

1 South Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

1 South Van Ness Avenue (CA 94103, USA)

The site is located at a prime location at the intersection of two of San Francisco's most prominent arterials, Van Ness/South Van Ness Avenue and Market Street in the Civic Center neighborhood at the southwestern end of the City's Downtown office core. The building located at 1 South Van Ness Avenue is an approximately 650,000 gross square foot eight-story office building with an underground parking garage that was built in 1959 and was acquired by the City from Bank of America in 2004.

The area is characterized by a vibrant mix of civic, institutional, arts, commercial, and residential uses and is the seat of City government. The site is zoned for a wide range of commercial and residential uses, with

buildings permitted up to 400 feet of height. The site is surrounded by active and entitled residential and commercial high-rise development projects.

The City seeks to redevelop the site into a high-density residential or residential mixed-use tower to advance the City's state-mandated target of adding over 80,000 new residential units by 2031, and support the City's post-pandemic economic recovery by repositioning the City workforce's office footprint to make use of historic office vacancies in the Civic Center and downtown areas, all while continuing to demonstrate San Francisco's commitment to sustainable development and a zero carbon future.



Plot Area:

This is a single 65,000 square foot parcel that is entirely occupied by a single building.

Expected Land Use:

The site is zoned for a wide variety of residential and commercial uses. It is the City's expectation that the highest and best use for the site will be for housing, with active ground floors for commercial or institutional use. Specifically, the City envisions transforming this site into a high-rise tower, integrating material recovery, zero-emission technologies and urban greening solutions. The project must consider the surrounding context, characterized by entitled and recently constructed high-rise buildings in the area. Residential units may be either for-sale condominium units or rental units. See planning rules and regulations section below

for applicable affordability and other code requirements.

Site Ownership:

The site is entirely owned by the City and County of San Francisco, with one ground floor commercial tenant in a long-term lease that would need to be negotiated as part of any future development.

Type of Property transfer intended:

The City's intent is to sell the parcel outright to use the proceeds for relocation costs of City workforce and other public purposes. A joint development model may be considered if proposed by the project team. Further information will be provided in Phase 2 of the competition.

Deadline for the submission of the Expression of Interest:

Thursday 5th September 2024, 11am PST

Presentation of the site and development expectations

The site is located at a prime location at the intersection of two of San Francisco's most prominent arterials, Van Ness/South Van Ness Avenue and Market Street at the southwestern end of the City's Downtown office core. The site is at the nexus of several distinct neighborhoods - Civic Center and Mid-Market characterized by office, institutional, arts, and mixed-use mid- to high-density development; Hayes Valley characterized by low- to mid-density residential and mixed-use development; and the western end of the SOMA neighborhood characterized by a mix of low- to mid-density light industrial, residential, and mixed-use buildings. Civic Center is known as the seat of City government and as one of the city's key arts districts, home to the San Francisco Opera, Ballet, and Symphony, the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Mid-Market also includes City and private offices, including major employers like X (formerly Twitter) and Dolby, and a string of performance arts venues including the American Conservatory Theater, Golden Gate Theater, and Orpheum Theater. Hayes Valley is a predominately residential area known for its retail and dining scene and, recently, as a center of the artificial intelligence industry. Western SOMA is a former warehouse industrial district that has evolved into a mixed-use neighborhood that still retains a number of light industrial uses as well as many of the city's nightlife entertainment venues, and is a center of City's Filipino and LGBTQ communities.

The site is very well served by public transit, sitting immediately atop the Van Ness Muni Metro station, along the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit line, on Market Street featuring several bus lines and the historic streetcar F line, and a 1/4-mile (5 minute walk) from the Civic Center BART station.



Figure 2: Aerial map of the proposed site, 1 South Van Ness Avenue

The City and County of San Francisco owns and manages approximately 5 million square feet of office space and other facilities across over 70 buildings throughout the city for its nearly 40,000 person City workforce. The building comprises about 475,000 net rentable square feet of space that is currently home to approximately 1,800 City workers across multiple City departments including the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA), Department of Human Resources (DHR), Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD), Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD), and Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure (OCII). The building also houses one commercial tenant, a Bank of America retail branch of

approximately 13,000 square feet on the ground floor located at the northwest corner of the building.

The building is over 60 years old and has not undergone a full remodel since 1992. The building's façade is original to 1959 and not in keeping with either the classic or contemporary architectural styles that otherwise characterize the surrounding area. The interior is characterized by a highly inefficient layout owing to its large floorplate and odd angles. The cost of performing various needed building system upgrades and the site's underutilization compared with the current zoned capacity make this site a good candidate for redevelopment through demolition and new construction.

