



## **Potrero Yard Reimagined – Fall/Winter 2020 Virtual Update and Conversation**

Saturday, December 5, 2020, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and

Saturday, December 12, 2020, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting, Meeting ID: 886 5578 0345

*Note – The meeting minutes capture the overall tone of the group’s discussion and is not meant to be an exact transcription*

### **SFMTA Staff:**

Rafe Rabalais

Adrienne Heim

Bonnie Jean von Krogh

Stanley Ng

### **Consultants:**

Rosie Dilger

Jenny Zhou

Lizbeth Maldonado

Lisbet Sunshine (December 5)

Marianne Glaser (December 12)

### **Purpose of the Meeting**

*To provide project updates to the public about the Potrero Yard Modernization Project in Spanish and English languages.*

### **Presentation**

*These meetings were provided in Spanish and English languages. The presentation included information on the project background, Draft Environmental Impact Report, the Request for Qualifications (RFQ), public engagement updates, and public engagement tools including the Request for Proposal (RFP) Survey and the virtual tour. They also included public polls with a texting option,*

*Please find links to presentations and the virtual tour below:*

[English Slide Deck](#)

[Spanish Slide Deck](#)

[Virtual Tour](#)

### **Questions & Answers**

#### **Question: How did you get to the 50 percent affordable target?**

Rafe Rabalais: We did an initial viability test and used a team of consultants to run the numbers and look at the development. We assessed that having 50 percent affordability would still be attractive to a developer. Then, we took it to the community to get their response to it, the community wanted lots of housing and well beyond 25 percent affordable housing on the site. At that point, it was about looking



at financial sources to see what type of housing (i.e. market rate and affordable housing) could be created on top of the yard.

We had a conversation with the [Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development](#) and the [San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development](#) and identified a certain subsidy level to get the project concept to the 50 percent base level. Since then, we've heard from multiple stakeholders to find multiple ways to go higher than 50 percent. With that said, the main priority for this project and for the agency is for the bus facility to be built to serve our Muni customers and support the essential workers who work inside this facility.

**Question: How has COVID-19 impacted the project?**

Rafe Rabalais: COVID-19 has presented several challenges to every transit agency across the country. We first went through a process of determining whether this is a project that should go forward. The answer is yes. Despite the short-term disruptions that COVID-19 has presented, we recognize the medium and long-term demand for a newer, safer, and more efficient bus facility. This translates to better Muni service for San Francisco to function and transit will need to be a priority.

Bonnie Jean von Krogh: It's also important to note that Potrero Yard is serving some of our busiest bus routes during COVID-19, the 14 Mission is one the San Francisco Municipal Transit Agency's (SFMTA's) busiest. It is transporting essential workers. Making sure that these routes are supported is critical. Staff that work at the yard such as operators and maintenance crews are all essential workers. We need to make sure that they have a safe place to work.

**Question: Why do some of the drawings show power lines above ground and with poles? Does the current plan include putting the power lines underground?**

Rafe Rabalais: We plan to clean up the overhead lines and poles to free up space. We plan to attach it to the building so there won't be poles. It's not a requirement for the utility to be underground and it is mostly about cost.

**Question: For the design sketch that Rafe showed, which street does it represent?**

Rafe Rabalais: The rendering is of Mariposa Street, so there won't be a bike facility shown. There is a plan for how the street would look like, but it will be further refined. We are now anticipating protected bike lanes.



**Question: There is uncertainty about the Muni fleet and extreme uncertainty about the housing market with many being abandoned or empty, so why pursue this now and not delay the project or downsize it?**

Rafe Rabalais: We have considered it and had internal discussions. The long-term trends indicate that there will be population growth and increasing demand on the infrastructure. So, this project is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to leverage the construction at the site to ensure Muni operations stay on path now and into the future and contribute to the City's housing goals. The major investment is still five years off, so the demographics and the future will be uncertain.

We are committing pre-development dollars, such as the planning, but the major investments will not happen until 2026. We are continuing to look at the housing, if it looks like the market conditions are not favorable, then we would look to downsizing the project. That's not something we want to do; we want a big affordable housing component for the project.

**Comment: In my neighborhood, I've been seeing families with eleven people living with one bathroom. They are now trying to move into those temporarily vacant units.**

Rafe Rabalais: The rise in vacancy helps some people have greater purchasing power. However, we've heard that people that don't have that purchasing power really require subsidies. We have been working with the Potrero Yard Neighborhood Working Group to see what each affordable unit should look like. Not every unit would look the same. We have heard is that the units should include families that have been displaced, especially in Districts 9 and 10.

**Question: Do you think the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's work-from-home mandate proposal might increase the need for housing in San Francisco?**

Rafe Rabalais: Sixty percent of people work from home, so the demand is certainly affected. No matter what, creating new housing is still good for the community.

Adrienne Heim: Not only is it important for our Muni customers, but it's also important because the agency can provide the staff with what they need.

Bonnie Jean von Krogh: It's not only to accommodate more people, but it is also helping the essential workers now and improving the yard to make it safer and more efficient.

**Question: What about the bus facility itself and what does that mean for the staff working on the ground?**

Adrienne Heim: For the workers at this facility, they need improved conditions, proper equipment, and proper rest areas for respite. Not only is that important to Muni customers, but it is also important that we make sure we support the staff that are there day in and day out.



**Question: Has SFMTA done public outreach via Nextdoor and Facebook?**

Adrienne Heim: The SFMTA does not have a Nextdoor account. There is further discussion about Nextdoor. We do use [Facebook](#).

**Question: How is this project impacted by climate change and how is this project going to address the issues?**

Rafe Rabalais: First, we would support sustainable modes of transportation. Second, the building should be resilient to climate change; anything from wildfires to rainier seasons. The idea is to build resiliency around those climate changes. For example, stormwater management: instead of stormwater discharging into the Bay, we would have it retained onsite to reduce demand on the storm drain system around San Francisco. Another example would be around heating and cooling; we don't know how hot our summers are going to be or how cold our winters are going to be. We would incorporate passive heating and cooling to reduce demand on the electrical grid. We would need to meet the [LEED Gold](#) design standards.

**Question: How do we transition engagement back into the physical? It's not prolific for Latin communities to use Zoom as a platform.**

Adrienne Heim: We tabled at a few events last year, such as Sunday Streets and Fiesta de las Americas on 24<sup>th</sup> Street. We also tabled at Carnaval during Labor Day weekend this past September. It was a COVID-19 testing and groceries event. We will continue in-person tabling when people feel safe enough to engage with folks. Nothing can replace physical interaction, but there are other options like traditional communications outlets (e.g. radio and newspaper).