

June 2014: Pier 70 Ballot Measure

Summary: The proposed “Union Iron Works Housing, Waterfront Parks, Jobs and Preservation Initiative” has two components: first, a policy statement outlining public benefit requirements for any future development on the 28-acre project site at Pier 70; and, second, as required by Proposition B, approved by the voters in June 2014, a legislative amendment to increase the height limit at Pier 70 from 40 feet to 90 feet, which is no taller than the highest point on an historic building currently at the site.

Project Description: As currently proposed, the Pier 70 project would include:

- Between 1,000 and 2,000 total residential units. A majority of those homes would be rentals, and 30% would be affordable to low- and middle-income individuals
- Between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000 square feet of new commercial and office space
- Nine acres of waterfront parks, playgrounds and recreation, and create permanent public access to the waterfront by setting back all buildings at least 100 feet from the shoreline
- Rehabilitation of three historic buildings, each included in the Union Iron Works Historic District
- Space for arts, cultural, small-scale manufacturing, local retail and neighborhood services
- Provision of new studio space, at reduced rents, for Noonan Building tenants
- Commitment to hire local San Franciscans for 30% of construction jobs
- Commitment to work with the community and City to identify transit improvements to support neighborhood growth.
- Development of urban and architectural design guidelines that will encourage a range of building heights between two and nine stories (though none taller than 90 feet) and promote high quality design of buildings and parks
- \$200 million in infrastructure investment, including raising the grade of the site more than three feet to protect against sea level rise. Taking an adaptive management approach, there will also be project-generated private funding mechanisms to perform additional infrastructure improvements, should they be necessary.

Public Benefits: The proposed ballot measure states that any future development plan for the 28 acre portion of Pier 70 should include the following components:

- 30% of all homes offered below market rate, affordable to low- and middle-income individuals (this is more than double the amount of affordable housing generally required by the City)
- A majority of all units constructed offered as rental housing
- Space for local manufacturing, retail and services
- Provision of new studio space, at reduced rents, for Noonan Building tenants
- Nine acres of waterfront parks, playgrounds and recreation
- Rehabilitation of three historic buildings, each included in the Union Iron Works Historic District
- Work with the community and City to identify transit improvements to support neighborhood growth.

Process: The ballot measure states that the environmental review process under CEQA and all necessary planning and design review will be thoroughly adhered to and respected. The proposed height increase in the ballot measure does not take effect until a development plan for the site has been vetted and adopted. If a development plan is never approved, the height increase never takes effect. Forest City has hosted multiple community workshops and engagement events including a craft fair, design charettes, open houses, and community meetings.

Disclaimer: The San Francisco Parks Alliance is currently seeking funding from the developer, Forest City, to help fund the Blue Greenway project and its Master Planning process.



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SFPA Recommendation: The Pier 70 development designates generous space to parks and open space in addition to 30% on-site affordable housing. The Park Policy Council was encouraged to learn that the developer, Forest City, is known for creating meaningful projects while genuinely engaging the community. The staff and Park Policy Council see the public benefit of the Pier 70 development and Forest City's quality of engagement to be worth the San Francisco Parks Alliance's support. The Park Policy Council was impressed by the extensive amount of community outreach conducted by Forest City. Through the various design and planning outreach events, the community's concerns and opinions have been heard and taken into consideration. There is a large amount of community support for the project, including the Dogpatch Neighborhood Association. SFPA staff and Park Policy Council recommend to the SFPA Board of Directors to officially support the Pier 70 development and the 90 feet height increase ballot measure.