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MARKET & OCTAVIA NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

CASE #: 2003.0346E

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Market and Octavia Neighborhood Plan (“the plan”) is the product of a three-year community planning process under the Planning Department’s Better Neighborhoods Program. The plan encompasses an area in the central city neighborhoods of about two to three blocks along Market Street from about 10th Street to the east to Noe Street to the west, north along the former Central Freeway alignment to Turk Street, between Laguna and Franklin Streets, and south along Howard and Sixteenth Streets (see Figure 1).

The plan proposes a comprehensive set of land use controls, urban design guidelines, public streets, and transportation system improvements aimed at encouraging new housing developments and enhancing urban neighborhoods. The plan was developed based on these concepts:

- Encouraging well-designed infill housing and new neighborhood-serving retail and other commercial services, with a special focus on development opportunities on the vacant Central Freeway parcels and a new neighborhood centered around South Van Ness Avenue from Market Street to Howard Street called SoMa West (see Figure 2).
- Improving the area’s public streets and open spaces, including extensive traffic calming strategies, street tree planting, creation of new parks, and streetscape improvements (see Figure 3).
- Improvements in the operation and convenience of all transportation modes, with a special focus on transit, bicycle, and pedestrian movements (see Figures 4 to 6).

Proposed Plan Components

Use and Height Districts

The existing zoning districts within the plan area include Mixed Residential (RM) Districts generally north and south of Market Street and west of Gough Street; Neighborhood Commercial Districts (NCDs) along Market Street, Hayes and Gough Streets, and portions of the Upper Market and Valencia Streets; and Downtown General Commercial (C-3-G) Districts near the Market Street and Van Ness Avenue intersection (see Figure 2).

The plan would generally reclassify properties in the area, would create three new zoning districts, and would amend the Hayes-Gough, Valencia, and Upper Market NCDs. Generally, RM Districts would be replaced by Residential, Transit Oriented (RTO) Districts, NCDs would be revised to

corresponding Neighborhood Commercial Transit (NCT) Districts, and some C-3 Districts would be replaced by a Downtown Residential (DTR) District.

The proposed zoning changes would generally replace limits on residential densities and would refine height and bulk controls and urban design guidelines that preserve mid-block open spaces and sunlight to streets, and would establish appropriate relationships between buildings.

The height reclassification proposed for the area would generally permit taller heights at Van Ness Avenue and Market Street and in the Civic Center area (up to a maximum 400 feet at highest points versus the existing 320-foot limit), adjust heights along various commercial streets (increase or decrease heights by 5 to 10 feet to 45 to 55 feet) to encourage more generous ground-floor ceiling heights, and reduce heights along alleys in residential areas (from 40 and 50 feet to 30 to 40 feet) to preserve sunlight access and small-scale character. Height and bulk district revisions would also require narrower towers and proposed urban design guidelines would allow varying building widths and massing according to the area scale.

Overall, the proposed zoning and height reclassifications would increase the potential for residential development in the area. This potential would generally be smaller in existing residential districts, and more concentrated at the Van Ness/Market/Mission area, in the SoMa West area, and along major commercial streets such as Market and Mission Streets.

Minimum parking requirements would be replaced by caps on the maximum amount of parking that could be permitted in new development (generally 0.75, 0.5, and 0.25 spaces per unit, for the RTO, NCT, and DTR Districts, respectively), providing flexibility to build for less than one-to-one parking requirements for the residential developments in areas with easy walking access to transit and services. Minimum parking requirements for commercial uses would likewise be generally replaced by maximum parking caps of about one parking space per 2,500 square feet of commercial use in the NCT Districts and about one space per 4,500 square feet of commercial use in the RTO District.

Public Space Improvements

The plan proposes extensive traffic calming strategies on residential streets and alleys, street tree plantings, sidewalk widenings, and new medians and pedestrian refuges (see Figure 3). Several new public spaces would be created including a plaza on Market Street adjacent to a new Central Freeway touchdown, a plaza in the McCoppin Street right-of-way west of Valencia Street, a small park at the center of the “Brady” block (along Brady Street), and dramatically widened sidewalk open spaces on McCoppin Street between Valencia and Otis Streets and the portion of Hayes Street between Franklin and Laguna Streets.

Streets in the SoMa West area would be reconfigured to include narrow pedestrian crossings and create new pedestrian spaces around the South Van Ness and Mission Street intersections, including a boulevard treatment for South Van Ness from Mission to Division Streets.