It is the City's expectation that the highest and best use for the site will be for housing, with active ground floors for commercial or institutional uses. The City sees this competition as an opportunity to revitalize San Francisco's Downtown and transform the site of the existing office building, 1 South Van Ness Avenue, into a high-rise tower integrating material recovery, zero-emission technologies and urban greening solutions. The site is zoned for a wide range of commercial and residential uses, with buildings permitted up to 400 feet of height. The site is surrounded by active and entitled residential and commercial high-rise development projects.

Specific planning rules and regulations

The property was included in the [Market and Octavia Area Plan Amendment](#) (the Hub), a community planning process that took place 2015-2020. While some of the height and zoning recommendations in the plan were not adopted, additional height and greater density were studied in the Environmental Impact Report ([EIR](#)) which was certified July 2020.

The property at 1 South Van Ness is currently zoned C-3-G and is within the Market and Van Ness Special Use District. The zoning allows for a wide variety of land uses including residential and commercial uses and doesn't place any limits on density. The existing height-bulk district is 120/400-R-2 and analyzed for additional height at 140/650-R-2.

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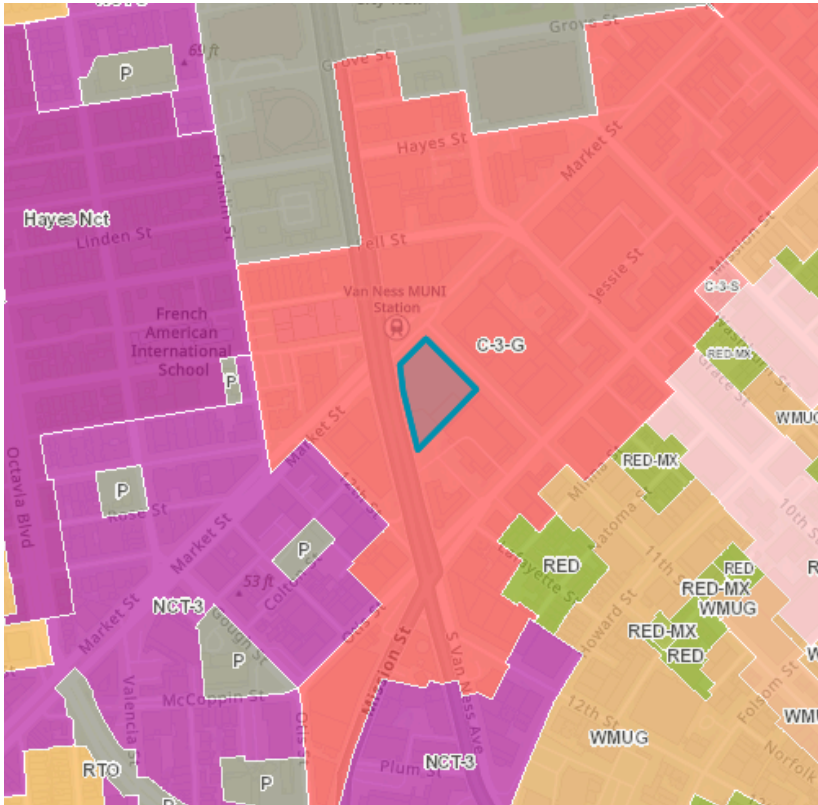


