



SPUR URBAN CENTER  
654 Mission Street  
San Francisco, California  
94105

415.781.8726

www.spur.org

SPUR SAN JOSE  
38 West Santa Clara Street  
San Jose, California  
95113

408.510.5688

www.spur.org/sanjose

**Chair**

Linda Jo Fitz

January 8, 2013

**Executive Director**

Gabriel Metcalf

Joshua Switzky

**Urban Center Director**

Diane Filippi

San Francisco Planning Department  
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA 94103

**Executive Vice Chair**

Anne Halsted

**Vice Chairs**

Alexa Arena  
Emilio Cruz  
David Friedman  
Bill Rosetti  
Lydia Tan  
V. Fei Tsen

Re: Central Corridor Project

**Secretary**

Mary McCue

Dear Mr. Switzky:

**Treasurer**

Bob Gamble

SPUR wishes to offer its comments on the latest version of the Central Corridor Plan. Given the enormous transit investment in the Central Subway that will run along 4<sup>th</sup> Street, coupled with the proposed extension of Caltrain and plans for High Speed Rail, this area's importance to San Francisco cannot be overstated.

**Immediate Past Chair**

Andy Barnes  
Lee Blitch

Downtown San Francisco is the most sustainable job center in the region due to its walkable compact nature and its position as the hub of the regions transit infrastructure. Downtown San Francisco is the only employment node in the region where most people travel to work by sustainable transportation modes such as walking, bicycling and taking public transit.

**Advisory Council**

**Co-Chairs**

Michael Alexander  
Paul Sedway

**The Central Corridor is one of the very few areas in the entire city that has the existing and planned transit infrastructure to build on these successes. It is critical that we consider the rezoning of Central Corridor Plan in the context of our long-term need for employment and housing space. We should make the most of the opportunity we have right now to zone for our future needs.**

**Board Members**

Carl Anthony  
Andy Barnes  
Veronica Bell  
Chris Block  
Larry Burnett  
Michaela Cassidy  
Michael Cohen  
Madeline Chun  
Charmaine Curtis  
Gia Daniller-Katz  
Oz Erickson  
Manny Flores  
Gillian Gillett  
Chris Gruwell  
Dave Hartley  
Aidan Hughes  
Mary Huss  
Chris Iglesias  
Laurie Johnson  
Ken Kirkey  
Richard Loneragan  
Ellen Lou  
Janis MacKenzie  
John Madden  
Jacinta McCann  
Chris Meany  
Ezra Mersey  
Terry Micheau  
Mary Murphy  
Jeanne Myerson  
Adhi Nagraj  
Brad Paul  
Chris Poland  
Teresa Rea  
Byron Rhett  
Victor Seeto  
Elizabeth Seifel  
Carl Shannon  
Chi-Hsin Shao  
Ontario Smith  
Bill Stotler  
Stuart Sunshine  
Michael Theriault  
Michael Teitz  
James Tracy  
Will Travis  
Jeff Tumlin  
Steve Vettel  
Cynthia Wilusz-Lovell  
Cindy Wu

It is with these thoughts in mind that we provide the following specific comments on the proposed height alternatives for the Central Corridor. **Specifically, we recommend making adjustments to the higher height alternative to study greater heights as part of the upcoming EIR process.**

**EIR Alternatives**

In our letter dated April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012, we requested that the Department study an additional scenario to the four scenarios originally put forward on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – one with greater heights in a number of locations, including those parcels adjacent to the freeway and those adjacent to Townsend Street. We also suggested that higher heights along 5<sup>th</sup> Street and in other locations be encouraged within the plan area as well.

In June 2012, the Department put forward two alternatives to be studied in the EIR (the "proposed height limit" alternative and the "higher height limit" alternative). We prefer the higher height alternative to the proposed height limit alternative, **but we believe there there is more work to be done to improve the higher height limit alternative.** Specifically we offer the following suggestions:

1. The higher height alternative studied in the EIR should include more intensive heights along the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor south of the freeway. This area is only a block from the new Central Subway and within walking distance of Caltrain. At minimum the 85/160 ft zoning should be extended to the parcels on the eastern side of 5<sup>th</sup> Street between Bryant and Brannan as was proposed in Scenario 4. However the block to the west of 5<sup>th</sup> street should also be explored for intensification.
2. The Northeast corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Harrison should be zoned for higher heights. This site is currently a parking lot.
3. The Department should work with the MTA to pursue higher heights and joint development opportunities at the Central Subway Station site at 4<sup>th</sup> and Folsom. This is an ideal location for transit-intensive job uses.
4. The west side of the block of 4<sup>th</sup> Street between Bryant and Brannan should include the slightly higher heights contemplated in the November 29<sup>th</sup> Scenario 4 Alternative as this areas is located directly adjacent to the Brannan Street Central Subway Station.
5. The 85/200 ft zoning should be extended across the entire parcel located at the northeast corner of Brannan and 4<sup>th</sup> as was proposed in Scenario 4.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 415-644-4292

Sincerely,



Sarah Karlinsky  
Deputy Director

cc: SPUR Board of Directors  
John Rahaim, San Francisco Planning Department  
Jose Campos, San Francisco Planning Department  
Sarah Dennis-Phillips, San Francisco Planning Department  
Steven Wertheim, San Francisco Planning Department  
Ken Rich, Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development  
Ed Reiskin, Municipal Transportation Agency