



# Potrero Yard Reimagined – Spring 2020 Virtual Event

June 6, 2020 English Transcript

**Rosie:** Good morning and thank you for joining us for this telephone conversation about the future of Potrero Yard!

My name is Rosie Dilger, and I'll be your host for today's conversation. Because of the current restrictions on public gatherings, we are hosting today's meeting as a call. We are thrilled you can join us and look forward to the next time we can do this in person.

Thank you for being here. As this call goes on, I will take a few moments here and there to welcome new callers and share information you may have already heard.

But before we proceed, I want to acknowledge what is happening in our communities, in this country, and in the world around us.

We have been living through a global pandemic which has disproportionately impacted black and brown communities. On a daily basis we are inundated Covid-19 crises - devastating individuals, families, and businesses.

At the same time, we are witnessing our nation's deep racial inequities brought to the forefront of conversation. And along with it, the inhumane consequences that black Americans have faced for hundreds of years.

Racially charged police terror and murders across the country and throughout history is gut-wrenching. We in no way want to trivialize or undermine the work that is happening to support communities that are hurting and need support.

What we do want to do is continue an open conversation with the community about our plans for Potrero Yard and share where we are in the process.

Today we are here to hear your thoughts and answer your questions about this project. On this call we hope to get your direct input on how this project impacts you and your community.

Once again, thank you for joining us for this telephone conversation about the future of Potrero Yard!

The Potrero Yard Modernization Project will rebuild the bus yard to modernize it, to enhance transit service in San Francisco, and add much needed housing.

Communicating these proposed solutions and enhancements and gathering input from you during this process is very important to us.

With that, if you have a question during any point, please dial \*3 and you will be routed directly to our team to get your question in the queue.

Today I'm here with the Project Managers for Potrero Yard:

Licinia Iberri and Rafe Rabalais; and also, Adrienne Heim, the project's Public Information Officer.

They are here to give you an overview of the project, share where we are in the process, and most importantly - answer your questions!

With that, Licinia, can you start us off with some background on the project?

**Licinia:** Thanks Rosie.

Good morning, I'm Licinia Iberri and I am one of two co-project managers for this exciting project. I've been working with the SFMTA for the last eight years and my job is to plan future facilities and yard rebuilds. Also, after living in the Mission for 10 years, I moved to Bernal Heights in October – just 10 blocks from Potrero Yard.

We are rebuilding and expanding the Potrero Muni bus yard at Bryant and Mariposa Street. The Potrero Yard Modernization Project is part of an SFMTA program called Building Progress. The Building Progress program is the 1.2 billion-dollar, multi-year effort to repair, renovate, and modernize the SFMTA's aging facilities in order to keep the city moving.

First, some background on the yard – it serves six major Muni routes: the 5 Fulton, the 5 Fulton Rapid, the 6 Haight-Parnassus, the 14 Mission, the 22 Fillmore, and the 30 Stockton – which carry over 100,000 passengers each day – and Potrero yard was built in 1915, over 100 years ago, for 100 streetcars at the time. After 100 years, a modern facility is urgently needed. We need a new yard with modern equipment and technology to ensure storage, maintenance, bus cleaning, and staff areas are safe and efficient. A new facility is important to enhance resilience to climate change and natural disasters and to improve our service performance.

**Rosie:** Thanks Licinia.

Now, if you are joining us for this telephone conversation about the future of the Potrero Yard, thank you again. And for those of who have just joined, we're happy to have you. If you have any questions at any point, please dial \*3 and as I said before, you'll be routed to our team to get your question in the queue.

And now Rafe, can you tell us more about the project?

**Rafe:** Sure, so, a piece of the project I have been working on in particular is the housing component of the project, which maybe many of you on the call have heard about. If you're wondering why we're considering housing for this site – which is certainly a unique mix of uses, it's not something we've seen anywhere else in North America – really the genesis of this idea was the Public Lands for Housing program which was started under then-Mayor Lee in 2014, which given the housing crisis in the city –

which of course has only gotten more acute – the idea would be for all city agencies to exhaustively look at their property holdings and see which ones could potentially become housing. Since in the case of this site, we knew that we needed to rebuild the bus yard from the ground up, and since this is a 4.5 acre site in a community that's really been impacted – the Mission – by displacement and by housing pressures, that was really the genesis for the idea for putting housing on the site.

