



# San Francisco Tomorrow

## Working to Protect the Urban Environment

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*Will you want to live in San Francisco – Tomorrow?*

### A NEW INITIATIVE TO CONTROL WATERFRONT HEIGHTS

Two-thirds of San Francisco voters [resoundingly rejected the Port's plans for the 8 Washington luxury high-rise](#) condos at the ballot box last November, saying they wanted **No Wall on the Waterfront**. Unfortunately, the San Francisco Port Commission and people at City Hall so far aren't listening. They are continuing to encourage developers to build high-rise waterfront luxury condo towers and are moving forward with plans to rubber-stamp a series of "waterfront walls" for high-rise luxury condos and office towers up and down our waterfront. That's why environmental, neighborhood, and community leaders have come together to sponsor a new initiative for the June 2014 San Francisco ballot, [The Waterfront Height Limit Right To Vote Act](#).

According to the impartial summary of the initiative by the San Francisco City Attorney, *"This measure would prevent any City agency or officer from permitting development on the waterfront to exceed the height limit in effect as of January 1, 2014, unless the City's voters approve the height limit increase."*

### BRING BACK OUR RECYCLING CENTERS

It took many years of lobbying by California Against Waste and other environmentalists for Sacramento to pass what is known as the "Bottle Bill". This bill passed in the State Legislature in 1986, and required that all supermarkets in California have recycling centers within a specified area around their store.

By requiring voter approval before any waterfront height increases can go through, the Waterfront Initiative will ensure that any future 8 Washington luxury condo projects that propose height limit increases will have to be approved by the voters. Passage of this measure would instead encourage developers to put forth reasonable projects that make sense for our waterfront, to be transparent and make the case for their plans to earn public support.

There will be petitions available to sign and pick up at 15 Columbus Avenue every day until the February 3rd deadline to qualify for the June ballot. Jon Golinger, Campaign Director for No Wall on the Waterfront, asks San Franciscans to come together again to qualify this Waterfront Initiative for the ballot and give the people the last word on height limits on the rest of the waterfront.

Now the State Lands Commission is weighing in, stating that the waterfront comes under its jurisdiction as city land that was once under water, and that waterfront zoning cannot be subject to a ballot measure voted by the people.

This legislation worked beautifully until a new wave of San Franciscans whose new affluence got in the way of their compassion began to complain about the recycling centers; it didn't help that their curbside trash dumpsters were being raided and the contents turned in for cash. They saw recycling centers as hangouts for the less privileged in our society. Owners of million dollar condos were disturbed to see these centers from their windows, for instance, Whole Foods condo project across from Market Street Safeway.

The hope of these new residents and building owners was that closing recycling centers would diminish recycling theft from bins set out for Recology pickup. It hasn't happened. What did happen is that the same people who pilfered recyclables now have to walk miles with their goods to the Bayshore Buyback Center.

When people are poor they are going to find a way to support themselves either legally or illegally. Having an outlet for selling recycling materials is far preferable than being hit over the head to take one's purse or wallet, thinks SFT Board member Denise D'Anne. Closing recycling centers also means job opportunities lost, she notes. For instance, Safeway at Market had three paid staff and HANC lost 10 paid staff.

Some of us who are complaining today may find ourselves in the same situation for which we are condemning others. Our present economic situation is slowly reducing our standard of living and marginalizing more and more of us, says Denise. It is disturbing to note that we have become a people that lack compassion for others and call in enforcement to criminalize and marginalize those we deem unworthy to live among us.

## **SaveSFMuni** reacts to the Mayor's Transportation Plan

**SaveSFMuni** has completed an evaluation of the transportation plan recently released by the Mayor's Transportation Task Force( TTF). SFMuni believes that it is little more than an elaborate ruse designed to get San Franciscans to approve a politically-motivated conglomeration of projects and fails both to address pressing public transit needs and to reduce city traffic congestion.

Considering the fact that most TTF members were selected to help push the desired funding measures past the voters next November rather than to seriously address San Francisco's transportation problems, this is not surprising. Of the 45-member Task Force, 17 were local officials, largely answerable to the Mayor, three were members of the Board of Supervisors, at least 11 represented business interests, two came from the School District, two from Labor, two to help raise State and federal funds, four from transportation organizations other than Muni, and one from the Transit Rider's Union. None of San Francisco's environmental groups, or transit advocacy groups or neighborhood groups or coalitions of neighborhoods were represented. Several members represented organizations angling for a generous slice of the pie. It does not appear that even a single one of the 45

members possessed the knowledge of Muni, experience, independence and commitment required to develop the long-range transportation plan San Francisco needs.

The result of the effort was eminently predictable: a slapped-together \$2.955 billion "plan" - funded by a General Obligation bond issue, sales tax extension and Vehicle License fee increase - consisting of 27 often vaguely-described projects. The plan breaks down as follows:

16.8% of the total to be raised to fund the TTF's \$2.955 billion "plan" - \$496 million - would go to upgrading and expanding Muni's fleet of LRV's and buses. Considering the fact that this would amount to just 10% of what the SFMTA's Transportation Director revealed two years ago would be needed to address Muni's fleet upgrading and expansion requirements, the allocation is inadequate.

