

SOUTH  
SAN FRANCISCO  
THE INDUSTRIAL CITY

LWC

# Zoning Code Update Technical Review

Planning Commission | August 5, 2021



**SHAPE** SOUTH SAN  
FRANCISCO  
2040 GENERAL PLAN

# Agenda

1. Project Overview
2. Community Feedback
3. Policy Review
4. Zoning Code Targeted Diagnosis
5. Developing a Zoning Framework



# 1. Project Overview

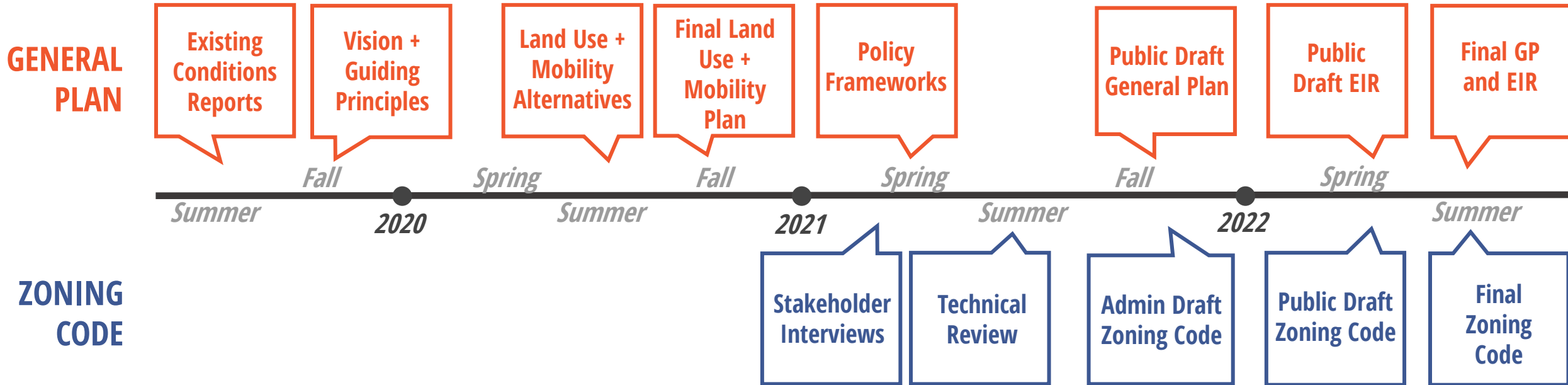


# Code Update Objectives

- Reflect the shared vision of the new General Plan and **implement its new policies**
- **Implement** the City's General Plan policies
- Reflect and preserve **community character**
- **Respond to economic realities and trends**
- Facilitate reinvestment in the community and development of **housing for all segments**
- Encourage **appropriate** use of land
- **Build on** Interim Zoning
- Create an **illustrated, legally adequate and friendly** regulatory document



# Code Update Schedule



# What Zoning Can Do

## Regulate Use, Development Form, and Placement

- Uses
- Clarifies the types of buildings and desired character

## Set Review Requirements and Procedures

- Administration and project review requirements

## Facilitate Land Use Compatibility

- Performance standards to address health, safety, and welfare

## Provide Predictability and Flexibility

- By-right approvals for developers who are in accordance with identified zoning requirements and exception process

# What Zoning Cannot Do

## Dictate Architectural Style

- Development controls can improve physical character with respect to building envelope but cannot dictate style