So what we have done, and again this might be familiar to many of you who are on the call, but we really kind of started our engagement in late 2017 and then, in earnest, in a very Potrero-kind-of-specific way in 2018 – in kind of the fall of 2018 – and over an 18 month period, we developed a draft project concept for Potrero Yard based on the feedback that we've received and based on potentially our agency needs for the bus facility. And so, it's our hope, of course, that we're developing a concept that primarily serves Muni need, of course, and supports our workforce, but also reflects the values of the neighborhood and reflects the needs of the neighborhood and is compatible with the neighborhood. We have the benefit of this site, unlike a diesel bus facility, of building housing above an all-electric fleet, which makes that a much more compatible use, of course, and as I said too,

it's a very large site in a very prominent location, and it's really kind of emblematic of the area's transition from industrial uses to mixed uses.

And, of course, the site itself will be a mixed used, so we'll have kind of a production, distribution, and repair function on the site with a new Muni bus facility and then also housing. And, in terms of the housing concept – to those of you who are not familiar with it – the housing concept – and this is the product of a lot of conversations with community, with fellow city agencies, and looking at the project feasibility – is a project size of 575 rental units, and a goal that 50% of the units be affordable at below market rates.

**Rosie:** Thanks, Rafe.

Now callers, I know that many of you will have questions about this, so as a reminder please dial \*3 at any time to ask a question and we'll begin taking your calls live in just a few minutes. Before we get to that, so Rafe, where are we in the process now?

**Rafe:** So, what we've been working on – I mentioned where we were back in the fall of 2019 and developing that project concept, so we've been working on a couple of things. One is filing a project application to the Planning Department which is required for any major project in the city, whether it's private project or whether it's pursued by a city agency, which is the case of course with Potrero Yard. So, we did that in the fall of 2019 and that has enabled us to start doing further technical reviews and environmental reviews under the California Environmental Quality Act. So, that has been ongoing since the fall of 2019, again a very technical process. And then the other milestone, or milestones that we're working towards, is bringing on a development partner to the project.

This is not a project that we would build as a city agency by ourselves, the same way that the City would build a fire station or police station or something like that, because of the complexity of the project, because of the housing component. So, in order to bring a qualified development partner on board and get the best project for the SFMTA and for the City, we're doing a two-stage solicitation process to bring that developer on board.

The first part is called the Request for Qualifications. This introduces the project to the development community and provides essentially a list of experience and qualifications that we want to see in the development partner. And, then, what we would do with that is arrive at a short list of three respondents or three teams, so if we get 10 respondents initially, at the Request for Qualifications stage, that would be dwindled down to three. In the second stage, we would issue a Request for Proposals, which we're anticipating doing several months from now. That would really get down to the specifics of what those three short listed proposers are in fact suggesting for the site and how it meets, obviously, the project's goals.

Another thing that we're working on too, which is a very technical item, as well, is a piece of project specific legislation to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and that would enable us to deliver the project and that is essentially something that is required just because it's an unusual project. A project at this scale with the housing and mixed of uses and the kind of traditional channels for delivering a project don't really apply here. So, this just basically enables us to do this solicitation for a development partner and deliver the project.

**Rosie:** Thanks, Rafe.

Once again, I want to remind the audience to please ask questions. To get your question in, please press \*3. You can do this at any time during the call.

We'll keep moving and bring you on when it's time for question to go live. A reminder to all for you at Adrienne Heim, the SFMTA's Public Information Officer on the project, is also here today. And, Adrienne is going bring everyone up to speed on the outreach and feedback to date. Adrienne, can you share how the public has been engaged so far and how that has shaped the project?

**Adrienne:** Yes, thank you Rosie.

As Rosie said, my name is Adrienne Heim, and I am the Public Information Officer with the project. And from the very beginning, the project team was committed to having an open dialogue with the community and stakeholders because of the complexity of the project and how we're working with various departments within the City family. So, we've engaged with the public and stakeholders – including our own Potrero Yard staff – since the very beginning, holding a number of workshops over the past two years. We've covered community needs and goals, housing, park space, street safety, bus yard operations, urban design, and so much more.

The comments and ideas we've received from these outreach meetings have been valuable and has changed the project for the better. The public input has shaped a number of concerns, like shadows cast on Franklin Square Park, which helped reexamine our proposal and capped the height of the building, affordable housing goals were increased to a goal of 50%, we've had different considerations for ground floor uses and what street they would face to better serve the communities surrounding the facility. We also have a 12 person Potrero Yard Working Group comprised of community members and one front-line Muni operator. They been reviewing our project and communication materials for the past year and a few months and it's been very instrumental with project. And we are actually looking for two more members to join the working group, one would be a transportation advocate and then, a small business within ½ mile of the yard.

So you can apply by going to [SFMTA.com/potreroyard](https://www.sfmta.com/potreroyard) or contact me directly at [Adrienne.Heim@SFMTA.com](mailto:Adrienne.Heim@SFMTA.com).

Thank you.