Another 32.3% of the total - \$954 million - would be directed toward the SFMTA's Transit Effectiveness Project (TEP) and several other Muni capital programs. The TEP makes a number of route changes and talks of Muni-only lanes, but in fact fails to do anything about Muni's increasing difficulty in getting its vehicles reliably through city streets.

Moreover, as acknowledged by the SFMTA's Project Manager, the TEP project fails to take into account or otherwise respond to the 90,000 new housing

units and 190,000 new office jobs projected to add to San Francisco's infrastructure problems by 2040. Several of the other projects listed in the TTF

report are described in only general terms and are consequently too vague to evaluate.

*(continued on page three)*

## Secondary units are back!

### Are they a solution to the affordable housing crisis in San Francisco?

But think about it: Secondary units that already exist cannot be legalized and then called "new" units just because they've suddenly become legal.

New secondary units sprinkled here and there would be "spot zoning", which is illegal.

There is a zoning category called RH-1(S) which allows legal creation of small secondary units (S) if a new district is created. By applying for a Code change to create an RH-1(S) district, four or five adjacent property owners at a time could build an "in-law" which would not be considered "spot zoning". But it has been hard to find anyone who wants to apply in this way for legal permission to create secondary units. Their property taxes would be increased; they would have to report rental income, besides. The argument that constructing a new

secondary unit would result in an *affordable* unit is ill-founded (there would be no rent control to secure then as affordable);

The argument that small contractors would benefit and that new jobs would be created is also not well founded. Secondary units require very little construction and are usually created just by adding a partition wall or two and extra utilities, within an existing structure, something a home craftsman can easily do without a contractor.

Secondary units are usually created in the place of garage space and most often remove at least one off-street parking space, not a good idea considering our crowded curbsides. The additional parking space necessitated by a secondary unit will never be provided because the Code doesn't require it.

### **Save SFMuni** *(continued from page three)*

Twenty-three percent of the total was assigned to street maintenance and traffic signal upgrading. These improvements are needed. However, before diverting more desperately needed transit funds to street work, every effort should be made to find other sources to pay for street work.

Only a token 0.8% of the total was allocated to extending Caltrain into downtown San Francisco, despite the fact that CTX is one of a tiny handful of projects with the potential to actually reduce the hundreds of thousands of commuter automobiles from the South that daily crowd onto San Francisco streets.

An astonishing 22% of the total - \$660 million - has unaccountably been earmarked for bicycle improvements and "street enhancement".

The remaining 10% goes to other transportation projects that neither ease San Francisco congestion nor increase San Francisco transit ridership.

SaveMuni calls on the MTA, the Mayor and the Board to Supervisors to allocate at least 75% of the funds raised by the Transportation Task Force's package of bonds, taxes and fees to sound and well-defined Muni capital and service improvements of proven cost-effectiveness geared to moving San Franciscans around the City quickly and efficiently. Because of the critical importance of the Caltrain extension, it should receive at least 10% of the total raised. To the extent necessary up to 10% should go to street repair and maintenance and up to 5% to other cost-effective transportation projects. *For more, please go to [SaveMuni.com](http://SaveMuni.com)*

**Superweeds that come from Superseeds** The Obama Administration is calling for the approval of 2,4-D resistant crops as a way to fight the next stage of the battle against weeds. *Superweeds* have developed as a result of spraying Monsanto's genetically modified corn with the herbicide called Roundup, Since Roundup no longer works, Dow Chemical company has engineered corn and soy that can withstand massive doses of a new herbicide, 2,4-D, **the same herbicide that, along with its cousin 2,4,5-T, is known as Agent Orange**, the chemical

warfare agent that has been linked to a million birth defects in Vietnam. Now they want approval to spray massive quantities of this herbicide on your food. And so far, the USDA is on their side. Roundup no longer works but genetically modified corn now amounts to 80% of American corn production and we're captive on the toxic treadmill. *You're eating genetically modified corn, did you know?*

*Visit SFT's website at [sftomorrow.com](http://sftomorrow.com)*

## **Let's call it SFT Vision 2014**

*As a member of SFT, you are always invited to take part and to let us know your views.*

*At the beginning of the year it is our intention to make an action plan for our efforts in 2014. Let's call it SFT Vision 2014, for lack of a better name.*

*We invite you to weigh in on the issues that have always faced us in San Francisco but have come to a head with the growth policies espoused in recent years, policies that have drawn even more people to our small, beautiful peninsula of the Bay. Growth issues have beset the Bay region for a long time. Some of the policies that SFT has espoused in the past (Build more affordable housing! Safeguard our existing affordable rental housing! Improve public transit!) will always be on the list. Is it likely that there are some new ways to frame the answers without giving up our SFT principles in the face of unprecedented pressures. What are your ideas? What still works? What are some new avenues?*

**Join an SFT Committee!** Choose Housing,  
Waterfront, Transportation, Political Action or Communication

If you're interested, call Jennifer Clary, 585 9489    Denise D'Anne 431 4172 or Jane Morrison 564-1482