

# WORKSHOP SUMMARY

## Community Workshop #3: Community Review of Refined Design Strategies

January 7, 2008



## INTRODUCTION

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The Upper Market Community Workshop Series and Design Plan (“the project”) is intended to guide the future development of the Upper Market Street corridor, generally between Castro and Octavia Streets. A series of community workshops were held in the fall of 2007 to focus on developing the community’s vision for the corridor, with an eye to how upcoming development can contribute to the vision. The workshops have gathered various types of community recommendations to focus the area’s identity through improvements to the public realm, design of new developments and land use recommendations. These elements will be formalized into a series of recommendations that convey the community’s vision for the corridor, and provide a guide for development within the area.

## METING FORMAT AND CONTENT

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On December 12, 2007, approximately 100 community members convened for the third of the project’s three community workshops. The purpose of this workshop was to review the refined community design strategies that emerged and developed over the first two community workshops. The workshop was held from 6:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. at the Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy.

Supervisor Bevan Dufty opened the meeting and emphasized the importance of seeing to the plan’s implementation. Supervisor Dufty then introduced Amber Crabbe of the Transportation Authority (TA) who spoke of the TA’s impending creation of a five-year plan for transportation improvements in San Francisco. Sarah Dennis, lead planner of the San Francisco Planning Department, made additional remarks. Daniel Iacofano of MIG provided an overview of the agenda, planning and project process. Mr. Iacofano summarized workshops #1 and #2 and reviewed additions to the Upper Market Vision Framework (composed of Vision Elements and Community Design Principles) based on community input from community workshop #2.

Anchi Mei, of MIG, presented the revised community design strategies for the public and private realm. Following the presentation, participants were divided into interactive, small group discussions, facilitated by MIG and San Francisco Planning staff, in which community members further discussed the revised vision elements, community design principles and design strategies.

The small groups then reported back to the larger group, sharing modifications to the vision framework and overall themes of discussion regarding the proposed design strategies.

The following document is a summary of community comments compiled from small group discussions and individual comment cards. The **purple text** highlights community suggestions for modifications, detailed specifications and/or additions to the preliminary vision framework, public realm improvements and new development design guidelines. Community feedback from this workshop (as well as all previous workshops) will be reviewed and synthesized into a draft Upper Market Community Design Plan that will be available for public review. (For more information about next steps in this project’s process, refer to Section V. Next Steps located at the end of this document.)

The workshop summary is organized under the following headings:

- I. Upper Market Vision Elements
- II. Overarching Community Design Principles
- III. Public Realm Improvements
- IV. New Development Design Guidelines
- V. Next Steps

## I. UPPER MARKET VISION ELEMENTS

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The following elements represent holistic, interdisciplinary values that describe the community's vision of the Upper Market corridor. Throughout the workshop series, community members have continued to support, refine and expand the Upper Market Vision Elements. In this third workshop, community participants emphasized public safety on the streets which is reflected in the modification of Vision Element E to include Health and Safety. Additionally, a new theme in the third workshop drew attention to the implementation and maintenance of the plan's recommendations. As a result, a new vision element -- *Vision Element F: Accountability* -- has been created. The following list of examples serves to better define and illustrate the meaning of each vision element; however the list is not meant to be descriptive rather than exhaustive. Additional explanation is conveyed by the *Overarching Community Design Principles* in the following section and more specifically, in *Sections III. Public Realm Improvements* and *IV. New Development Design Guidelines*.

**A. Inclusivity:** Celebrate the many **and diverse** identities of the area, including the LGBT community and adjacent neighborhoods.

- Celebrate the area's rich historic heritage.
- Encourage the area's sense of community.

**B. Livability:** Encourage and support neighborhood needs.

- Provide housing options and neighborhood services for a range of ages, especially youth and seniors.
- Provide housing options for a range of family sizes, from singles to families with children.
- Enforce anti-loitering codes and bolster programs that provide support for homeless populations.
- Support a range of different businesses of all sizes and types.
- Encourage residents of a range of income levels.
- Balance visitor and local uses.
- Maintain the area's existing village atmosphere while increasing development opportunities that can help achieve the community's social and cultural goals.