**Rosie:** Great, thanks for that update, Adrienne.

So Licia, what's the next big milestone for the project, and how can people get involved?

**Licia:** Thanks Rosie. Again, Licia Iberri here.

We'll be releasing the RFQ part-one, if you recall the two parts we mentioned before that Rafe described earlier on the call. We'll be releasing that part one in mid-June as soon as we wrap up the last edits, so potentially as soon as next week. The RFQ phase allows us to collect qualifications of the developer team, so from that we home to create a short list of up to three teams to continue to the Request for Proposals stage.

**Rosie:** Okay, that's great. So, at this point we're going to start opening it up to callers. Looks like we have a few people already. Let's go ahead and when I say your name, you're gonna be live. Here we have JJ. We have you on the line, what's the question you'd like to ask our team?

**JJ:** Thanks so much. It's two if I can, I'll try to make them really quick. The first question is right now we're in a time of clearly great change and we don't know if we're going to need more housing in the future. So, I was wondering if that plan was maybe a little organic, you could switch it up if it turns out that we don't, because then there'll be another big empty building?

**Rafe:** Yeah, so this Rafe Rabalais from the team and that's a great question. I think, you know, you're absolutely right that we're in completely uncharted territory. These are very strange times and in

delivering the project, we do have to be flexible. It's our sincere hope that housing will be a component of the project because – for a couple of reasons – one, we're making essentially a 100-year decision with this site. Once we build it, we're not going – we'll maybe make some tweaks down the line – but this is a long-term decision that we're making. I think that when you look at the history of the Bay Area, certainly since at least the 1980s, if not beforehand, we've had a real crisis of housing, you know? That there's been an ongoing need for housing and affordable housing in the community. So, I think in spite of the ups and downs of the housing market that we're seeing and will see probably for the next several months or even years, for the timeframe that we're looking at for this investment it makes sense to look at housing. That being said, we know that as we get closer and closer to completing the financing for the project and starting construction of the project, that if the market conditions aren't there, the resources aren't there, then we'll have to, you know, have to think twice about that, basically. That's I think part of the strategy of working with the development partner to be nimble, so that if those conditions do change we can still meet the core goal that the SFMTA has of this being a transit project and delivering a high quality bus yard that is also an asset to the community.

**JJ:** Okay. The second part, and just keep this in mind, when Potrero Improvement came along, they kinda forget about us. They forget about everything from, I think, it's about 20<sup>th</sup> Street down. No trees, no, you know, we didn't get beautification – we got bigger sidewalks which is nice but that's kinda it. And, we have a convenience store going up at 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Potrero, from what I understand. The lofts that we got, that's not exactly aesthetically pleasing. So, it, so it's more of the same that's gonna make this not a happier little neighborhood, you know, if it doesn't have public space, if it's too tall, if it's so many things. Just want you to keep that in mind. That makes sense?

**Licinia:** Hi, this is Licinia, just wanted to respond briefly to some of the things you said.

That is that, the concerns that you're voicing, that's part of the reason that we've been trying to find good ways to engage with the neighborhood. And I'm not, I don't recognize your name so I'm not sure if you've participated before, but it would be great if we're getting some new voices through this phone call. I'll say that the development program, kind of the idea of what's going in there – the transit yard and the concept of housing, kinda pending making sure that there is a development team that thinks they can actually build this and make it feasible from a financial perspective. The rest of the project is open for idea generation. So if you're feeling like you really have neighborhood amenities that you're lacking, I encourage you to stay linked into the project or get on mailing list or send us a set of – an email with your ideas of community benefits that you'd like to see there, because we really have an opportunity at bringing on a development partner to try and deliver some of these things on this site. So, you know, this project is kinda bound by the four side walks around it. I don't know – I don't think at this stage we're considering more neighborhood wide improvements, but we could deliver some more amenities on the site itself, so please keep that in mind as you stay engage with the project.

**JJ:** That's great, and I can just contact the general number or email for the project?

**Licinia:** Adrienne, do you wanna...

**Rosie:** Adrienne, do you wanna share your email? That would be great, but also JJ and for any other caller, you can find information on the project website – it's [SFMTA.com/potreroyard](http://SFMTA.com/potreroyard). You can sign up there. And also, when you hang up, if you wanna dial back, \*3 again, you can get to another screener and you give us your email address and we'll be sure to add you as well.

**JJ:** That's great. I'll go straight o the site. Thanks for your time.

**Rosie:** Absolutely, thanks for your call. Alright, let's take another caller. Alright, Roberto, you are live, what is the question you have about the project?

