



A Transit Riders' Association for San Francisco
P.O. Box 190966, San Francisco, CA 94119
voice mail 415/273-1558 • www.rescuemuni.org

April 12th, 2005

TO: Planning Commission and Redevelopment Commission
C/o: Commissioner Sue King, Chair Planning Commission
Commissioner Ramon Romero, Chair, Redevelopment Commission

RE: Draft Mid-Market Plan and Special Use District (SUD)

Dear Planning and Redevelopment Commissioners,

Rescue Muni, San Francisco's transit riders' association, urges you to amend the Draft Mid-Market Plan and Special Use District (SUD) to improve conditions for transit riders and to encourage the use of public transit and alternative transportation. We are generally in concurrence with Transportation for a Livable City's recommendations for this draft plan. In particular:

- **We oppose allowing 1:1 residential parking in an area that contains some of the most important transit, bike, and pedestrian corridors in the City.** Planning and Redevelopment should not allow the same excessive parking ratios in the most transit-rich neighborhood in the City (if not the entire region) as they do the outer San Francisco neighborhoods with poorer transit access. We urge Planning and Redevelopment not to allow more parking than the current code allows by right (.375:1, approximately **1 space for every 3 units**) and not to allow more than **1 parking space for every two units** (.5:1) with a Conditional Use.
- **We oppose the inclusion of yet another short-term parking garage in the area as called for in the current Plan.** The Mid-Market study area currently has 8,000 parking spaces in 25 lots and garages (including publicly-subsidized 5th & Mission and Civic Center garages) as well as a pending 320-space garage at 1160 Mission. These garages already generate a large number of auto trips that cause public transit delays; additional short-term garages will cause even more delays. We urge Planning and Redevelopment to find builders who will build projects that will serve the majority of San

Franciscans who routinely ride BART and Muni to downtown, not just auto drivers.

- **We oppose allowing 3 stories of above-ground parking in this area because it reduces the amount of housing that can be built in this transit-dense area.** While the Draft SUD includes many good urban design requirements that require active, pedestrian-friendly uses on the exterior of buildings, it also allows for too many exceptions to these requirements. These exceptions would allow developers to exempt themselves from good urban design requirements that would help create a safer, more inviting pedestrian realm in Mid-Market. Again, this auto parking would lead to more transit delays, and it would also increase the cost of new housing in an area where many buyers and renters would be happy to forgo a parking space for a low-cost apartment a very short walk from Muni and BART.

Rescue Muni generally agrees with TLC and others that the proposal for a revitalized Mid-Market neighborhood with expanded housing for all income levels, increased density, and improved commercial amenities will be a very good thing for the neighborhood and for the city. We are just concerned that the increased auto trips that would be generated by the proposed developments would cause major delays for transit riders on Market and Mission, two very high-density transit corridors serving hundreds of thousands of riders a day.

In particular, increased car trips on Market and Mission would block streets and bus lanes serving the 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 14L, 19, 21, 66, 71, 71L, and F lines, along with SamTrans and other regional agencies that use the corridor. The Market Street subway can't accommodate all of these transit riders!

Reducing the parking requirements for new residential and commercial buildings will help prevent these delays, and it will also make housing in the district less expensive for builders, buyers, and renters. We urge you to take this common-sense step now with the Draft Plan.

Thanks,

Andrew Sullivan
Chair, Rescue Muni

Cc:
Rescue Muni Steering Committee
Jeremy Nelson and Tom Radulovich, Transportation for a Livable City