

# ***Planning Principles***

of the Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force  
(adopted August 23, 2006)

*Only the headings in bold face constitute principles; the sub-text is provided as examples of how principles could be applied.*

## **1) Mitigate to the fullest extent possible neighborhood impacts resulting from new development.**

- a. Direct a significant portion of any extra development value resulting from conditional use approvals, up zonings, etc. to important SOMA community needs/benefits.
  - i. Examples: Intercontinental Hotel and Rincon Hill special community benefit programs.
- b. Require new development – individually and collectively – to mitigate directly any specific local problems it creates, such as traffic impacts, business displacement, etc.
  - i. Examples: Downtown Plan (transportation, child care, art, job placement, etc.). Rincon Hill (Community Benefits program)

## **2) Stabilize the neighborhood against speculative land use proposals and developments.**

- a. Residential Enclave Zoning expansions
  - i. Example: More REDs with strict design guidelines within and in surrounding buffer areas.
- b. Historic Preservation Districts

## **3) Promote safety in all areas of the public realm (e.g., streets, sidewalks, parks, etc.).**

- a. Work with Public Agencies to recommend specific programs that promote street safety.
  - i. Examples: Work with TA on reducing the traffic speed throughout SOMA, including restoring two-way streets, creating safe cross walks. (New developments could be required to contribute towards/create nearby traffic crossings, bulb outs or traffic lights). Work with Rec and Park, re safety in neighborhood parks, with park monitoring (as done by NPC). Work with Police to establish Neighborhood Watch program.

## **4) Maintain and encourage the existing community cultural diversity.**

- a. Cultural Preservation Districts
  - i. Example: Consider the creation of “Cultural preservation zones” by identifying “communities and their support services and business in order to protect and promote these communities centers. (Filipino, LGBTQ, entertainment, arts)
- b. Creation of more Residential Enclaves
  - i. Preserves existing housing stock and the opportunities for current residents to remain a part of the neighborhood.

## **5) Proposed new land use development shall primarily serve the needs of existing residents and businesses. Citywide and regional needs are subordinate to existing local needs.**

- a. Give priority to SOMA residents for new affordable housing and jobs developed in SOMA as reasonably practicable and legal allowable, so they benefit from its development instead of becoming victims of it.
  - i. Example: SFRA housing and job policies for its SOM project.

## **6) Maintain and promote diversity (e.g., day/night, living/working, spectrum of uses, etc.) of neighborhood land uses.**

- a. Require each new development in Western SOMA to incorporate major element(s) in its design and mixture of uses that maintain or advance the character of the Neighborhood that this Plan is trying to maintain/achieve.

- ii. Example: Require mixed income housing in the air rights above new off-street parking for large retail/commercial developments.
- b. Employment Incentive Programs
  - i. Example: In order to create a greater jobs/housing balances create employment incentives or broaden the type of allowable business in SOMA.

**7) Provide clear and simple community planning policies and zoning recommendations.**

- a. Use where possible existing planning definitions, concepts
  - i. Example: Existing or proposed Eastern Neighborhoods district designations, set backs, FAR, height, etc and language in order to promote proper implementation of intent of the planning principals. If possible modify "correct" existing language rather than invent new.

**8) Generally maintain the existing scale and density of the neighborhood.**

- a. Preservation Programs and Contextual Development Scale Controls
  - i. Examples: Review existing maximum development envelopes for all areas and revise to reflect existing scale and density.

**9) Promote environmental sensitivity in new development projects.**

- a. Design Neighborhood Environmental Development Incentives
  - i. Examples: 1. Create new setback requirements to require public and private green space. 2. Give 10% density or FAR bonus if a project meets specific environmental goals.

**10) Encourage nurturing characteristics and maximize opportunities for seniors, families, youth and children.**

- a. Unit Mix Requirements
  - i. Example: Require new projects to have 40% of units be 2BR units and developments above 10 units include some amenities.

**11) Develop and maintain local accountability and monitoring mechanism.**

- a. When practicable, empower SOMA community-based groups/organizations that are familiar with, based within, and committed to the SOMA community to implement such community benefits projects/programs.
  - i. Example: Community Benefit District concept, and various nonprofit project/programs.
  - ii. Example: Create a Neighborhood Review Board with specific review of projects and the reflection of their adoption of these goals.

**12) Provide periodic reassessment of the community plan.**

- a. Establish a SOMA community advisory body or planning board with public processes to monitor this Plan's implementation, realization, and adjustment to changing conditions over the long term, providing accountability to the community.
  - i. Example: PAC's; NYC planning boards.
  - ii. Example: Create a Neighborhood Review Board with specific review of projects and the reflection of their adoption of these goals. Recommend modifications of planning language to fix unintended consequences.

**13) Maximize general environmental quality and health.**

- a. Create new setback requirements to require public and private green space.
  - i. Example: Give 10% development bonuses if a project meets specific green space goals