**C. Connectivity:** Improve circulation, safety and amenities for all modes of travel.

- Improve transit services.
- Prioritize pedestrian movement.
- Make Market Street a "24-hour street".
- Maintain availability of parking supply.

**D. Quality:** Promote and maintain quality design in public and private developments.

- Keep public spaces clean and well-maintained.
- Make Upper Market a historic, eclectic, 21st Century model village.
- New development should be sensitive to historic areas.
- Encourage diversity and originality of designs in new development.
- New development should utilize high-quality building materials.

**E. Health and Safety:** Support the public and environmental health **and safety** of the area.

- Enforce anti-loitering codes and bolster programs that provide support for homeless populations.

- Ensure appropriate construction mitigation measures for neighbors adjacent to new developments.
- Improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Address environmental safety issues, such as asbestos and serpentine, in construction projects.

**F. Accountability:** Design and plan private and public improvements for long-term sustainability. Ensure improvements have sufficient maintenance and programming.

- Promote designs of public improvements with lower-maintenance materials and sustainable design features.
- Continue the dialogue between the community, developers and the Planning Department.
- Continue, expand and improve the Upper Market CBD.
- Coordinate work with appropriate City agencies to implement the recommendations of the Upper Market Design Plan.

## II. OVERARCHING COMMUNITY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

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The following design principles are broad design concepts to guide the design and construction of physical improvements in the Upper Market area. Workshop participants provided robust feedback from workshop participants to further detail the concepts. The following list of examples serves to better define and illustrate the meaning of each design principles; however the list is not meant to be descriptive rather than exhaustive. Additional explanation is conveyed more specifically in *Sections III. Public Realm Improvements* and *IV. New Development Design Guidelines*.

### A. Local Character and Identity

- Strengthen the area's identity and sense of community.
- New development should make Market Street a 24-hour street.
- New development should reflect the diversity in area.
- Build on the LGBT character.
- Build on the different residential neighborhoods adjacent to the corridor, including the Mission Dolores, Duboce Triangle, Hayes Valley, Mission, Eureka Valley, and Castro neighborhoods.
- Public improvements and new development should integrate with historic buildings.
- Respect the design character of traditional San Francisco neighborhoods.

### B. Vibrant Pedestrian Realm

- Create attractive, engaging, clean and safe sidewalks and crosswalks.
- Improve speed and reliability of transit services as well as transit station appearance and amenities.
- Ensure that new and existing street improvements (including plantings and plazas) are well-maintained.
- Provide more places for public seating.
- Activate streetscape to discourage loitering.

### C. Active, Street-Engaging Buildings

- Create engaging building facades on new developments that contribute to an active public realm.
- Encourage socially-engaging ground floor design of commercial storefronts.
- Encourage upper-story design features of buildings that offer more “eyes on the streets”.

#### **D. Well-Designed, Affordable, Flexible Buildings**

- Encourage high-quality building materials.
- Encourage a range of architectural styles and interesting designs that are fine-grain, tasteful and elegant.
- Promote a range of rental and for-sale housing options that accommodate a range of income levels, especially affordable and middle-class options.
- Promote a variety of housing sizes, configurations and styles that accommodate a range of ages and family sizes, including singles, seniors, as well as families and young couples.

#### **E. Network of Open Spaces**

- Create new programmed and well-maintained public open spaces and green spaces in the Upper Market area.
- Create a better network of public spaces in the Upper Market corridor.

#### **F. Series of Community Serving Uses**

- Support businesses that are useful for day-to-day living and working in the corridor.
- Encourage partnerships between community groups and developers to bring about community-serving land uses.
- Support a range of business types, from local businesses to large format retail.

#### **G. Sustainable Environments**

- Provide sufficient maintenance and upkeep of public and private improvements.
- Promote green building design and ecologically-sensitive public infrastructure.