Transit Improvements

Improvements to transit operations and reliability would be implemented for all Muni services on Market, Mission, Church, Duboce, and Haight Streets (see Figure 4). These improvements would include dedicated transit lanes, signal preemption, improved transit lane enforcement, and better platforms and waiting areas.

Bicycle Improvements

Improvements to the area's bicycle network would include traffic circles on Page Street (with two-way stops for crossing streets), new bike lanes on Market Street, and special treatments at South Van Ness Avenue and Division Street and at the new Central Freeway touchdown at Market Street (see Figure 5).

Traffic Improvements

With the completion of the approved Octavia Boulevard and the new Central Freeway touchdown at Market Street, regional traffic flow to and from the Fell/Oak and Franklin/Gough Street couplets would be expedited. Proposed traffic calming strategies along adjacent streets under the proposed plan would minimize cut-through traffic and improve pedestrian crossings at major traffic streets. Selected streets would be returned to two-way traffic, including: Hayes Street east of Van Ness Avenue, Fell Street from Van Ness Avenue to Octavia Boulevard, and Haight Street between Market and Octavia Streets for MUNI buses only (see Figure 6).

For more information about the plan, please visit the Market and Octavia Neighborhood Plan Website at: "www.betterneighborhoods.org", click on "Market and Octavia".

