Will the zoning on my property change?
Zoning is proposed to change on some parcels within the four neighborhoods. To determine if a zoning change is proposed for your property, locate your property on the Existing Zoning and Proposed Zoning Maps found on our website: http://en-hearings.sfplanning.org (scroll down to the link entitled “Proposed Area Plans, Zoning and Heights Limits Maps”).

What changes are proposed for properties currently zoned Residential (RH, RM, RED)?
Generally, the proposal is to leave these existing exclusively residential zones unchanged. An exception to this is the area generally between South Van Ness Avenue and Guerrero Street, where the current residential zoning is proposed to be changed to a new “Residential Transit-Oriented” (RTO) designation. This new zoning category continues to require exclusively residential uses, except that it also allows small retail on corner parcels. In recognition of the good transit service in this area, the RTO zoning also removes the minimum parking requirements and relaxes density controls.

What changes are proposed for properties currently zoned Industrial (M-1, M-2, C-M)?
Areas currently zoned industrial will generally be rezoned to one of following designations:
• Production, Distribution and Repair Zones (PDR): In these zones, everything that is permitted today would continue to be permitted, except new residential development, which would be prohibited, and retail stores and offices, which would be limited in size.
• Urban Mixed-Use Zones (UMU): These zones are designed to promote a mix of different types of activities. The rules applying to these new urban mixed-use zones are generally the same as the above PDR zones, however new residential development would also be permitted. In both zones all existing offices, retail stores and residences which received a permit at the time they were built or established would be considered legal and allowed to remain indefinitely. For example, if a tenant of an office space were to move out, a similar office tenant would be able to move in to that space. In other words, all legal pre-existing offices, stores and residences are “grandfathered” with respect to the new zoning.

What changes are proposed for properties currently zoned Neighborhood Commercial (NC)?
The neighborhood commercial zones will be rezoned to Neighborhood Commercial – Transit (NCT) districts, which differ from the old designations (NC) generally in that they remove parking minimums and relax density controls.

What changes are proposed for properties in South of Market zoning districts?
The South of Market currently contains a series of specialized zoning districts intended to promote a mixture of activities. Proposed zoning controls update the existing zoning to encourage a greater mixture of residential, office and PDR activities, while introducing increased open space requirements and new design guidelines.

How much new housing and affordable housing will the Plans produce?
Under the proposed Plans, the Planning Department projects that over the next 20 years a total of 7,500 – 10,000 new housing units will be built in the four neighborhoods. Based on the affordable housing rules in the proposed new zoning, we expect that the major-ity of units built would be “market rate,” while 20-30 percent of the units produced would be below market rate, affordable to a range of families and individuals earning from 30-150% of the median income. (For context, the median income for a single individual in San Francisco is about $58,000 per year, while for a family of four it is about $83,000 per year. It requires an annual income of at least 200% of the median income to afford to buy a market rate priced house or condominium in San Francisco.)

What is the Eastern Neighborhoods Program?
The Mission, Central Waterfront, East South of Market and Showplace Square/Potrero Hill neighborhoods are home to much of the city’s industrially-zoned land. For the last 10 to 15 years, these neighborhoods have been changing and have seen growing land use conflicts, where residential and office development has begun to compete with industrial uses. How should we plan for the future of these areas? Should we allow housing and offices to gradually predominate or should we seek to create a balance of some sort? Does the City need to keep a place for “production, distribution and repair” businesses, as well as the arts? How much space should we provide for “high-tech” industries? How much new housing should be made “affordable”? How can necessary improvements to neighborhood parks and transit be funded? Resolv-ing these difficult questions – with an emphasis on balance – is at the heart of the Eastern Neighborhoods Program.

Based on several years of community input and technical analysis, the Eastern Neighborhoods Program calls for transitioning about half of the existing industrial areas in these four neighborhoods to mixed use zones that encourage new housing. The other remaining half would be reserved for “Production, Distribution and Repair” districts, where a wide variety of functions such as Muni vehicle yards, caterers, and performance spaces can continue to thrive.

The Process
The Eastern Neighborhoods community planning process began in 2001 with the goal of developing new zoning controls for the industrial portions of these neighborhoods. A series of work-shops were conducted in each area where stakeholders articulated goals for their neighborhood, considered how new land use regulations (zoning) might promote these goals, and created several rezoning options representing variations on the amount of industrial land to retain for employment and business activity.

In February 2004, the Planning Commission established interim policies for East SoMa, the Mission, and Showplace Square/Potre-ro Hill to be in effect until permanent zoning is established.

Starting in 2005, the community planning process expanded to address other issues critical to these communities including affordable housing, transportation, parks and open space, urban design and community facilities. The Planning Department began working with the neighborhood stakeholders to create Area Plans for each neighborhood to articulate a vision for the future. Since then, the Planning Department has conducted an extensive outreach program, including several large workshops in each of the neighborhoods, hundreds of smaller meetings and discus-sions with community groups and individuals, over 15 planning commission hearings, office hours in the neighborhoods, surveys and focus groups with owners of PDR businesses, and a citywide summit on industrial land.

DRAFT Eastern Neighborhood Area Plans were released in Decem-ber 2007 for public comment. In April 2008, the Planning Com-mission initiated the adoption process and held several hearings throughout the spring and summer. On August 7, 2008 the Planning Commission adopted the Area Plans and new zoning code for the Eastern Neighborhoods. Hearings at the Board of Supervisors will begin in September 2008.
1. Residential Zones: In areas which are currently zoned for residences only (generally portions of the Mission, Potrero Hill and Dogpatch) the proposal is to leave this zoning intact, with some changes intended to encourage development near strong transit service.

2. PDR Zones: The intent of these districts is to ensure space for existing and new PDR businesses and activities. In order to protect PDR, residential development would be prohibited, with office, retail, and institutional uses (schools, hospitals, etc.) would be limited. HOWEVER, residences, offices and retail which currently exist legally in these areas may stay indefinitely.

3. Mixed-Use Zones: There are many portions of the Eastern Neighborhoods where it makes sense to promote a mix of different types of activities. The Plans propose a variety of different mixed-use zones, to accommodate unique characteristics of different neighborhoods. These range from neighborhood commercial zones, which call for a mix of residences and retail, to other zones which bring PDR into the mix.

Aside from regulating what sorts of activities can occur on a given parcel of land, the proposed Eastern Neighborhoods rezoning also includes a variety of changes to other key regulations, including the following:

Building Heights: Height limits would be adjusted both up and down in various areas. No heights would be raised above 85 feet.

Parking: In mixed-use areas, parking requirements would be changed generally to remove minimum parking requirements and establish maximum requirements instead.

Open Space: In many areas, the amount of open space required as part of new development would be increased. Additionally, these spaces will be required to be greener and more usable.

Unit Mix: Existing density requirements would be replaced with a bedroom-mix requirement to ensure a diversity of housing units.

“Public Benefits” including Affordable Housing

As some portions of the Eastern Neighborhoods transform over time from largely PDR areas to places for people to live and work, a variety of community needs will be created. These include affordable housing, transportation improvements, new and improved open space, as well as a variety of other community facilities.