## Regulate Free Market

- Cannot determine exact mix of tenants in private development

## Establish Land Use Policy

- An implementation tool

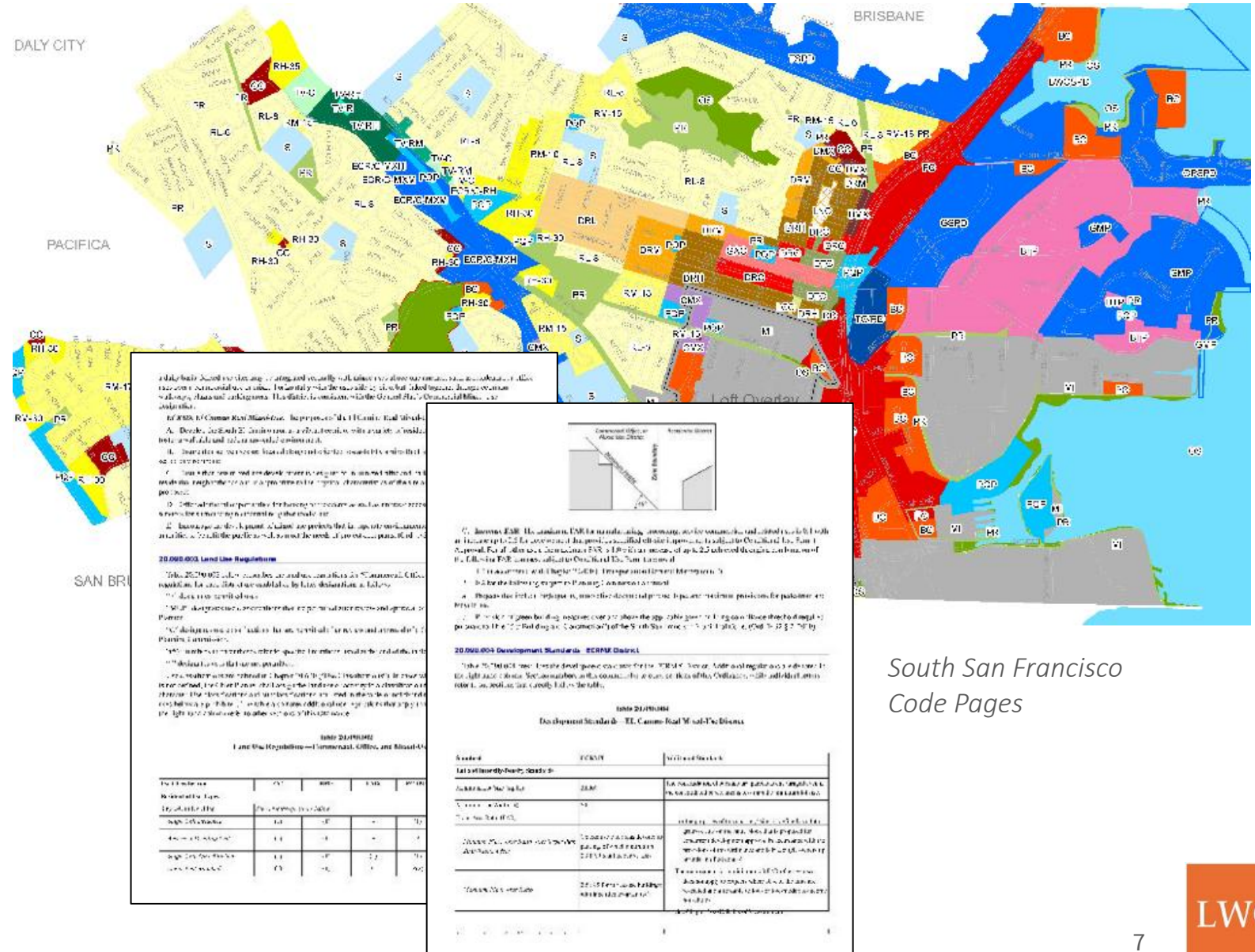
## Reallocate Impact Costs

- Shift cost burdens to make density or desired uses more feasible



# Conventional Approach

- Regulates land uses, lot size, coverage, and dimensions, building height, and other standards.
- Uses tend to be segregated, such as residential separate from commercial or industrial.
- Exceptions often require an amendment process.



# Conventional Approach

- Districts established/modified/deleted as needed to be consistent with GP classifications.

