



STABILITY

## CHAPTER 3.

### Building on Our Strengths



*Area youngsters participating in an environmentally focused field trip sponsored by Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ) at Heron's Head Park. Courtesy Port Authority of San Francisco.*





## BUILDING ON TODAY'S STRENGTHS FOR A VISIONARY FUTURE

The most important aspect of the *Bayview Hunters Point Revitalization Concept Plan* is its emphasis on the community's voice articulating a comprehensive vision of the future. This future is based firmly upon present strengths while also respecting the past. During the course of community outreach activities, residents have established their goals to resist displacement, retain and strengthen cultural traditions, honor the past, and enhance the unique character of Bayview.

Major aspects of the community's history and demographic make-up, along with an understanding of the natural resources and the economic forces shaping the community, have been examined and documented in the previous chapter. The next step is to examine community strengths and challenges, identify resources to meet needs, define the community's form, and give voice to community views that together set the stage for revitalization programs and projects created through the community planning process. By focusing upon the strengths of positive elements related to existing community resources and traditions, and building intelligently upon them, plans will be meaningful and empowered.

This is not only the overwhelming will of the community, it is an approach that makes *practical* sense. Growth cannot be directed from outside the community and expect success; development must be sensitive to cultural traditions, build upon valued resources, and engage residents through inclusionary policies and processes. This is the ultimate vision of a revitalized Bayview Hunters Point.

## UNIFYING CULTURAL TRADITIONS

The greatest strength of this community is the people themselves. While culturally diverse, Bayview Hunters Point is home to the largest African American community in the City. The desire to be inclusive is balanced by the need to

celebrate unique cultural qualities and histories of this diverse community. A means for achieving this inclusive societal goal is understanding what is held in common by residents while creating an arena of respect for differences.

### Political Activism

One supremely important value held in common by members of the community is the desire to be a stakeholder, having a place to call home and opportunities for both personal growth and family well-being. One of the greatest resources of Bayview Hunters Point is the political



*Celebrating black history at the Bayview Opera House. Courtesy Bayview Opera House Ruth Williams Memorial Theatre.*

activism of the community. Bayview is a place where neighbors very actively engage other neighbors and work towards resolving issues to attain common goals. This is often difficult in communities of color where resources have been scarce. In this realm, inclusive *processes* are as important as specific revitalization programs or projects. The PAC has dedicated itself to the hard work of gathering the people of Bayview Hunters Point together and finding ways to build upon unifying cultural traditions.

### Gathering

A major aspect of community-building is the importance of gathering places that provide centers for congregation, interaction and play. Every healthy community needs rituals to unite and celebrate their being. Current traditions of gathering in Bayview Hunters Point include the annual Sojourner Truth Third Street Faire, Unity March, and Earth Day celebration; plays and musical performances at the Bayview Opera House; church and gospel singing performances; and many block parties bringing neighbors together. Members of the community have strongly voiced their desire for the addition of meaningful parks, plazas and cultural centers that provide meeting and recreational opportunities for young and old alike. There is also a unified community voice requesting the enhancement and development of maintenance programs for existing public spaces. Developing public resources for unifying activities like active sports and outdoor events also ranks very highly for residents.

### Artistic Expression

Combined with the desire to foster interaction within the community is the goal of providing opportunities for cultural expression through the arts. Residents have called for arts-based programs and projects as one means for revitalization and unification. Positive community identity and civic pride is fostered by physical public artworks. Performance-based art provides opportunities for both collective and individualized cultural expression. The arts also allow each cultural group to build meaningful ties while learning about others and memorializing history. An African American artists community is established in the area and can be brought into future projects for these purposes. Many churches also have art programs, especially engaging youth.

The strong presence of existing murals on public buildings celebrates the past and present in a rich and powerful manner. Public art that connects people to place—especially historical or environmental artworks—enriches the everyday



*Budding young artists show off their artistic talent as part of the Children's Mural Project at the Bayview Opera House. Courtesy Bayview Opera House Ruth Williams Memorial Theatre.*

environment and imbues it with meaningful, unifying stories for the people who call the community their home. Artistic performances, such as voice performances and dance, provide windows to each culture's celebration in a way that brings diverse communities closer together. New seasonal public gatherings, and venues for public sculpture and art are all very important modes of expression desired by Bayview Hunters Point residents.