### III. PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

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#### A. Sidewalks

A1: Encourage socially-engaging design (flexible outdoor seating, landscaping, display of goods, etc.) of sidewalks adjacent to active uses. Alternate and encourage creative, organic design that enhances existing uses and character.

- Good ideas but maintain walking flow.
- Ensure safety on sidewalks through sufficient and safe lighting and pruned trees to allow light to filter onto the sidewalk.
- Provide more trashcans.
- Increase police on foot patrol in the corridor.
- Clean sidewalks more often.
- Take better care of trees.

A2: Design and install pavement materials, art and way-finding signage that express the artful and historical characteristics of the area, i.e. LGBT history, Mission Dolores, 1906 earthquake/fire.

- Use tinted concrete as a distinctive pavement material.
- Create more murals on blank walls done by local artists.

A3: Encourage street performers and commercial uses on sidewalks.

- Vendors are preferred over performers.
- Street performers should be licensed.

#### B. Green Infrastructure

B1: Install more natural landscaping and materials on sidewalks, on occasional on-street parking spaces and in the center median. Explore the feasibility of permeable paving on sidewalks and storm water retention basins.

- Use native plantings.
- Bridge this project with the Better Streets program.
- Restrict the size of vegetation and plantings so as not to be too dense, block out retail signage or impede pedestrian flow.

#### C. Open Spaces

OVERALL COMMENT: Emphasize the importance of a network of open spaces in the Upper Market area.

C1: Create a public gathering space the intersection of Castro and Market by converting a portion of 17<sup>th</sup> Street into a pedestrian/transit plaza that allows for public gatherings, events, and performances.

- There's a lot of support for this!
- Explore raised sidewalks for pedestrians.
- This is a great place for a farmer's market.

C2: Create additional open spaces in the Upper Market area, such as at the Church and Market intersection.

- We should have a vendor there to prevent homeless encampment.
- Program the space to avoid it being taken over by the homeless.

C3: Incorporate a strong sense of artful, expressive and multi-faceted historical (LGBT, Mission Dolores, 1906 earthquake/fire, etc.) design elements with gateway features, art and landscaping in the center median.

- Install rotating public art.

## D. Pedestrian / Transit-Oriented Improvements

D1: Improve crossings for pedestrians across Market Street by using creative, low-maintenance pavement materials (such as tinted asphalt) in the crosswalks and pedestrian refuges across Market Street. Explore specific pedestrian crosswalk improvements and traffic-calming measures at the Market Street intersections of Noe and Sanchez.

- Explore the additional specific interventions at 16th and Market:
  - retime pedestrian crosswalk timing for a “pedestrian scramble”, i.e. all crosswalks are timed for pedestrian crossings at the same time;
  - lengthen pedestrian timings at long intersections, e.g. south side of Market Street at Noe and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets;
  - clear visual obstacles of pedestrians for cars, e.g. cars heading down market turning on 16th have a blind spot due to the unused newspaper sales stand;
  - consider left-turn-only signals, closing off 16th west of market;
  - calm traffic.

D2: Provide bulb-outs on residential side streets off of Market Street, where possible.

- This is not applicable at 15th and Market. Bus #3 and runs through 15th from Market. 15th is too narrow for bulb-outs. It restricts cars entering driveways into condo building at 15th and Market.
- The current bulb-out at 16th Market (north side) does not deter motorists accelerating throughout the Market Street intersection. We need something in the middle of the intersection (circle?) and increased policing of the red light runners.

D3: Create transit plazas that enhance public space around bus stops and include the following strategies: improved signage, bus shelters, distinctive pavement materials and MUNI waiting platform expansion to sidewalk.

- Connect transit plazas to mini parks.
- The transit plaza is a great traffic calming strategy for cars on Market Street.
- Incorporate bike parking into transit plazas.

## E. Bike-Oriented Improvements

E1: Explore designs to connect Market Street bike lanes through major intersections as described in the San Francisco Bicycle Plan Update which involve reducing curb extensions and/or removing on-street metered parking spots.