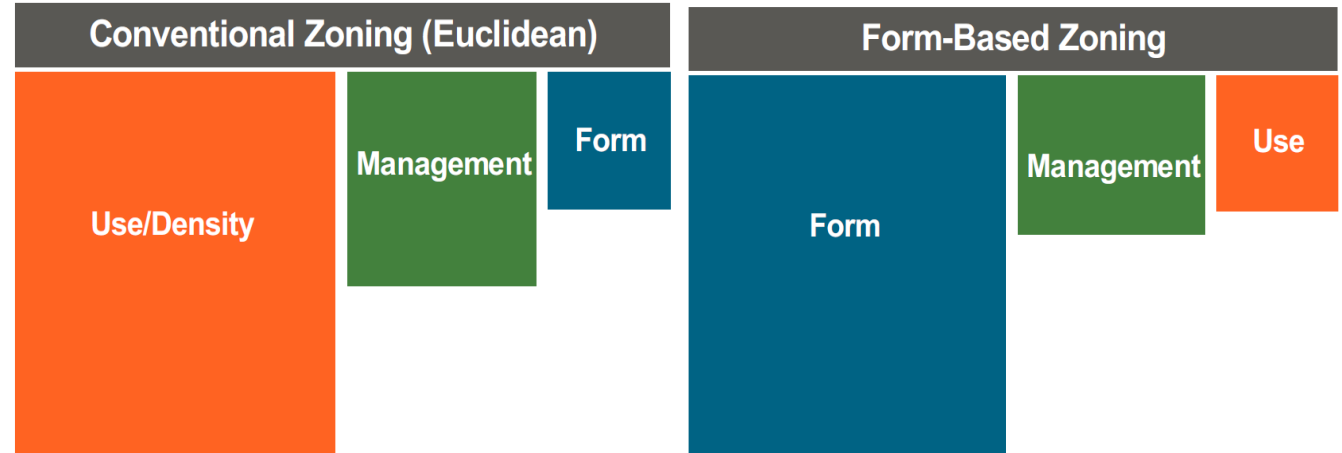




# Form-Based Approach

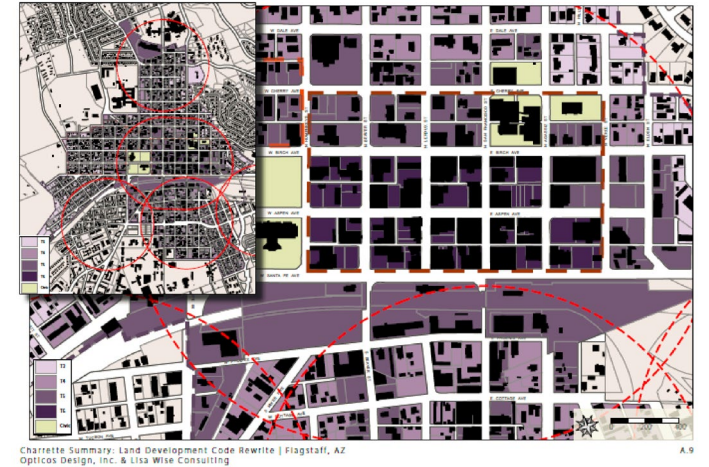
Form-based codes (FBC): Land development regulations that emphasize the design, scale, and relationships of buildings and public space.

- Seeks to achieve a **specific urban form** and to shape a **high-quality built environment**.
- Prioritizes **building form** over use to develop walkable areas.
- **Does not replace state and local building codes.**
- Meets State requirements of the Housing Accountability Act for objective standards.
- Addresses the relationship of private development to public space.



## Elements of an FBC

1. Form-Based (Transect) Zones
2. Building Types
3. Frontage Types
4. Open Space Types



# Form-Based Approach

Provides greater flexibility for uses.

Specifies desired building form and site development.

### CMU-5 Corridor Mixed Use 17.28

**A. Description**

The CMU-5 district is an urban environment that supports a wide range of uses and higher-intensity buildings types. Generally located along the Main Street corridor west and east of the Downtown core, this district supports a movement away from sprawl and toward a walkable high-density residential environment with neighborhood- and community-serving amenities and employment uses in a mixed-use setting along transit and adjacent to neighborhoods. All building types are oriented toward the public right-of-way and prioritize building frontages over parking, to create a successful walkable environment, right-of-way improvements to the public realm - wide sidewalks, street trees in tree grates, on-street parking and slow moving traffic - will need to be provided in front of these new buildings.