**Roberto:** Yeah, thank you for your time as well. I had a quick question that there's a – maybe it's old information – there's an October FAQ document saying, and I quote, "housing is not a prerequisite to build the yard." Can you address how have the plans changed since then? Is it confirmed that there'll be housing? Because what I am foreseeing in the future development process is kind of like two different beasts, whether this would have housing or not.

**Rafe:** Yeah, so this is Rafe. I would say that the, your question about – could you restate the question? Is the question essentially is that housing a prerequisite for building the yard? Is that the crux?

**Roberto:** Yeah, well, is housing still *not* a prerequisite to building the yard, that I guess would be the simple question.

**Rafe:** I think this gets back to the first question that was asked, where we understand, I think, we could have stated more confidently three months ago – three and a half months ago – what the future looked like than we can now. So, we understand that we have to have a degree of flexibility as the predevelopment work precedes over the next several years. So, you know, conditions have changed for sure but for all the reasons we have stated on the outset, the fact that over several decades, housing – and affordable housing – have been real dire needs for residents of the City of San Francisco and that we have an opportunity with a large site – by San Francisco standards, 4.5 acres that is in a centrally located area that is across from a park, that is in walking distance from shops and services as well that is conveniently located relative to transit – that this is kind of an opportunity that we don't want to pass up. So, you know, I would hate to say "prerequisite" you know, especially given how dynamic the conditions are, in the world right now and in the housing market. But again, it's our strong hope that that will be a principle component of the project.

**Roberto:** But, sorry, just to follow up, the [RFQ] you will let the developers decide that? Or, how will we reach this decision?

**Rafe:** Yeah, no, the [RFQ], our assumption is that housing will be a component of the project. I would think it would only be under really tiring circumstances, during the predevelopment phase, after the developer is picked, that we would maybe go down an alternative path. So, that is kind of our approach right now.

**Roberto:** Got it, thank you.

**Rosie:** Alright, thank you, Rafe, and thank you, Roberto. We're going to move on to the next one. Actually, before we take our next call, let's take a moment to do a quick little poll. We have a number of people on, and we'd love to know a little bit more about you. So, for this poll, please press 1 if you are from the community and this is your first time attending a Potrero Yard event. Press 2 if this is not your first time attending a Potrero Yard event. Again, this is a poll. You can either press 1 or 2. Press 1 if you are from the community and this is your first time attending a Potrero Yard event and press 2 if this is not your first time. Alright, thank you so much. For our next caller...

**Rafe:** Do we want to give a summary?

**Rosie:** Oh, I just clicked Sarah live. So, we're going to give people a few moments to press 1 or 2, and then we can let everybody know.

**Rafe:** Okay, cool.

**Rosie:** Sarah, what's your question?

**Sarah:** Oh, hi. First of all, thank you for this wonderful presentation. My husband and I are registered voters in District 9 and we are very, very excited about the entirety of the project. We are also truly excited about the housing element of the project. I believe that, you know, there is a very clear and well-documented housing crisis in the state of California as well as in San Francisco, and that housing will be a critical part of restoring our economy and bringing in all of the workers and families that are needed to rebuild San Francisco. Unequivocally, we support all parts of the project. My question was, this is my first – and my husband's and I's first – time getting a chance to be involved in this process and so, our question was, as far as the housing element, what was the maximum capacity for units on the site? And, what were any available incentives that the state or that local incentives that were may have had for the maximum allowable units on the site? And, how does that compare with the current projected capacity of units on the site? What is the difference between the two numbers? And, is there any way that the maximum units could be expanded, using state or local bonus incentives?

**Licinia:** Hi Sarah, and all the rest of you. Thank you for your questions, those are great questions.

We have been working on an overall analysis of the site and trying to answer exactly those questions you just posed for the last, I'd say probably 18 months or so. And, really, where we started – so, the current zoning of the site is P, Public, so that doesn't currently allow housing, in combination with the transit facility. And, also then, the height – the allowable height – is 65 ft. When we did our first programming analysis, just for the bus facility, we had a pretty good understanding that just the bus facility itself was going to exceed that height, the height of 65 ft. So, we knew if we were going to include housing, we would really need to look at significantly more height there. At that point, we went directly to SF Planning Department to have an open conversation about the rebuild and to talk to them about other work that they had done with the community and the neighborhood. At that time, the Mission Action Plan was just wrapping up, and as part of the Mission Action Plan, sorry – my four year old just joined me – but as part of the Mission Action Plan, there are several sites that had been analyzed for development potential and Potrero Yard was not. But there was, at that time, understood that a 150 ft in height would be the maximum at the Planning Department thought that they could support, based on prior work with the community. So, that's really where we started. Trying to fit residential units within that envelope – between 150 ft and the top of the bus yard. And, then, just with a bunch of other considerations on the site – urban design, the shadow on Franklin Square, and the overall massing of the building – Rafe... do you want to pick up from here for a second? Thank you.

