

### Introduction

For nearly one hundred years, Fisherman's Wharf has been a substantial economic asset for San Francisco. It is home to Northern California's most active fishing fleet and fish handling facilities. Fisherman's Wharf is San Francisco's number one visitor attraction, as well as the most significant income generator for the Port of San Francisco and a substantial tax contributor for the City and County of San Francisco, generating millions of dollars annually. Over 32,000 people work in Fisherman's Wharf. People come from around the world to enjoy its distinctive maritime setting, historic fisheries, world-class restaurants, hotels, unique retail projects, and entertainment. The Fisherman's Wharf area is bounded between Pier 33 and Municipal Pier/Van Ness Avenue and from Bay Street to Columbus and Francisco to San Francisco Bay (please see attached map). A number of government agencies share responsibilities for the oversight of the area including the National Park Service, California State Lands Commission, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Port of San Francisco, the City Department of Planning, Municipal Railway, Recreation and Parks Department, Department of Public Works, and Parking & Traffic Department. Within the boundaries of Fisherman's Wharf, there is a national maritime park with numerous national landmarks, two historic cable car turntables, two long-standing swimming and rowing clubs, and a historic street car line.

### Statement of Purpose

Preserve and enhance the original purpose and cultural heritage of Fisherman's Wharf by implementing plans that successfully respond to community concerns consistent with the Burton Act, which bring about new public open spaces and economic revitalization that benefits Fisherman's Wharf businesses, residents, and visitors. This effort will require the committed leadership of the Mayor of San Francisco to ensure proper response and coordination by City, State, and Federal agencies to the needs of the Fisherman's Wharf community.

### Need

Fisherman's Wharf outside the Port's jurisdiction has the weakest zoning restrictions of any commercial district in the City. The Fisherman's Wharf area outside the Port's jurisdiction also lacks a comprehensive plan, which sets forth standards and policies for land use, urban design, historic preservation, traffic circulation, transportation and parking. This lack of effective planning and protection threatens the traditional uses and character of the area. Fast food restaurants, large electronic message signs, and adult bookstores are permitted uses under current codes. Buildings of historical significance and businesses that generate maritime employment are at risk. Without a proper planning and coordination by responsible agencies, in concert with its community, Fisherman's Wharf will continue to lose its character, uniqueness, appeal, and its economic and cultural contribution to the City.

### Issues

Recently, the Board of Governors of the Fisherman's Wharf Association identified a number issues that must be addressed to stimulate the area's future economic vitality, to better serve residents and visitors, and preserve the area's character and fishing industry. They include the following:

- Preserve and encourage the commercial fishing industry;
- Improve traffic circulation to accommodate the needs of the fishing industry;
- Provide better access to the Bay and open space;
- Encourage more parks and places for the public to gather;

- Facilitate and enhance the excursion fleet and ferry service;
- Enhance recreational uses of the water and open space of Aquatic Park;
- Refurbish Municipal Pier;
- Promote visitation and recognition of historical and maritime parks, attractions and resources;
- Encourage the Development of uses, such as The Bay Center on Pier 45's Shed A, that appeal to Bay Area residents, provide educational opportunities for schools, diversify the activities of the area and preserve the fishing industry;
- Improve transportation access and circulation for buses, automobiles, and bicycles;
- Create pedestrian friendly sidewalks and thoroughfares;
- Establish a parking management program to maximize off-street parking opportunities and reduce auto congestion on the street;
- Install directional signs for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians;
- Improve the appearance of storefronts;
- Establish awning and sign standards;
- Enhance and upgrade the diversity of retail uses in the area;
- Encourage property owners and stakeholders to work collectively to improve the area;
- Establish a strong working relationship through planning with the adjacent diversified neighborhoods;
- Discourage or prohibit uses which detract from family oriented activities;
- Develop policies to better accommodate street artists and performers; and
- Develop effective enforcement procedures.

#### Background.

From 1987 through 1991, the Fisherman's Wharf community, representatives from nearby neighborhoods, various City agencies, and planning and design consultants studied and drafted zoning controls, design standards, land use, preservation and other policies for a comprehensive plan for Fisherman's Wharf. Unfortunately, the required Environmental Impact and City approvals were not completed and this plan was never adopted. The extensive product of work and documents are available and can be a starting point to help expedite the community process necessary to undertake implementation of a comprehensive plan and zoning policies.

During subsequent years, the Port of San Francisco initiated planning work was and developed planning policies and restrictions that were adopted for property within the Port's jurisdiction only. Specifically, based upon an environmental review report for Port property, the Port Commission in June 1997 adopted the Port of San Francisco Waterfront Land Use Plan, which included policies for Port property at Fisherman's Wharf, and in October 2001 adopted Fish Alley Amendments to this plan. In 1998, the San Francisco Planning Commission adopted amendments to the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance that reflected the policies in the Port's Waterfront Land Use Plan.

Recently, BCDC and the Port of San Francisco have initiated a planning and decision process focused on the Pier 45/Taylor Street triangle area. This effort is intended to lead to new land use, street circulation, and other policies, as well as amendments to BCDC's "Special Area Plan" and the Port's "Waterfront Land Use Plan." This study area is a fragment of the Fisherman's Wharf community and on the tip of a peninsula. We, The Fisherman's Wharf Association, believe that this planning effort for the triangle will be far more effective if the comprehensive plan for the broader Fisherman's Wharf area is developed in concert. (Otherwise it is like attempting to tune a piano by adjusting only a few left-hand keys.)

### Action Needed.

The Fisherman's Wharf Association is looking for leadership from the new Mayor of San Francisco to direct the effort to develop and implement plans that will preserve and enhance the luster of Fisherman's Wharf. We ask for standards that will maintain and strengthen the economic health, maritime activities, vitality, authenticity and diversity of the area. We ask for development policies to promote high quality urban design and an inviting environment for neighborhood residents, workers, and visitors. This challenge is before us and it must be resolved. It requires professional city planners with a commitment to integrity in the planning process. It will take a coordinated effort from the Port of San Francisco, the Department of City Planning, the Office for Economic Development, and other agencies. We ask for selection of competent and professional leaders in these and other departments that will instill confidence in staff and the community and that will re-establish the highest standards in the planning process. For too many years there has been inaction and politically based decision-making that impedes effective community planning and undermines the uniqueness of our business districts and neighborhoods. We, the Board of Governors (excepting Kirk Bennett, the Port of San Francisco representative, who must abstain from taking a position on this matter) and involved members of this community, ask for the effective leadership from our future Mayor to achieve the abovementioned objectives in the immediate future.