**B. Sub-Zone**

None

**C. Building Types and Lot Size**

Building Type	Lot Width	Lot Depth	Standards
Triplex/Quadruplex	70' min.	100' min.	Sec. 17.31.030
Rowhouse	100' min.	80' min.	Sec. 17.31.050
Courtyard Building	100' min.	150' min.	Sec. 17.31.060
Multiplex Small	150' max.	150' max.	Sec. 17.31.070
Multiplex Large	200' max.	100' min.	Sec. 17.31.080
Flex Small	100' max.	150' max.	Sec. 17.31.090
Flex Large	200' max.	100' min.	Sec. 17.31.100
Clivic	n/a	n/a	Sec. 17.31.110

**D. Building Placement**

**Setback (Distance from Property Lines)<sup>1</sup>**

Location	Setback
Front	0' min. 12' max.
Street Side	5' min. 15' max.
Side	0'
Rear	0'

**Building within Facade Zone**

Location	Setback
Front	75% min. lot buildable width (excludes required setbacks)
Street Side	50% min. lot buildable width

**E. Building Form**

**Height.** Permitted building height may be further restricted by Building Type; see Section 17.30.

Feature	Requirement
Stories	5 max.; 2 stories min. on corner parcels
Ground Floor Finish Level Above Sidewalk	6" max.
Ground Floor Floor-to-Ceiling	12' min.
Upper Floor(s) Floor-to-Ceiling	9' min.

**Adjacencies**

Transitions in scale, density, and uses shall occur along alleys or mid block rather than across streets.

The least intensive part of a development shall be placed along the adjoining perimeter of a lower intensity development.

Height, step-backs, balconies, and/or other accentuating features shall be incorporated into building facade design where different building heights abut or face across a street.

**Notes:**

1. Building height limited to 30 feet within 50 feet of an intersection, 15 feet of a street, or 15 feet of a zone.

**4-16 | Woodland Comprehensive Zoning Code**

Sample Development Regulations with FB Standards

Include graphics that are easy to understand and implement.

Standards describes desired or intended outcome rather than what is prohibited.

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# Form-Based Approach

- Develop form-based zones for all or portions of the three change areas identified
- Identify and establish form, palette, and design for better predictability.

El Camino Real  
Corridor Area



East of 101  
Area

Lindenville Area

## 2. Community Feedback





# Stakeholder Interviews

- March 10, 11, 12, and 22
- 20 individuals participated in 1-on-1 or small group interviews
- 45-minute interviews
- Residents, designer professionals, real estate brokers, housing advocates, developers, local business owners/operators, Council, Chamber of Commerce, School Board, Design Review Board

# Stakeholder Interviews Summary

## Existing regulations - What works well?

- Compatibility; Progressive parking regulations; Flexible Mixed Industrial Zone; Good biotech standards

## Existing regulations - What *doesn't* work well?

- Allow more height/density near transit and east of 101; Account for modular construction and screening; Flexible density ranges, uses, and FAR; Quality affordable housing

## How to incentivize housing?

- More density, height in the downtown area and transit areas; Streamline application processes; identify community benefits.

## Uses?

- Need for greater range of uses, active ground floor, walkability, balance between uses.

## Parking?

- Need City-funded parking structures; Design for flexibility of uses over time; Reduced ratios; Shared parking arrangements.

## Signs?

- Current regs generally work well, but concerns about large signs, illumination, and billboards.

## Administrative Procedures?

- Fewer projects should go to DRB; More predictability/less subjectivity



# 3. Policy Review

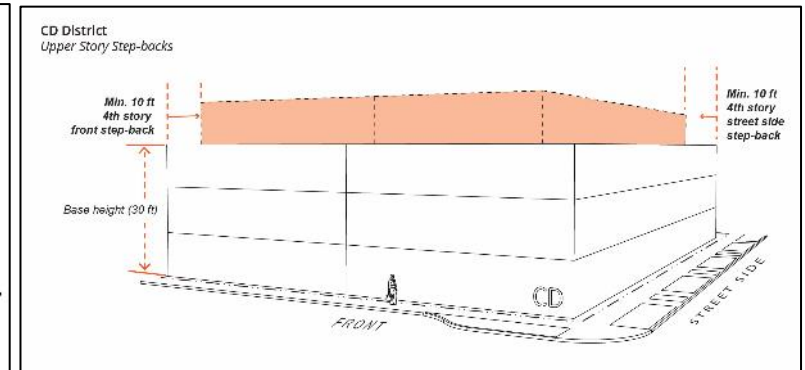
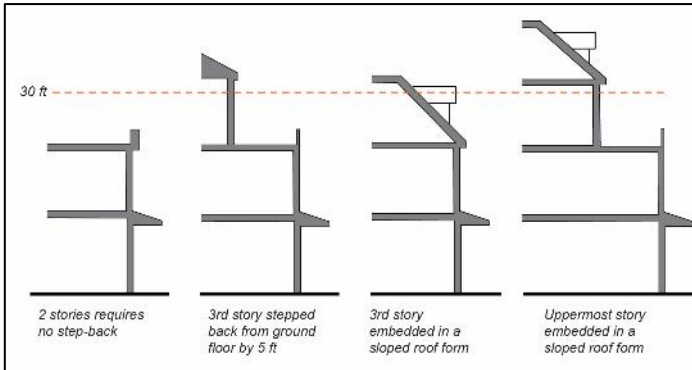