**Rafe:** Yeah, so the conversations, basically the conversation between the Planning Department, this dated back to the very beginning of the feasibility work on the project. And, you know, as Licinia said, we would have to change the zoning of the property and reconceptualize it just to fit the bus facility. So, then it becomes really, a kind of question, of more art than science. You can fit a whole lot of housing units if you were building, you know, 50 story towers on the site. But then, you know, it is kind of – it's a question of what is compatible with the neighborhood and what is going to stress the neighborhood? What is going to be aesthetically compatible? That kind of thing. And, basically, you know, the drivers of the capacity on the site were, I'd say, three main things. One is the overall height, kind of at its highest point, and that was really driven by compatibility. So, at what we're looking at right now in the concept design for the site is about 150 ft at its tallest point, which is comparable to some of the taller structures in the immediate vicinity, it is definitely in the upper bounds of what you see in the immediate area. The second factor, I would say, is shadow on Franklin Square. We wanted to reduce or minimize shadow as much as possible on Franklin Square because of regulations that we have in place that have been approved by the voters of San Francisco, to minimize shadow on public parks. And, then the third factor is really, just standard architectural considerations, where you have to

have light and air for all of your units, you know, you have to have windows for bedrooms. That kind of thing. That basically again, established the upper bound on the number of units that the site can accommodate, and that's basically how we arrived at, you know, the 525-575 figure. And, I would say and emphasize that this is also something that was very informed by community feedback. We had in December 2018 and February 2019 a series of community workshops as well as just kind of one-on-one conversations with community members, stakeholder groups, and neighborhood groups about the site and it was kind of a question about synthesizing all of that feedback into something that would work for the site. Does that answer your question?

**Sarah:** Yes, it does. We are so extremely excited. We may not have been a part of the things but I really hope that people were expressing an overall welcoming tone, and that all efforts to make it a supportive site where new neighbors are welcomed and embraced and interested in the community will be a priority, when considering the housing construction on this project. We are extremely excited, and it sounds like a lot of professional consideration has been put into the project and we are thrilled for it moving forward. And, I believe that we represent a large group of people who would be very open and receptive to the housing element being a thriving and a future-forward factor in looking at the City's overall path forward. Thank you!

**Rafe:** Thank you.

**Rosie:** Thank you, Sarah. Thank you so much for your questions and thank you for your support of the project. It's great to have you here.

Alright, to give folks an update on the poll that we did, if you did want to answer it now, you can as well. The question we asked was press 1 if you are a member of the community and this is your first time attending a Potrero Yard event or press 2 if this is not your first time attending a Potrero Yard event. And, right now, it looks like 30% of you are new folks. So thank you so much for coming. We are excited to hear more voices, and to have you join us for this conversation. And, thank you as well to everyone to who this is not their first time. We really appreciate everyone who has been involved in the project and continues to be through the duration of it.

Okay, so moving on to our question, next up we have Jennifer, you are live. What is the question you have for us today?

**Jennifer:** Hi, good morning. Thank you for taking the time. One of my questions was about the beginning of the podcast, or meeting here, that you mentioned there was still two available slots on the committee for this Potrero Project. One of them was one that I signed up, but was told that all the slots were filled. My family has a business and we've had a business for about 32 years here on Potrero Hill and we own three houses right up the street here. The Potrero Yard is in our backyard so we would definitely love to be a part of that committee, but we were told that all the slots had been filled. But now I'm hearing that it is open. It would be awesome if we could be reconsidered to be a part of them, and this committee and helping decide, you know, the important things. Because at the end of the day, we all have to deal with, you know, the outcome of the project. Some support it more than others, and I do think there is a need in San Francisco, that there is a need for affordable housing, but I also think that Potrero Hill has – and the Lower Mission Area – has done their part as contributing to the affordable housing. There is a beautiful Muni yard down by the Marina, you know, so there are a few questions but basically, that first question was, just kind of getting at, you know, my initial request to be a part of the community project was denied because, I guess, all of the slots were filled. So, we were just looking to get on that, if we could?

**Rosie:** Alright, Jennifer. Thank you so much. Adrienne, if you could take this one?



**Adrienne:** Yeah, sure. Jennifer, nice to hear from you. I think we met during the August event at Franklin Square. Definitely, just based on people's work and the state of where we are right now, some of our members had to drop out. I'm more than happy to connect with you and I do have your contact information, and just have a conversation with you about how to incorporate you into the group.

**Jennifer:** That would be awesome and thank you. I think I, I'm sorry, I forgot my second question. If I remember, I'll chime back in. But that is the first one I definitely wanted to get out there.