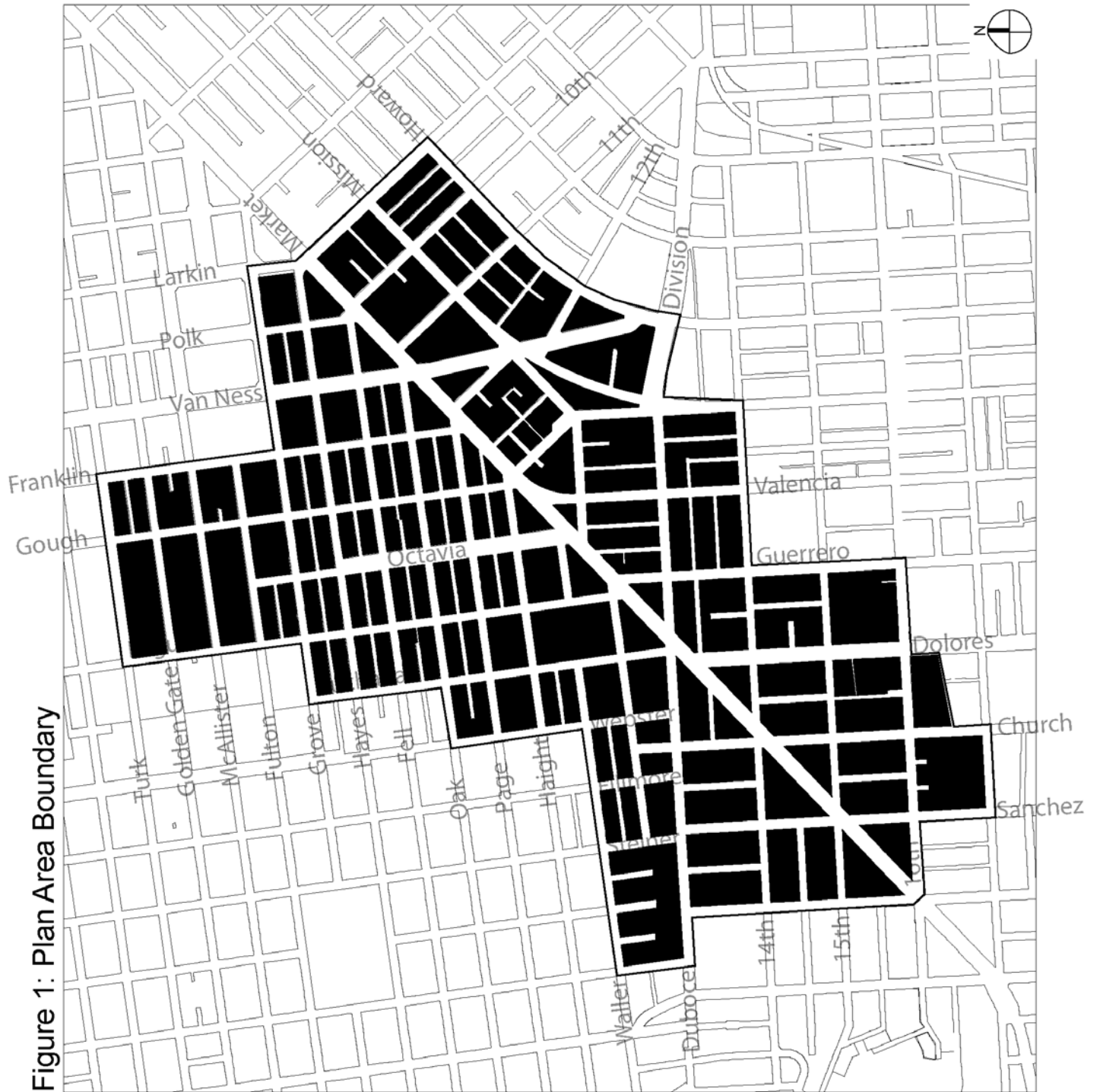


Figure 1: Plan Area Boundary

Figure 2: Proposed Zoning Districts

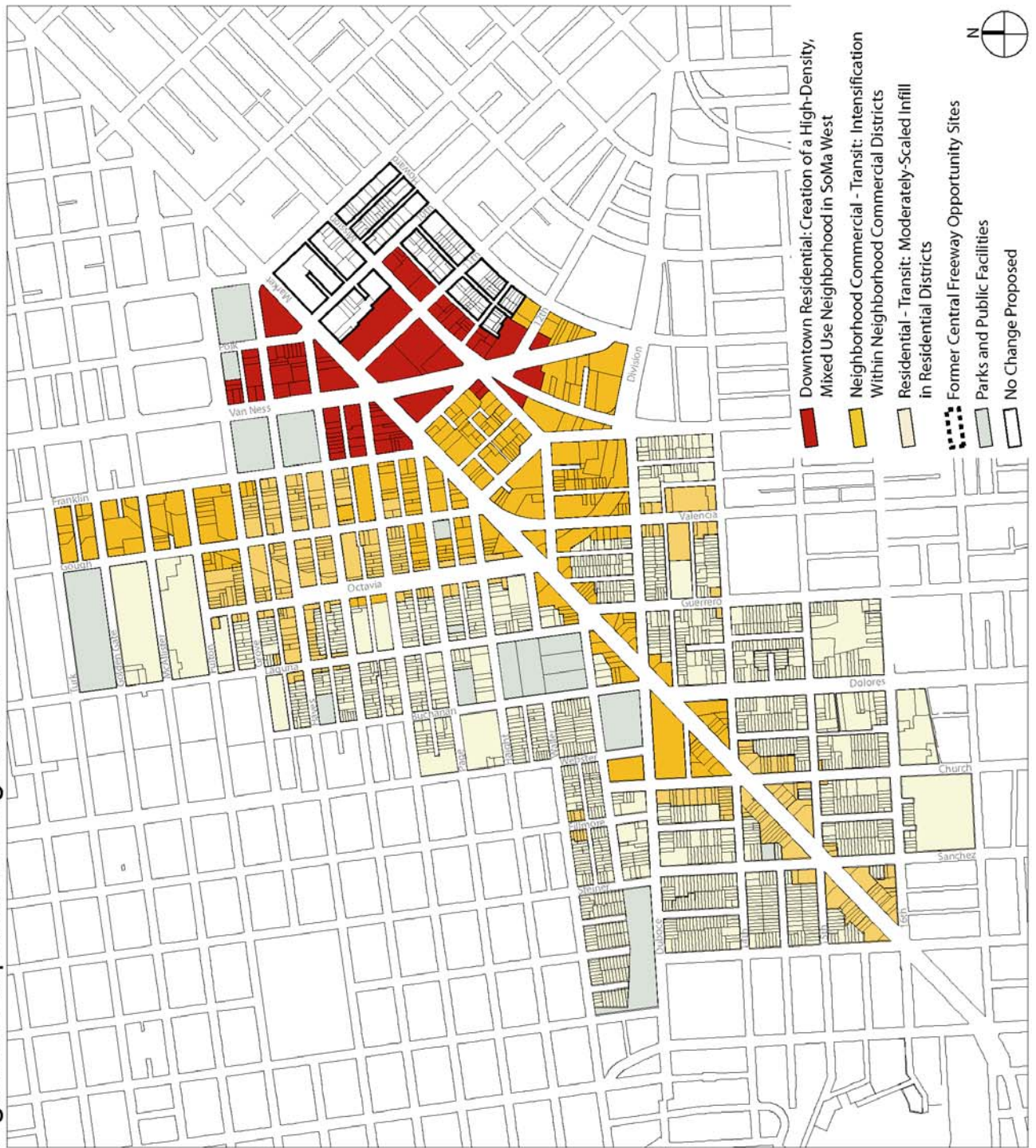