- Install more public bike parking.
- Enforce double parking in bike lanes.

- Explore the possibility of switching bike lanes and parking lanes. This option preserves more parking over other configurations and protect bikes from double parked cars or other use of bike lanes.

## **F. Parking**

Overall, workshop participants expressed a mixture of approval and concern for alternative parking strategies. While there is support for improving the pedestrian realm, many local community members are concerned about any substantial net loss of parking.

F1: Explore parking management strategies for public parking, i.e. parking pricing plans, shared public parking, parking structures and/or underground parking.

- Please consider a new residential sticker for the Castro/Market Corridor.

F2: Explore flexible use of parking spots for use as outdoor seating during evenings and weekends.

F3: Judiciously convert selective on-street parking space for expanded sidewalk gathering places or landscaping.

F4. Increase opportunities for car sharing services.

- Create friendly pick up places for companies like Google to pick up their workers.

## **G. Maintenance**

G1: Make public improvements in a judicious manner that takes into account future maintenance plans and sustainability.

## **H. Design Excellence**

H1: Create design competitions for high profile public sites.

## IV. NEW DEVELOPMENT DESIGN GUIDELINES

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### A. Upper Market Building Height and Massing

A1: Consider a zoning overlay to allow for higher buildings at the intersection of Market and Castro Streets. Conduct a height and massing study for height at this intersection.

- There is a mixture of support and disagreement of increasing building heights.

A2: Setback higher floors and provide opportunities for balconies and terraces on new buildings. Encourage setbacks on the south side of Market Street to increase amount of sunlight onto streets. Use upper floor setbacks to create an appropriate context with lower, adjacent residences.

- Explore the financial feasibility of this recommendation from a development perspective.
- Create diagrams that show the side, front and back view of buildings.

A3: Encourage a fine-grain appearance when infilling into an existing fine grain context, particularly on large lots.

### B. Active Ground Floor Design Features

Many participants noted a desire for stronger language for the following recommendations due their relative importance over other development guidelines.

B1: Promote active uses of the sidewalk building zone through ground floor building design elements such as transparent, operable windows, open partitions, awnings, goods and wares visible in front, and informational displays.

B2: Encourage engaging building entrances for large and institutional buildings through the following techniques:

- integrate sidewalk area into building entrance,
- use light features in highlight building,
- set back entrance from rest of building,
- install plazas, fountains, and sculpture in front of buildings.

B3: Encourage a range of commercial floor plates to accommodate both large format retail as well as small businesses.

B4: Encourage large commercial developments on large lots to have engaging transparent facades, multiple pedestrian entrances, and outdoor seating.

- Encourage basements in buildings with large footprints.

B5: Use creative garage door materials and design to minimize appearance and integrate into building façade. Limit one curb cut per lot, lower parking requirements and encourage car-sharing facilities.

- The Market Octavia Plan is a good example. Use same parking ratios as 2002 plan and soon to be amended 2007 plan. No curb cuts on Market Street.

B6: Buildings on corner lots should have street-engaging elements such as windows and entrances on both sides of the street.

B7: Commercial ground floor ceiling height should be in the range of 10-15 feet high.

- Modify the range of ground floor ceiling height to 12-15 feet.

### C. Upper Market Upper Story Design Features

Some community participants noted that recommendations in Sections C (Upper Story Design Features); D (Natural Systems in Building Design; and E (Green Building) could be seen as trade-offs and not all absolutely necessary.

C1: Encourage operable, climate-sensitive windows, balconies and terraces of a range of sizes to provide a range of uses for indoor-outdoor activities.

- Specify that this guideline applies to the Market Street side only, and not the backside of buildings where it may impact privacy.

C2: Encourage gardens on balconies, upper-floor setbacks and rooftops.

- Specify that this guideline applies to the Market Street side only, and not the backside of buildings where it may impact privacy.

