



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

New Municipal Code Change Summary: Amendments relating to the San Francisco Health Code, the Building Code and the Mechanical Code to require special ventilation for residential development in "Potential Roadway Exposure Zones"

Code Change: Requiring special ventilation for residential development in "Potential Roadway Exposure Zones" (see attached map)

Case Number: Board File No. 08-1004 (0281-08 adopted Ordinance)

Initiated By: Supervisor Ammiano, July 8, 2008

Effective Date: January 5, 2009

The Way It Was:

In 2005, the California Air Resources Board issued guidance on preventing roadway related air quality conflicts, recommending localities avoid placing new sensitive uses within 500 ft of many freeways. Between 2005 and 2007, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) developed guidance to assess and reduce health impacts associated with locating new residential uses near roadway air pollution hot spots. In 2007, environmental review of the Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Area Plans project identified roadway air pollution exposure to sensitive uses as a significant environmental impact and required project level assessment and appropriate ventilation systems to mitigate these impacts. In 2008, the Planning Department began requiring developers of sensitive uses near busy roadways to conduct an air quality site assessment under the guidance of DPH.

This air quality assessment was applied citywide by the Department and is similar to the new legislation. The Eastern Neighborhoods EIR set forth a testing procedure and a mitigation scheme for locations that may have had significant exposure to roadway particulates. If a residential project site was located within 500 feet of a roadway (or roadways) where average additive traffic volumes were equal to or greater than 100,000 vehicles/day, a site-specific air quality assessment was required. Project sponsors could elect to have DPH model particulate concentrations or provide their own air quality assessment to DPH for peer review. If modeling indicated the presence of 0.2 micrograms (μg) per cubic meter (m^3) of roadway specific particulate matter, exposure impacts were considered significant and required mitigation. If testing indicated particulate levels below this threshold, the impact was considered less than significant and no mitigation was required. If the 0.2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ threshold was exceeded, project sponsors were required to implement mitigation. Mitigation could entail performance-based measures such as strategically locating air intakes away from areas of high traffic pollution, locating residential uses above the ground floor, and installation of air filtration systems.

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Filtration was required to remove 80% of outdoor PM 2.5 through the use of MERV 13 or better filtration. MERV 13 (minimum efficiency reporting value filters) typically capture more than 90% of particles 1 micron or greater in diameter, and less than 75% of smaller particles 0.3 to 1 micron in size.

The Way It Is Now:

The new amendments to Article 38 of the Health Code are similar to previous requirements placed on developers as mitigations in the Eastern Neighborhoods EIR and implemented by the Planning Department through environmental review. The legislation would now require air quality regulation as part of DBI’s review, instead of the previous practice of adding mitigations through the environmental review process.