# Residential Districts

- Encourage a variety of housing types for different income levels
- Healthy and safe housing options
- Contextual building design
- Healthy food options



**Update Development Standards to provide a variety of housing types, visual interest, and density bonuses beyond State Density Bonus Law (SDBL).**



**Update building massing standards and ensure context-sensitivity**



**Update uses to allow groceries, farmer's market, food pop-ups/mobile vendors, childcare, and "pop-up" uses.**



# Commercial, Office, and Mixed-Use Districts

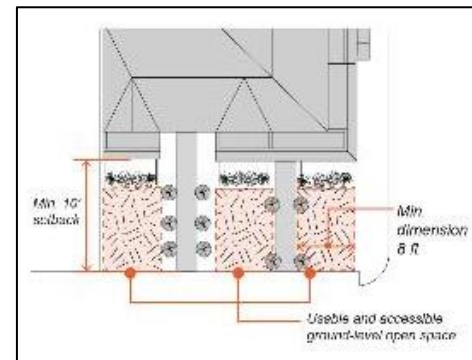
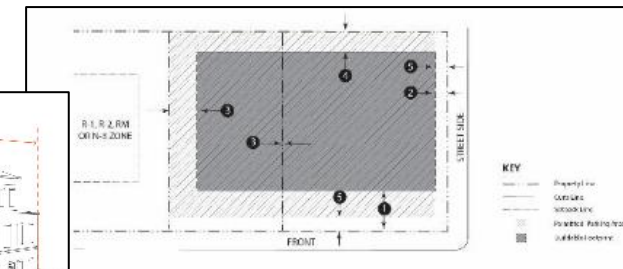
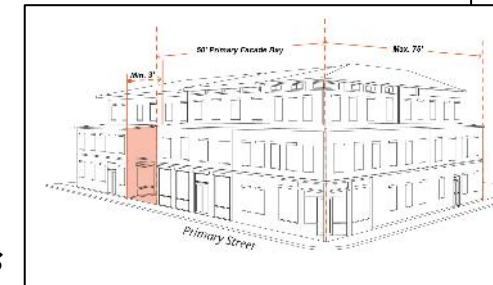
- Complete 20-minute, transit-oriented neighborhoods
- Mix of high-quality development, affordable housing, and improved mobility options
- A diverse economy and range of businesses