Figure 3: Zoning map of the proposed site, 1 South Van Ness Avenue

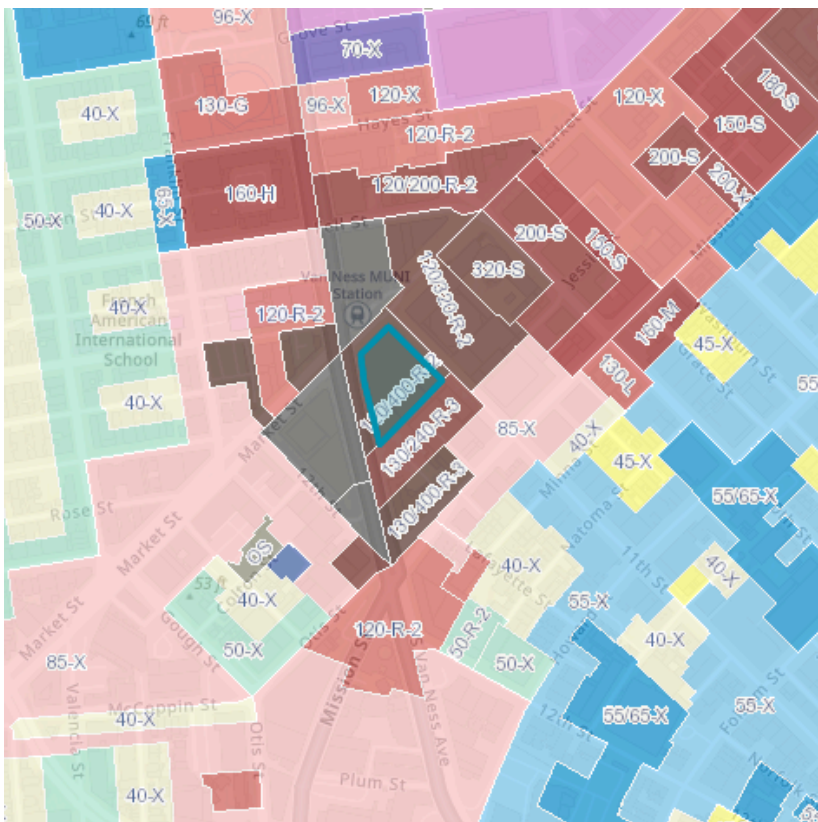


Figure 4: Allowable heights map of the proposed site, 1 South Van Ness Avenue

All projects that include 10 or more dwelling units must participate in the Inclusionary Affordable Housing Program contained in Planning Code Sections 415 and 419. Every project subject to the requirements of Planning Code Section 415 or 419 is required to pay the Affordable Housing Fee. A project may be eligible for an Alternative to the Affordable Housing Fee and must provide necessary documentation to the Planning Department and Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development. For more information about the current inclusionary rates can be found [here](#).

In addition to meeting the City's inclusionary requirements, most development projects are subject to impact fees. For more information about specific impact fees and current rates see the [fee register](#).

In September 2023 legislation was adopted that changes the way that the city sets, imposes, and collects impact fees. These changes include paying impact fees (other than inclusionary) at certificate of occupancy, the impact fee rate (other than inclusionary) is locked in at the time of project approval, and the rate increases annually by a flat 2%. In addition, any project approved before November 2026 is eligible to receive a 33% reduction on required development impact fees. To remain eligible for the discount, projects must obtain their First Construction Document within 30 months of final approval. See [Planning Code Section 403](#) for more information.

State Housing Legislation

Some projects that require Planning Department approval may qualify for a ministerial, non-discretionary review. Please see [Planning Director Bulletin 5](#) and [Planning Director Bulletin 9](#) for more information.

This parcel would be eligible to apply the State Density Bonus as defined in Planning Code Section 206.6(b). This program allows a project to receive up to 35% bonus and receive certain incentives and waivers from the Planning Code. The amount of density bonus and number of incentives depends on the amount and level of affordability the project provides. Projects must comply with the City's Inclusionary Affordable Housing but may seek a bonus at a single income level. Please see [Planning Director Bulletin 6](#).

City climate priorities and environmental challenges

In addition to the competition's ten climate challenges, San Francisco will use the Reinventing Cities competition to leverage the strategies and actions in its [2021 Climate Action Plan](#) to develop a cutting-edge, sustainable building site that integrates various innovative technologies, materials, and design strategies, along with engagement and public awareness to build greater racial and social equity, increase community resilience, and foster a more just economy through affordable housing and green workforce development.

San Francisco will address all seven sectors in its Climate Action Plan (CAP) in the Reinventing Cities competition (energy, building operation, housing, transportation and land use, responsible production and consumption, healthy ecosystems, and water supply). Through twenty different CAP actions, San Francisco will not only push the envelope on sustainable design but also create a safe environment for residents and neighbors while fostering a deeper connection with the natural environment and showcasing how urban infill housing can reduce GHG pollution more effectively than any other option.

Other Specific cutting-edge innovative solutions include:

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Adaptive Reuse: Repurposing parts of an existing building, or adaptive reuse, is the best way to reduce embodied carbon emissions compared to using virgin materials. This project will consider ways to pilot thoughtful deconstruction and use salvaged materials. Planning, such as whole-building life cycle assessment, can help sites rethink design, reduce materials, and avoid focusing solely on recycling or downcycling. Designing with layout flexibility and circular principles in mind can enhance longevity and adaptability of the building and reduce costly renovations or rebuilds.

Biodiverse Design: Major site renovations offer opportunities to create wildlife habitats and nature connections for city residents and workers. Design strategies include living roofs and walls, sidewalk gardens, and native pollinator-serving street trees. This project can incorporate many biodiverse elements, such as local plants in various vegetative structures, bird-nesting boxes, bird-friendly windows, and nature play spaces. These features also promote well-being, improve air quality, mitigate urban heat island effects, and provide diverse recreational and educational opportunities for occupants and adjacent communities.

Zero-emission technologies: Through adoption of San Francisco's current and proposed building regulations, this site will reduce climate pollution, increase building resiliency, and improve indoor air quality. The project will replace gas equipment with efficient all-electric equipment and add battery storage and potentially photovoltaics. The building will also include a tailored demand response system to support energy load shifting. Leveraging smart and clean energy solutions through building decarbonization will save money, protect health, and result in a zero-emission building.