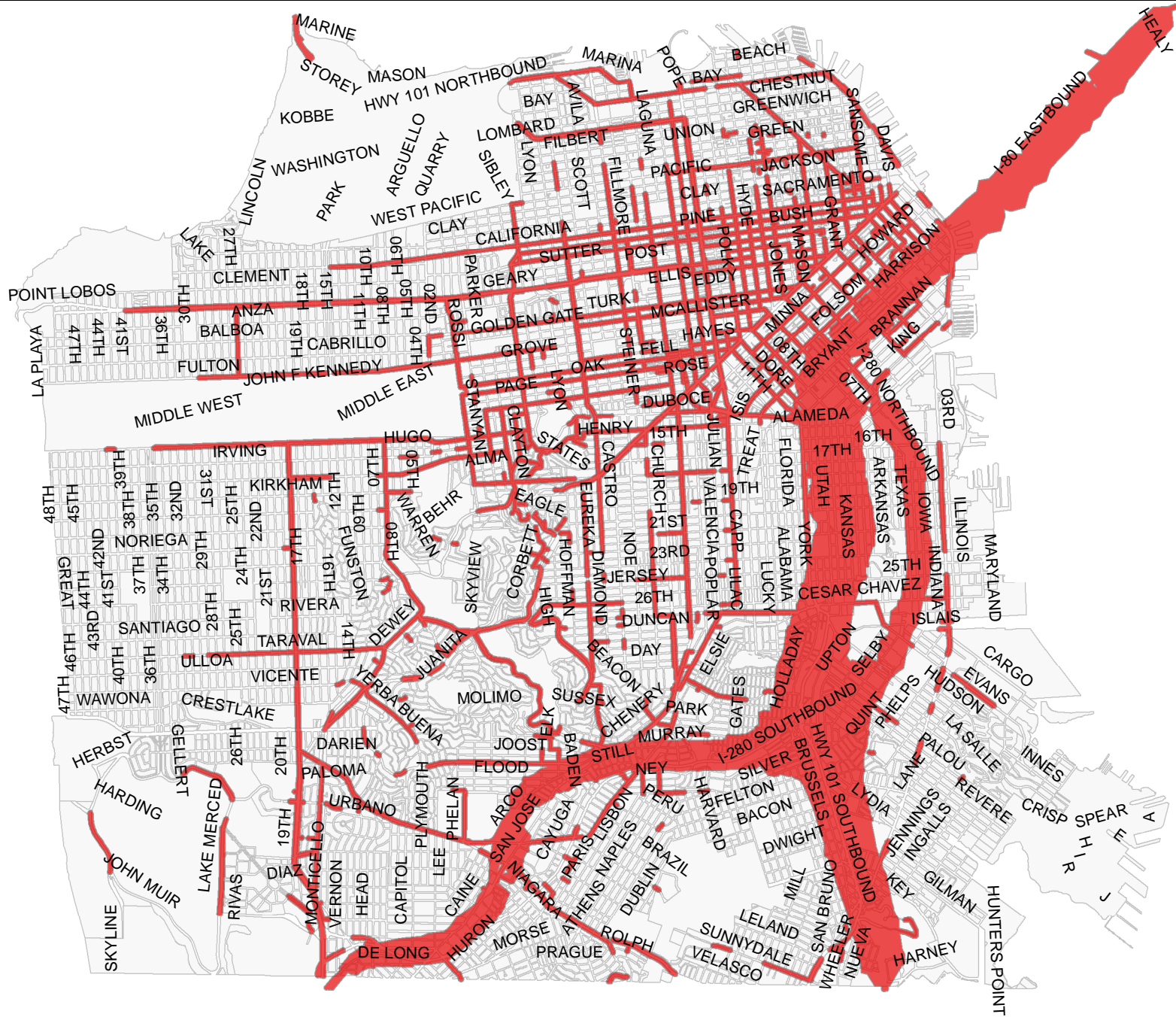
The Director of Public Health is charged with developing a map of “Potential Roadway Exposure Zones”. Projects of ten residential units or more that are within this exposure zone would be required to conduct an air quality analysis. If that analysis shows a PM 2.5 roadway concentration greater than 0.2 µg /m3 (the same threshold that the Department applied) then the project would be required to incorporate a ventilation system that removes more than 80% of the ambient PM 2.5 from indoor spaces.

Future changes to the rules and regulations of Section 3811 require concurrence of the Chief Environmental Review Office for any amendments. As particulate matter is regulated by the US EPA, California Air Resources Board (ARB) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), there is interest in CEQA review of proposed changes.

Projects in the Potential Roadway Exposure Zone (PREZ):


The Department will send a letter to all project sponsors who have a project with 10 or more units that is located in the PREZ. This letter will inform the sponsor of their obligation to work with DPH on an exposure level determination for their project location. DPH will provide a status letter on the level of exposure at that location to the project sponsor. In the event the threshold is exceeded, the project must adhere to the regulations outlined in this Ordinance. If the project’s location is determined to be below the threshold, the Planning Department shall keep a copy of this determination in the project file.

Board File No. 080934	Ord. No. 0281-08	<p>Amendment to Health Code - Article 38, Requiring Air Quality Assessment and Ventilation for Certain Urban Infill Residential Developments.</p> <p>Full text available at: http://www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/bdsupvrs/ordinances08/o0281-08.pdf</p>
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Potential Roadway Exposure Map

Parcels that are within the Potential Roadway Exposure Zone require review by the Department of Public Health

 Potential Roadway Exposure Zone

 City Blocks

Date: December 18, 2008
 For questions concerning this map please contact Jessica Range