**Support neighborhood commercial and opportunities for commercial in the Downtown**



**Introduce “menu” of elements required of publicly-accessible open spaces.**



**Update development standards to require flexible spaces, ample accessible open space and ped/bike access to transit.**

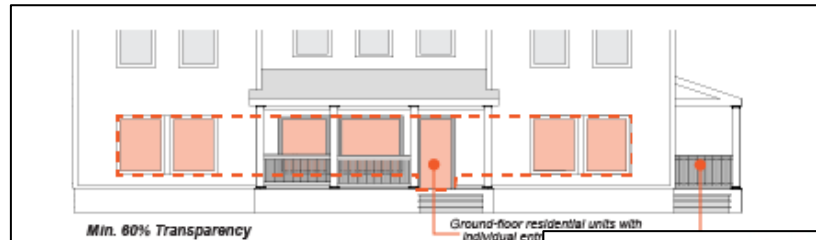


# Downtown Districts

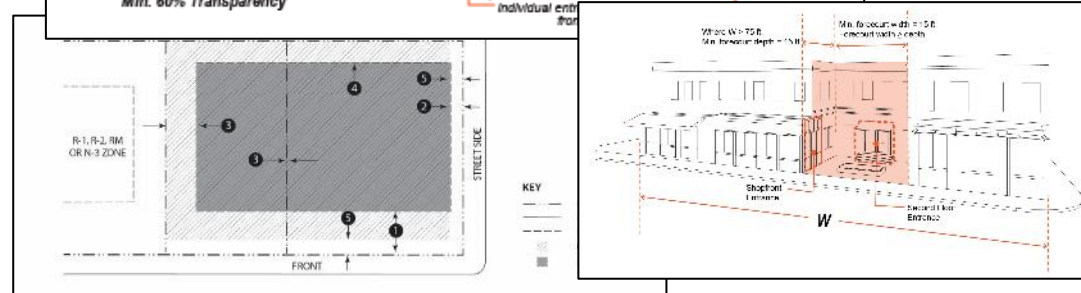
- A network of attractive, pedestrian-oriented, human scale, and well-landscaped streets
- Celebrate the history and culture of Downtown
- Promote new residential, mixed use, retail, service, and employment uses



***Include urban types appropriate for the Downtown. Form-based open space type palette should apply to the Downtown as well as Form-Based zones.***



***Update Development and Design Standards***



***Introduce development regulations related to historic preservation; coordinate with requirements of Chapter 2.56 as appropriate.***



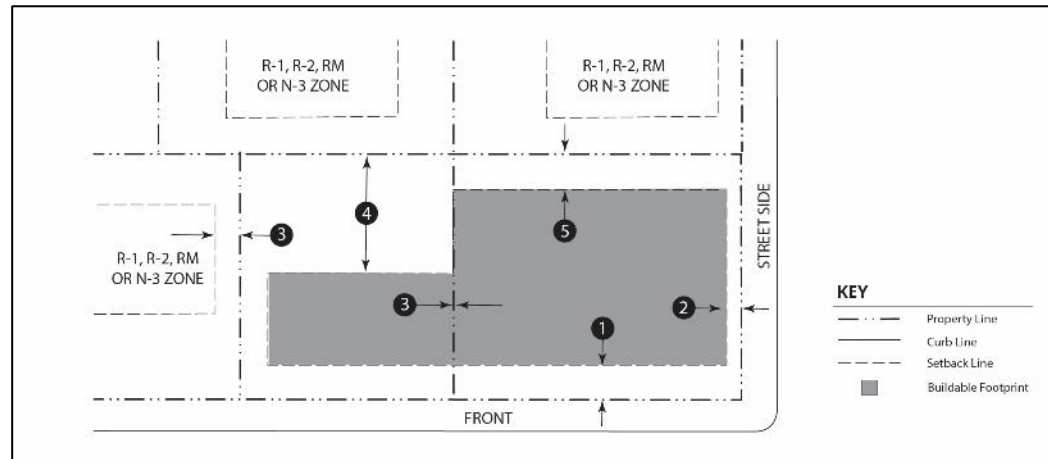
***Update uses to support dining (indoor and outdoor) and retail***

# Employment Districts

- Spaces for R&D, life sciences, and high-tech employment, industrial, manufacturing, and warehousing opportunities
- Expand living, working, and shopping in Lindenville
- Incorporate residential east of 101
- Attract and retain businesses requiring industrial land and offering jobs with opportunities and local businesses



**Support production, distribution, and repair (PDR) uses.**



**Increase flexibility in FAR for commercial and industrial uses.**

**Allow lot consolidation/aggregation to lend flexibility in the Downtown and transit areas.**



**Require active ground floor uses and support a range of residential uses including live/work.**



# Public, Semi-Public, Parks and Open Space

- Create new, accessible open space types and amenities
- Mix of educational uses, public and institutional uses, and places for gathering
- New recreation spaces, public services, and entertainment options
- Transform Colma Creek
- Network of parks and gathering spaces



***Allow groceries, community gardens, farmer's market, food pop-ups/mobile vendors, childcare.***



***Introduce “menu” of elements required of publicly-accessible open space.***



***Enhance requirements for publicly-accessible, landscaped open spaces.***



***Require public open spaces and connections to/from creeks.***



# Discussion

## Zoning Policy Direction

- In the Downtown? In neighborhood areas? In General Plan “change” areas?
- Uses: Compatibility and flexibility
- Achieving complete neighborhoods
- Other?

