



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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July 24, 2014

Mr. John Arntz  
Director of Elections  
Department of Elections  
City and County of San Francisco  
1 Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
City Hall, Room 48  
San Francisco CA 94102

VIA INTERDEPARTMENTAL MAIL AND  
VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL TO: [barbara.carr@sfgov.org](mailto:barbara.carr@sfgov.org)

**RE: Pier 70 Development Site Height Limit Increase initiative measure – November 2014 Ballot**

Dear Director Arntz,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the "Pier 70 Development Site Height Limit Increase" initiative measure ("Measure") that will appear on the November 4, 2014 ballot. As you requested, and in anticipation of the Ballot Simplification Committee's preparation of a fair and impartial summary of the Measure, the Planning Department ("Department") is providing an objective analysis of the Measure's impact on current law and current Department and City practices.

Generally, the Measure would affect current law and practice in two primary ways:

- 1. The Measure would establish City policy to encourage development of 28-acres of Port of San Francisco property with a project including certain major features.** Bounded roughly by 20<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and Michigan Streets ("the Project Site"), these major features include nine acres of waterfront recreation areas; approximately 1,000 to 2,000 residential units, with the majority available for rent and 30% affordable to middle- and low-income households; restoration and reuse of historic structures; space for new and existing arts and cultural activities; manufacturing and retail space; approximately 1 to 2 million square feet of commercial and office space; and parking and transportation infrastructure improvements ("the Project").
- 2. The Measure would amend the City's Zoning Maps in order to reclassify the Project Site from a 40-X Height and Bulk District to a 90-X Height and Bulk District.** This would allow buildings on the Project Site to extend up to 90 feet in height, subject to the current methodologies and exceptions in the Planning Code. This reclassification would not occur unless and until the Port Commission approves a development plan for the overall use of the Project Site.

All properties in the City are assigned a Height and Bulk District which governs the maximum allowable height and bulk of structures. In the 40-X Height and Bulk District, structures are generally limited to a maximum height of 40 feet and are allowed unlimited

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bulk within that 40-foot limit. Similarly, in the 90-X Height and Bulk District, structures are generally limited to a maximum height of 90 feet and are allowed unlimited bulk within that 90-foot limit. Excluding Open Space districts, height limits in the City are generally between 25 feet (e.g. the 25-X Height and Bulk District) and 1,000 feet (e.g. the 1,000-S-2 Height and Bulk District).

The Height and Bulk District applicable to a given property is just one of many restrictions on building form. The Planning Code further constrains buildings by establishing maximum floor areas, minimum open spaces, and minimum setbacks among other limits. Additionally, the Planning Commission would continue to exercise discretion regarding reductions to project height and/or bulk within this maximum development envelope in order to ensure compliance with the General Plan and/or applicable design guidelines. These existing constraints would all continue to apply to the Project should the Measure be approved.

Aside from the foregoing issues, the Measure would not affect any other current law or practice. The existing development review process would remain unchanged and would continue to apply to the Project. Specifically, the Measure states that it would not "in any way substitute, deny, alter, circumvent, subjugate or abbreviate the thorough review and public approvals process" that would apply to the Project, and is clear that the "sole legislative change made... is to modify the height limit for the Project Site." As such, the Measure would satisfy the requirement established under June 2014's Proposition B that any increase to Port-controlled property be acted on by the voters.

Please do not hesitate to consult us as your deliberations move forward by contacting Daniel Sider of my staff at [dan.sider@sfgov.org](mailto:dan.sider@sfgov.org) or (415) 558-6697.

Sincerely,



John Rahaim  
Director of Planning