**Adrienne:** Oh, for sure.

**Rosie:** Thanks Jennifer, and absolutely if you have another question, please press \*3 to dial back in and we'll go ahead and get that in the queue as well.

**Jennifer:** Thank you.

**Rosie:** Thanks. Alright so, moving on, we have a couple of questions about having housing above the facility. Basically, and perhaps Rafe and Licinia, if you two want to take this one. We have a couple of questions asking, if it's appropriate to have housing above a bus facility?

**Licinia:** So, yeah, this – as I said earlier in the introduction to the project, the Yard was built for streetcars which were electric and was transitioned to electric trolley buses around 1950, which are all electric. And our future plans for all of our facilities, starting with Potrero Yard, are to convert to battery-electric buses. So, because we have had a zero-emission fleet since as Rafe mentioned, the beginning of time, we don't have any toxic emissions, conflicts, or health hazards to really worry about in combining housing on this site. So, this is a really great opportunity and one of the reasons we really moved forward in a kind of untraditional set of land uses. Also, we understand that there could be other perceived conflicts or actual real conflict like the noise, 24-hour nature of our operations, some folks might be concerned about things like vibration, or just having a lot of people there. And, those are real concerns and something that we will definitely be posing in the RFQ and RFP to our prospective development partners about looking for ways to design mitigations to those kinds of conflicts. So, it's true that we do work 24 hours a day, and that's really needed to keep our transit service operating and so, we hope that by having full-in, closed yard and bringing our maintenance base inside so that the buses aren't circulating on the streets as much, we can really lessen a bunch of the impacts that folks around the Yard might be feeling with this new project. And also, keep the folks who are living in the new residential units from being negatively impacted from our function downstairs.

**Rosie:** Thank you so much, that's a super helpful answer. Now we are going to take a slightly different turn. Not project specific, but I guess it is. About the impact of COVID-19. If you could let the audience know a little bit more about how COVID-19 is being handled by the agency and also, how is it impacting this project?

**Rafe:** Well, I'll talk briefly and Adrienne, I know you probably have your finger on the pulse of agency-wide impacts as much as anybody. But I think the key thing to distinguish, in terms of COVID-19 impact is, the kind of short term and long term. You know that in the short-term, it's been incredibly disruptive. We've seen, I don't know the exact figure, but I'd venture to guess, 90% to 95% plus decline in ridership. As many of you know, we've temporarily shut the Market Street Subway and rail service there so that's obviously had a tremendous impact on us as an agency. I think that, as an employee of the SFMTA, that I would really emphasize is that – and we don't always do everything right, of course – but we think that something the agency is taking very seriously is the health and safety of our employees too. So, you know, we've seen a very low caseload for an employer and

agency that has 6,200 employees. So, I think personally, I appreciate that too. I would just quickly say that in the long-term too for all the tremendous disruption we're seeing to transit, again, what we're planning here with Potrero is a 100-year investment. We know that we have, I think it's the second densest city in the United States, after New York City, here in San Francisco, and that transit remains an equitable way to move people around the city and an environmentally sustainable way, and really, you know, the only way to effectively move the number of people we have and the finite amount of area that we have, in an efficient matter. I think the long-term goal has really remained the same for this project in spite of what we can acknowledge has been a major disruption.

**Adrienne:** Hi, this is Adrienne, Public Information Officer. I would echo Rafe's comments. This project is securing Muni operations for this current generation and future generations. It's important that we have facilities that can support, again like Licinia stated, the six routes – about 14% of our total ridership – that is operated out of Potrero Yard. If people want to get the latest updates on how we are responding to COVID, you would go to [SFMTA.com/COVID19](https://www.sfmta.com/COVID19) or [SFMTA.com/COVID](https://www.sfmta.com/COVID). Right now, we are working on how to bring back parts of our transit service. In March, we stopped the Muni Metro Rail so that we could move our staff into maintaining our buses, the cleanliness of our buses, for the safety of our customers and for our staff. So, yes, we are working on that. There are new developments every day. We have the Closed Street Program that is a living project and we are always requesting suggestions, and we also have our Taxi Credit so that for people who are 65 or older, go to 311 or [SFMTA.com/COVID](https://www.sfmta.com/COVID) to apply to get credit for taxi services.

**Rosie:** Alright, thank you Adrienne. It looks like we have another caller. It looks like Jennifer is back in for another one. Here we go. Bringing you live again. And, what was your question?