Figure 3: Proposed Pedestrian and Open Space Improvements



Figure 5: Proposed Bicycle Improvements

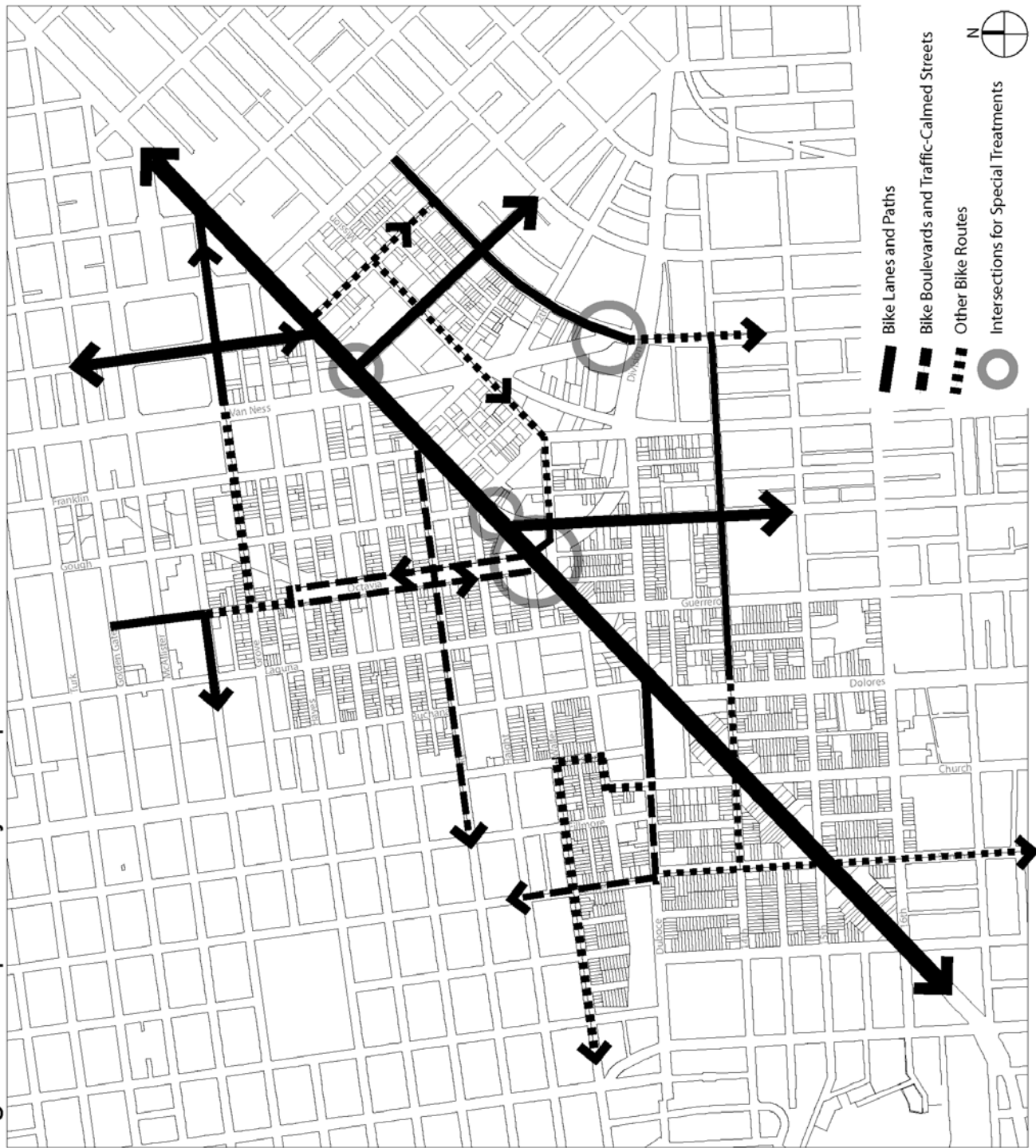


Figure 6: Proposed Traffic Circulation