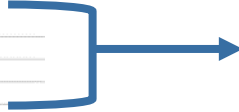
# 4. Zoning Code Targeted Diagnosis



South San Francisco Municipal Code						
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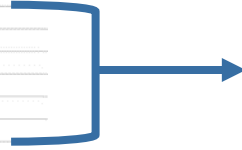
## Chapters 20.010-20.040: Authority and Rules

- Update purpose statement
- Update districts established and corresponding table
- Add Form-Based Regulating Plan
- Update/clarify Rules of Measurement



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## Chapters 20.080-20.130: Base Districts

- Update base districts regulations per GP and community and City feedback
  - Add/update development regulations
  - Add/update use regulations
  - Add/update design standards as appropriate
- Add Transect (form-based) Zones as needed:
  - Purpose
  - Establishment of Form-Based Districts
  - District Standards by Transect Zone
  - Building Types
  - Frontage Types
  - Open Space Types

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## Chapters 20.140-20.280: Overlays & Plan Districts

- Delete Specific Plan Districts and Overlays as appropriate
- Add Flood Plain/Sea Level Rise Overlay District

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## Chapters 20.300-20.430: General Standards

- Update Signs chapter to be consistent with federal law and community priorities
- Combine Wireless Communication chapters
- Add chapter for Community Benefits Program
- Update TDM measures
- Further streamline as appropriate (e.g., prohibitions on specific uses can be worked into use tables and definitions)



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Chapter 20.630 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

## Chapters 20.440-20.580: Administration and Procedures

- Add Minor Modification
- Create a single Use Permits chapter, each permit type with its own section (Conditional, Minor, Temporary, etc.)
- Revise Design Review to be compliant with State law and generally raise threshold.

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Title 20 ZONING

Chapter 20.010 TITLE, COMPONENTS, AND PURPOSES
Chapter 20.020 ZONING DISTRICTS, ZONING MAP, AND BOUNDARIES
Chapter 20.030 RULES FOR CONSTRUCTION OF LANGUAGE
Chapter 20.040 RULES OF MEASUREMENT
Chapter 20.080 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS
Chapter 20.090 COMMERCIAL, OFFICE, AND MIXED-USE DISTRICTS
Chapter 20.100 DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS
Chapter 20.110 EMPLOYMENT DISTRICTS
Chapter 20.120 PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC USE DISTRICTS
Chapter 20.130 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICTS
Chapter 20.140 PLANNED DEVELOPMENT (PD) DISTRICT
Chapter 20.150 LOFT (L) OVERLAY DISTRICT
Chapter 20.160 HILLSIDE (HS) OVERLAY DISTRICT
Chapter 20.170 SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES (ES) OVERLAY DISTRICT
Chapter 20.210 BAY WEST COVE SPECIFIC PLAN DISTRICT
Chapter 20.220 GATEWAY SPECIFIC PLAN DISTRICT
Chapter 20.230 OYSTER POINT SPECIFIC PLAN DISTRICT
Chapter 20.240 TERRABAY SPECIFIC PLAN DISTRICT
Chapter 20.250 TRANSIT VILLAGE PLAN DISTRICT
Chapter 20.260 GENENTECH MASTER PLAN DISTRICT
Chapter 20.270 EL CAMINO REAL/CHESTNUT AVENUE AREA PLAN DISTRICT
Chapter 20.280 DOWNTOWN STATION AREA SPECIFIC PLAN DISTRICT
Chapter 20.300 LOT AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS
Chapter 20.310 CHILDCARE FEE
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# Chapters 20.620-20.630: Definitions

- Update as needed.

# Discussion

## Zoning Code “Diagnosis”

- Organization and user-friendliness
- Streamlining conventional zones
- Integrating Form-Based zones
- Other?



