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission evolved into another important locus of building activity in the district, eventually bracketed on three corners by important early skyscrapers, including the rebuilt Aronson Building on the northwest corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Mission (1903, rebuilt 1907) and the Williams Building on the opposite corner (1907) (**Figure 5**).<sup>4</sup>

The initial flurry of post-quake reconstruction was followed by a brief recession. By the end of the First World War, construction had picked up again, with several substantial new office buildings and hotels constructed in the district. Notable examples include the new Call Building at 74 New Montgomery Street (1914) and the Santa Fe Building at 601 Market Street (1917) (**Figure 6**). After subsiding for several more years, the market picked up again in the early 1920s. By the 1920s, concrete construction had become the predominant building material due to its strength and durability, resistance to earthquake and fire damage, and ability to provide large and open unobstructed workspaces. Several notable concrete commercial loft and industrial buildings were erected on the few remaining empty lots toward the southern edge of the historic district, the most notable of which is the Philips Van Orden Building at 234 1<sup>st</sup> Street (**Figure 7**). Concrete was also well-adapted to the architectural styles popular during the 1920s, including the Spanish Colonial Revival and Art Deco styles. In addition to the Philips Van Orden Building, the Volker Building at 625 Howard (1929) is the most important example of Art Deco design in the district. It is also the last contributor built within the district, its first component completed right before the Stock Market Crash of that year. The ensuing Depression and Second World War essentially put a stop to new construction in the proposed district until the late 1950s.



Figure 2. Rialto Building, 2007

<sup>3</sup> Anne B. Bloomfield, "A History of the California Historical Society's New Mission Street Neighborhood," *California History* (Winter 1995/96), 385.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Corbett, *Splendid Survivors* (San Francisco: California Living Books, 1978), various.



Figure 3. Veronica Building, 2007



Figure 4. Sharon Building



Figure 5. Williams Building, 2007



Figure 6. Santa Fe Building, 2007



**Figure 7. Philips Van Orden Building, 2007**



**Figure 8. Volker Building, 2007**

### **Eligibility**

As mentioned above, the New Montgomery and Mission Historic District appears eligible through survey evaluation for listing in the California Register under Criteria 1 (Events) and 3 (Design/Construction). Compared with much of the surrounding area that has seen vast physical and demographic changes since the end of World War II, the district consists of the city's highest concentration of intact masonry commercial loft buildings, the majority of which were constructed immediately after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. West of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, the Yerba Buena Redevelopment project removed hundreds of similar buildings. East of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, market-driven real estate development has incrementally removed many of the post-1906 commercial and industrial buildings that once existed there. The proposed historic district has survived in part due to the substantial nature of its building stock and the continued suitability of these buildings for evolving business needs. Serving as a southerly extension of the city's central business district, the district contains much of San Francisco's historic wholesale district, as well as several of downtown's most notable office buildings and hotels.

Under Criterion 1, the New Montgomery and Mission Historic District appears eligible for its strong associations with what is arguably the most important event in the history of San Francisco: the 1906 Earthquake and its aftermath when the city's leaders and citizens famously rebuilt the city in a relatively short time. Two-thirds of the district contributors were completed between 1906 and 1910, the height of the reconstruction period. Many were built by members of San Francisco's business community to replace buildings destroyed in the catastrophe. Undeterred by naysayers and prophets of doom, these men and women had confidence in the ability of San Francisco to recover its role as the economic, cultural, and industrial center of the Pacific Slope. The contributing buildings are also a testament to the laborers and craftspeople who completed the Herculean tasks of clearing the rubble and erecting the buildings that continue to stand today.

Under Criterion 3, the New Montgomery and Mission Historic District appears eligible as San Francisco's largest and most intact collection of significant masonry commercial loft buildings and as a district that "embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction." Mostly constructed within a very brief period of time, the district presents several unusually cohesive Streetscapes comprised of three-to seven-story steel or heavy timber frame American Commercial style loft buildings constructed between 1906 and 1910. Although some were built for a particular industry or use, most were speculative ventures and accordingly designed to accommodate a full range of different uses. Their adaptability and durability is attested to by their continued existence.

The New Montgomery and Mission Historic encompasses and expands upon the overlapping New Montgomery and Second Conservation District and the Second and Howard National Register District.

### **Integrity**

Once a resource has been identified as being potentially eligible for listing in the California Register, its historic integrity must be evaluated. The California Register recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity. These aspects are: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. In order to be determined eligible for listing, these aspects must closely relate to the resource's significance and must be intact. These aspects are defined as follows:

- *Location* is the place where the historic property was constructed.
- *Design* is the combination of elements that create the form, plans, space, structure and style of the property.
- *Setting* addresses the physical environment of the historic property inclusive of the landscape and spatial relationships of the building(s).
- *Materials* refer to the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern of configuration to form the historic property.
- *Workmanship* is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history.
- *Feeling* is the property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
- *Association* is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

The process of determining integrity is similar for both the California Register and the National Register, although there is a critical distinction between the two registers, and that is the degree of integrity that a property can retain and still be considered eligible for listing. According to the California Office of Historic Preservation:

It is possible that historical resources may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, but they may still be eligible for listing in the California Register. A resource that has lost its historic character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for the California Register if it maintains the potential to yield significant or historical information or specific data.<sup>5</sup>

As mentioned above, the New Montgomery and Mission Historic District retains a remarkable degree of integrity. Of 123 individual properties, 89, or nearly three-quarters date from the period of significance and retain sufficient individual integrity to be contributors to the district. Constructed of rugged masonry and designed with flexibility and adaptability in mind, the commercial loft buildings that comprise the majority of the district have not typically required extensive remodeling to prolong their serviceable life. The most typical alterations in the area include seismic retrofitting, including the insertion of large X-braces inside several buildings. Some building owners have removed the ornate sheet metal cornices as part of parapet bracing projects. Several buildings have received vertical additions, but in many cases this work has been accomplished without detracting from the individual building's contributory status. Overall, the district retains the aspects of design, materials, and workmanship. Historically built at a larger scale than surrounding areas, property values have not, until recently, justified market-driven redevelopment. Developed to its "highest and best use," the district displays much of its post-quake reconstruction character, also retaining the aspects of location, setting, feeling and association.

**\*D7. References** (Give full citations including the names and addresses of any informants, where possible.):

For a full list of references, please see the bibliography in the accompanying Historic Context Statement prepared for the Transit Center District Plan EIR.

**\*D8. Evaluator:** Christopher VerPlanck **Date:** June 9, 2008  
**Affiliation and Address** Kelley & VerPlanck Historical Resources Consulting  
2912 Diamond Street #330, San Francisco, CA 94131

<sup>5</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Series No. 6, California Register and National Register: A Comparison* (Sacramento, CA: California Office of State Publishing, November 2004)