

March 1, 2018

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

**RE: Central SoMa Plan Amendments to the General Plan, Planning Code and Zoning Maps  
2011.1356MTZU [Board File. No 170961]**

Dear President Hillis, Vice-President Melgar and Commissioners Fong, Johnson, Koppel, Moore and Richards:

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in with SPUR's support for the Central SoMa Plan. As you might guess, SPUR is happy to see that the initiation of the Plan is on the agenda for today. We urge you to initiate the Plan and hold a hearing to adopt the amendments to the General Plan, the Code and the Zoning Map as quickly as possible. The Planning Department has been working with the community for several years to get this Plan completed, and it is time to get it across the finish line.

Central SoMa is an area that is key to San Francisco and to the region. It lies adjacent to the Financial District, an existing dense jobs center, and it holds the most links to regional transportation infrastructure. Downtown San Francisco is the area in the region with the lowest rate of driving to work and one of the few places within the region where people can and do commute by public transportation.

This is therefore the right place — from an environmental standpoint, a jobs agglomeration standpoint and others — for accommodating a significant amount of growth for both jobs and housing, but particularly for jobs. This is not to say that San Francisco is done doing its part on housing. We could see future efforts to add more housing units in the Central SoMa Plan without coming at the expense of the 40,000 planned jobs. And while there are many existing zoned opportunities for housing in the city, there is room for future efforts as well. This could include looking at the west side of San Francisco, Western SoMa, Geary Boulevard, commercial corridors throughout the city and others.

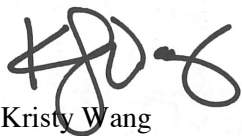
This Plan holds room for 40,000 jobs and 7,000 housing units, and that growth is planned to one day fund up to \$2 billion in public benefits towards housing, transportation, open space, sustainability and many other needs for the city and this neighborhood. These benefits would be transformative, once the Plan is approved and once that development moves forward. But we have been waiting for the plan's completion for long enough. In the meantime, the economy has been shifting, construction costs have been rising and the feasibility of development moving forward is now shakier than it was a few years ago.

In that spirit, now is better than later. Displacement of both residents and businesses from San Francisco is happening in part because there is more competition for homes and office space. Quote unquote “normal” office jobs for nonprofits, engineering and architecture firms and other businesses are being shifted to downtown Oakland in the best case, but also to more suburban locations or other regions, because of the increased cost to lease office space in San Francisco.

The Central SoMa Plan is a thoughtful and ambitious plan to improve the neighborhood for residents, workers and visitors. It will increase housing opportunities, provide significant affordability, expand green space, transform the experience of being on the street, maintain a vital mix of uses, allow a diverse mix of businesses to remain in San Francisco and more. SPUR urges you to move the adoption proceedings along as quickly as possible in order to set in motion the processes that will bring these benefits to Central SoMa, San Francisco and the region.

Thank you for your consideration. Let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kristy Wang', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kristy Wang  
Community Planning Policy Director

cc: SPUR Board of Directors  
Mayor Mark Farrell and staff  
Supervisor Jane Kim and staff  
John Rahaim, Steve Wertheim / Planning Department