# 5. Developing a Zoning Framework



# Micro-Scale Analysis

- Serves as the basis for the form-based elements of the Code Update.
- 8 sites
- The analysis documents:
  - Building depth and length
  - Frontage type(s) and dimensions
  - Setbacks
  - Building height
  - Lot coverage
  - Open space types
  - Façade elements (e.g., window spacing, fenestration percentage, etc.)
  - Pedestrian amenities,
  - Shade structures
  - Parking placement/design
  - Other character-defining features



*Grand Ave  
between Linden  
and Breezeway,  
South San  
Francisco*



*Mission Bay Blvd  
and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street,  
Mission bay, San  
Francisco*



*Center St  
between  
Shattuck and  
Oxford,  
Downtown  
Berkeley*



*Long Bridge St  
between 3<sup>rd</sup> and  
4<sup>th</sup> streets,  
Mission Bay, San  
Francisco*



*Winslow and  
Middlefield  
streets,  
Downtown  
Redwood City*



*Oliver Lofts, 65<sup>th</sup>  
St, Emeryville*



*Mission Creek  
Channel  
between 5<sup>th</sup> and  
4<sup>th</sup> streets,  
Mission Bay, San  
Francisco*



*Bancroft Ave and  
3<sup>rd</sup> Street,  
Bayview, San  
Francisco*



# Micro-Scale Analysis Findings

## General Findings

- Building placement - high coverage, pedestrian amenities, and gathering spaces
- Coordination between vertical and horizontal articulation
- Windows dimensions (greater on the ground level as compared to upper stories)
- Finish floor level above the sidewalk (via terraces, dooryards, stoops, other urban residential frontages).
- Range of multi-unit building types (triplexes, multiplexes, live-work, etc.)
- Paseos and pedestrian streets integrated into block configurations
- Parking location and design (behind and to the side of the building; “wrapped”)





# Micro-Scale Analysis Findings

## Findings Specific to Place Types:

### *Corridors*

- Well-designed shared open spaces near transit hubs
- Improved pedestrian and cyclist experience
- Range of active commercial uses
- Flexibility of uses in industrial transition zones
- Buffer heavy industrial uses from residential through landscaping, open spaces
- Parking for industrial areas along secondary streets and near transit hubs
- Large setbacks along waterways and open spaces for improved urban design/flood management.

### *Nodes*

- Minimal building setbacks
- Six or more stories
- Elevated open spaces
- Pedestrian and bike access along waterfront areas.

### *Neighborhood environments*

- Massing articulated in specified intervals/rhythm
- Primary frontages facing the primary street
- Pedestrian circulation design by block
- Parking behind/hidden from the primary street, accessed via alleys where possible.

# Complete Recommended Zoning Framework

## ■ Basic Framework

- Carries forward **existing use-based** zoning districts and regulations as appropriate in non-change areas
- Identifies **preliminary transect districts** in the change areas
- Generally **reduces the number** of zoning districts
- Recommends **new or modified zoning districts** as needed

## ■ Conflicts

- **Design standards** to address inconsistencies between GP vision and existing development patterns
- Additional **zoning districts** to be introduced to reflect needed limitations on use, impacts
- **Non-conforming regulations** to be updated address incompatibilities and continued use/maintenance

# Complete Recommended Zoning Framework

- **Residential General Plan Land Use Designations**
  - Density may be increased in some zones
  - Some areas may be distinguished through design standards
  - Some uses may be phased out
- **Mixed-Use General Plan Land Use Designations**
  - “Change areas” may be implemented through form-based zones
  - Form-based zones will consolidate existing zones where possible
  - Form-based subzones as needed for areas with unique use or form
- **Non-Residential General Plan Land Use Designations**
  - Non-change areas will be streamlined, with fewer implementing zones
  - New zones as needed to implement GP (e.g., Mixed Industrial zones)
  - Generally, increased flexibility
- **Civic General Plan Land Use Designations**
  - Minimal change anticipated
  - Standards introduced for connectivity and environmental issues





# Discussion

## Development of Zoning Framework and Standards

- Micro-Scale Analysis: Input on design elements addressed? Not addressed?
- Encouraging high-quality infill and housing
- Forward-looking standards (priorities for walkability, transit orientation, changes in employment trends, sustainability, flood/sea level rise areas, other)
- Other?

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LWC

Thank you.

August 5, 2021



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