**Jennifer:** Oh, I'm sorry, um, my first question was what was the... So, I know that the building and the Muni Yard is a historical landmark and I wanted to... that's really important to me as a San Franciscan, fourth generation, to keep the history of our City and all the beauty that goes with it. I wanted to know if there was anything that you guys were doing to protect that piece of that building as a historical site? And the second question was what made the – whoever was making the decisions: Muni – what made them focus on Potrero Yard in general? Because I've driven around the city, and there's a lot of other Muni yards that are lower densely populated areas. I was just, you know, wondering why we choose this site?

**Rosie:** These are great questions, Jennifer. Since you have two, let's start with the first one about the historical landmark.

**Jennifer:** Thank you.

**Licinia:** Hi Jennifer, this is Licinia. I have been working with the Planning Department on the Environmental Review, getting that started. And, one of the things that's required for Environmental Review – sometimes you might hear it called CEQA, the California Environmental Quality Act or like EIR, Environmental Impact Report, just so you know, those are kind of all environmental analysis related words – and so, we will be preparing an EIR for this site and one of the things we will be looking at, through that EIR, is impacts to cultural resources, including historic buildings. The way that environmental laws in California are written, essentially, if you change any part of the building, for new use or add on to it, you are creating what is called "Significant Impact" on the building and so we do anticipate that there will be a significant impact to the existing building. We have done some analysis of the existing site to see if the building could be maintained. As we've said earlier, the building itself is over 100 years old. You are correct that it has been identified as being eligible for the California register of historic places, so it is a historic building by that classification. But the building itself does have significant structural issues and we do not expect it to perform very well in case of an earthquake. And, so, the kind of costs needed, with a building that is this old to comply with modern

standards, are very high in addition. One of the really big things that we are trying to solve for in this rebuild is really improving the spaces for our employees. The program of that building, as it was built for a 100 street cars with far fewer operators and employees in the building, just really isn't enough space in that building for the number of employees that we really need to serve, and just to provide quality space for our employees. As you might imagine, Muni operators and mechanics have pretty stressful jobs, particularly if they are running some of our more heavily used lines. There are, at times, lots of riders, kind of rowdy riders sometimes, and so our operators really do need a place to renew their mental health in between shifts. And, so one of our priorities is really opening up and brightening the space for operators, which the current building doesn't allow. At this time, to be transparent with you and the rest of the callers, we are assuming that the building would be removed in its entirety. But that said, through the Environmental Impact Report analysis, we will need to analyze whether it is possible to keep a certain portion of the building or whole building in place and analyze how that does or does not meet the objectives of the rest of the project. And so, we are in the process of preparing that alternative analysis now. And that will be disclosed as a part of the draft EIR. We believe that the draft EIR will be available by the end of this year or the beginning of next year of 2021. So, Rafe, do you want to take the second question about why Potrero first?

**Rosie:** Quickly, since we are close to the end of our time together, Jennifer, we are going to keep you on but I'm going to put you on mute briefly and in between questions, let's ask another poll of the audience. Alright, callers, we are going to have a poll with a few options so let's listen to all of them before you make your first selection. And it might be tough because you can only make one. Our question to you is, what amenities do you consider to be the most important to include on the site? Of these options, you can choose one. Press 1 for community space. Press 2 for childcare. Press 3 for open space. 4 for community retail. Press 5 for art. Or, 6 for none. Again, the question is, what amenities do you consider to be the most important to include on the site? And, again, press 1 for community space. Press 2 for childcare. Press 3 for open space. 4 for community retail. 5 for art. Or, press 6 for none. While that's taking a moment, go right ahead Rafe. I'm going to put back on Jennifer.

**Rafe:** As we're waiting for response, I can answer the question about why this location for housing. And, I would say a couple of things. Right off the bat, you know, not to gloss over details too much or anything. As with any land use decision, it is just as much as art as science. You could get a bunch of people in the room and get a bunch of different opinions about what is appropriate for a certain location and what is not appropriate. For this, I would say, this thought of housing on the site was really guided by a number of things. As I mentioned on the outset, we're following city policy that has been in place since 2014 to look at public sites that are underutilized as potential locations for housing and, you know, this is not just a policy that has been in place for the SFMTA but for example, there is the SFPUC that is pursuing housing development on Balboa Reservoir, close to City College. There are other city agencies that have been looking at housing at their locations. You know, so that is one bit of policy guidance. In terms of this being an appropriate location, first, it is a large site. You don't have too many 4.5 acres sites in the city so that is one consideration. Another is that, it is conveniently located. It is within walking distance to services, amenities, across the street from a park. And, a critical element too is that it's centrally located and well-served by transit. And, so you know, the city has a number of policies in place and this is consistent with regional policies - basically, established by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission - to essentially concentrate development in locations that are well-served by transit. And, you know, one of the goals being as we grow, as a city, because we have continued to grow and the region has continued to grow, that people be in location that they can walk, bike, take transit. We think this is one of those locations. The City has a goal, just along those lines, that really in a very short period of time, that 80% of travel trips be by sustainable modes of transportation, so those are things like walking, biking, and taking transit. So, if we are going to do