C3: Encourage housing developments that provide diverse and flexible configurations to:

- provide for different ages, particularly seniors and assisted living,
  - provide for different household sizes, from singles to families,
  - encourage shared facilities in new development,
  - encourage smaller residential units, more studios and 1 bedroom units.
- Encourage co-housing developments.
  - There are unit mix requirements in the Market and Octavia plan that should be relaxed for non-profit development or permanently affordable development.

C4: Encourage housing developments that are affordable for both lower and middle income residents for both rental and owning.

C5: Encourage second floor commercial uses in blocks that currently have second floor commercial use.

### D. Incorporate Natural Systems in Building Design

Some community participants noted that recommendations in Sections C (Upper Story Design Features); D (Natural Systems in Building Design; and E (Green Building) could be seen as trade-offs and not all absolutely necessary.

D1: Encourage new developments to maximize outdoor elements such as sidewalk seating, courtyards and balconies.

- Encourage wind breaks.
- Encourage functional designs.

D2: Encourage creative treatment (steps, retaining walls, landscaping) to soften building edges in steep topographic building conditions.

D3: Encourage adjustable windows, sunshades, wind/rain protection patio elements that allow residents to have plantings and use outdoor balcony space comfortably. Discourage residents from excessive storage on balcony.

- Specify that this guideline applies to the Market Street side only, and not the backside of buildings where it may impact privacy.

## E. Green Buildings

Some community participants noted that recommendations in Sections C (Upper Story Design Features); D (Natural Systems in Building Design); and E (Green Building) could be seen as trade-offs and not all absolutely necessary.

E1: Encourage green building certification -- LEED for commercial and high-rise residential/GreenPoint Rated (GPR) for non high-rise residential-- in new building construction.

## F. Architectural Style

Buildings in the Upper Market area are diverse in materials and architectural styles. No specific palette of materials, colors or architectural styles have been defined as essential in terms of new development.

However, given the area's prominent yet diverse nature, new development should demonstrate a creative and tasteful approach to materials, colors and style. New development should reflect the community's oft-stated importance of diverse, fine-grain, historically- and site-sensitive design and use of quality materials in building design. New developments should also be sensitive to the possibility of new historic districts in the focus area, i.e. Duboce Triangle, Upper Market Commercial, Mission Dolores.

F1: Encourage project sponsors to have open dialogue with the community.

## G. Land Use Recommendations

Many participants noted a desire for stronger language for the following recommendations due their relative importance over other development guidelines.

G1: Encourage rethinking of the Safeway site design through the following strategies:

- improved pedestrian edge (rotating art displays, street trees) along Market Street
- ground floor retail along Market Street,
- a park and housing,
- improved areas around the recycling center near Safeway through the following techniques:
  - increased policing,
  - incorporating the recycling center into a building structure,
  - relocating the recycling center to another appropriate location.
- The design shown for the recycling center will only push the problem to the street behind it. Don't push the recycling center into the bikeway.

G2: Encourage a healthy mix of diverse serving commercial and entertainment uses, such as: restaurants, high-quality grocery stores, bakeries, markets, boutique hotels, bars, small office space, pet services.

G3: Encourage community and cultural land uses, such as: museums and cultural institutions, theater, performing space and entertainment, art galleries, library expansion, youth spaces, such as recreation, art centers and shelter.

- Encourage partnerships between developers and community serving groups.
- Explore a cultural density bonus for new developments that include a community/cultural institution.
  - Clarify if this recommendation refers to a height or density bonus.
  - The Gaia Building in Berkeley is a good example.
  - Make LGBT uses more explicit.

## H. Approval Process

H1. Expedite the approval process for projects that clearly address the community-identified priorities.

- There is a mixture of support and disagreement for this recommendation.
- There is concern “fast-tracking” projects will be abused.

## V. NEXT STEPS

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Based on the feedback received from this and previous community workshops, staff and consultants will work to revise and refine the vision elements, design principles, recommendations and guidelines. All these components will be synthesized and summarized in a draft Upper Market Community Design Plan which will be made public by San Francisco Planning staff for public input and review.