that and accommodate some growth at the same time, then centrally located areas are areas to potentially concentrate on. The last thing I would say too, is that, you know, this is not a decision we made in a vacuum. I mentioned earlier, the outreach events at the end of 2018 and at the beginning of 2019. At the February 2019 event, one of the questions we posed to the public, generally, was, what do you think about this idea? Is this crazy that we're thinking about this? Do you think housing would work for this site? Again, you could get 100 people in the room and get 100 different answers and it doesn't make any of them wrong. But, based on the responses that we got at that meeting, we heard just overwhelming support for housing. 90% plus of the people who attended those meetings, you know, supported the idea of housing on this site. So, that is a very lengthy explanation to say that those are all the things we took into consideration to consider housing at this site.

**Jennifer:** I guess it just would have been nice to have had a meeting with the people that own the property. I guess there are a lot of people who rent around here. But it is the families who own the property that at the end of the day that are going to have to live with it, because we are the ones that are going to come back to our house when we retire and, you know, so there has been a lot of community input, which is amazing. But, maybe, one of the things should be a little more focus to when it comes to having to deal with, do I want 170 story building in my backyard? Not to mention, with COVID, I don't know – and I know it's not something that we're going to be dealing with forever – but our lives are going to change and being in a highly populated area is not what we're ever going to go back to. So, I truly hope you guys think about that, and I'm sure you guys are. You are doing an amazing job, and I want to say thank you. And, that's all.

**Rosie:** Thanks, Jennifer. We definitely appreciate that insight and we look to have all of our stakeholders, including property owners. But, as we are getting short on time, we're almost done here. Just one last question. Oh, sorry, before our last question, I wanted to let everyone know about our poll results. We asked what amenities you consider to be most important on the site. Please, if you haven't answered yet, please go ahead. Press 1 for community space. Press 2 for childcare. 3 for open space. 4 for community retail. 5 for art. And 6 for none. And so, you know, the results we have right now. The big winner is for community retail, a little over 40%, followed by childcare, and then community space followed by open space. This is wonderful feedback, so thank you to everyone who participated. Since we are actually wrapping up on time, let's start closing this out. Licinia, what's the next big milestone for the project and how can people get involved?

**Licinia:** Great, Rosie. I think we talked about that right before the questions, but I'll review that one more time. We are releasing the RFQ – the Request for Qualifications, part one of the part two procurement process that we mentioned earlier. The RFQ phase allows us to collect qualifications and from there, we hope to create a short list of up to three teams.

**Rosie:** Okay, that's great. And, Adrienne, you also wanted to share your contact information as well as the website?

Adrienne: Right, for all the new folks that are on this call, I would urge you to subscribe to our updates so you know where we are in the process and you know when we're going to have events and so you can provide comments by email. So, go to [SFMTA.com/potreroyard](https://www.sfmta.com/potreroyard) and you can also email me at [Adrienne.Heim@sfmta.com](mailto:Adrienne.Heim@sfmta.com).

Rosie: Great, thank you, Adrienne. And to build on where we are at in the project and where folks can continue to get involved, as we've said earlier, in the fall, we'll take the three teams – who qualify from the RFQ – to the RFP stage, the Request for Proposal. And as we lead up to the RFP, there will be more community events like this one and virtual opportunities to engage and share your feedback about what should be included in the RFP to help us pick the best development partner to rebuild Potrero Yard. As Adrienne mentioned, please go to our website and sign up for the email list and

check the site for project updates. Another thing that you can do is that we have a survey going via text. If you would like to answer some survey questions for us, text Potrero to 415-599-8662. This is also located on the website. So once again, if you would like to participate in the survey, you can text the word Potrero to 415-599-8662. And, with that, we're at time. I want to thank everyone for being here. We really appreciated everyone who participated – in the polls, asking questions, as well as all of you who have listened in. Please get in touch with us, our doors are always open, and we would love to hear from you.

**Licinia:** Thank you to everyone.

**Rafe:** I would also say thanks, as unusual an event as this is, we would prefer, of course, all things being equal, to literally shake hands and say hello to people and answer questions in person and have cool visuals and all that kind of stuff. But, in kind of unprecedented circumstances, this is us trying to communicate with folks as best as possible so we appreciate everyone's participation.

**Rosie:** Alright, well thank you everyone. Appreciate your time and once again, for project updates, go to the website at [www.SFMTA.com/potreroyard](http://www.SFMTA.com/potreroyard). Thanks and have a great weekend!

**End**