### Spirituality & Faith

Faith-based traditions are also strong in Bayview Hunters Point. There are numerous churches and faith-based institutions, often with long histories of civic activism, located throughout commercial and residential areas. These institutions provide cohesiveness and leadership. They restore faith and courage in people's hearts for a brighter future. As these traditions act to strengthen the resolve necessary to rebuild a sense of community in people's hearts, they must be strengthened in turn through their involvement in revitalization processes.

Only recently have local governments recognized the powerful force that faith-based institutions provide to revitalization, especially in communities of color. In terms of





*Historic neighborhood church and gathering place.*

planning for the future, creating housing partnerships, sharing facilities, and linking open spaces to religious institutions is desired. Also important is utilizing them as a communication resource to energize people with the vision of a revitalized future.

### Community Service

This community, characterized by families, children and elders, places great importance upon building the capacity of existing programs that serve Bayview Hunters Point. Churches in this community have long offered strengthening programs that help individuals and families. There are also numerous service providers in the City offering programs in health, education, training, and other needs. Over 20 are community-based institutions located in Bayview Hunters Point. One avenue for revitalization is strengthening these programs, creating central facilities that bring

them together and help them share resources to serve the community in a more powerful way. The presence of these institutions is not enough: outreach to those most in need and engagement of residents as mentors or volunteers is necessary to create a unifying force.

### Environmental Awareness & Activism

Another value held in common is human and environmental health. Bayview Hunters Point has for far too long borne a disproportionate burden of environmental hazards and impacts that have compromised the health of its residents. Fighting against polluting industries and the dumping of toxins into the local environment has brought this community together in a powerful way. Community leaders have pushed for the removal or mitigation of polluting industries and public facilities located in the Bayview. Meanwhile, numerous non-profit and community-based organizations have worked long and hard to respond to peoples' concerns, help educate them about the effects of toxins in their environment, and organize them politically. Strong advocacy exists for community gardens and public markets that provide fresh food, an opportunity to reclaim fallow land to productive purpose, and strengthen the ties of neighborhoods—especially youth—to the environment. It is imperative that new development projects coordinate with leaders and community groups working today to address these issues. The existing *Sustainability Plan* for the City of San Francisco provides a framework of ecological values for new development and continued environmental clean-up efforts throughout the community.

### Cultural Diversity & Commonality

The African American community in Bayview Hunters Point has reached consensus about building identity into the commercial district by emphasizing its history and the arts. Many leaders have identified the creation of a central business district that builds upon African American identity as an important means for revitalization. Even while working to create an African American center in Bayview, this community values its diverse population — present and past. The unique blend of ethnic heritage that defines this community includes Italian and Maltese, Chinese and Vietnamese, Samoan and Filipino, Mexican and Puerto Rican, and all others who have lived or live here today. Each brings special stories, traditions, art, and history that enrich daily life.

Many California neighborhoods, like those in Bayview, have experienced a phenomenon of polyethnic African American-Asian neighborhoods leading to both cultural successes and

conflicts. The worst cases have witnessed violence and civil unrest when resources become scarce and disinvestment occurs. The most successful are the quiet examples seen in many Bay Area neighborhoods, especially here in the Bayview, in the Fillmore District, and in Oakland's Telegraph-Northgate and Clinton Park. The truth is that African Americans and Asians have long lived peacefully together in these same neighborhoods.

Being an American can mean feeling conflicted, requiring a balance between one's heritage and the idea of the strong individual as a member of society. Revitalization in complex communities of color requires a balance of acknowledgment of differences and commonalities, ensuring equal empowerment. Civic and communal celebrations of all commonalities and diversities are a powerful means for achieving these goals. Unifying traditions are value-based and, although diverse in their beliefs and views, all members of this community—whatever their ethnic traditions—share the desire for a clean, safe, beautiful and vital place to call home. This is the shared destiny of Bayview Hunters Point. The differences that do emerge are to be valued in themselves, celebrated as strengths in an arena of respect.



*Celebrating culture at the Southeast Community Facility. Courtesy City College–Southeast Campus.*

## COMMUNITY FORM AS THE SETTING FOR CIVIC TRADITIONS

This segment moves from looking at civic and ethnic traditions to understanding the context of physical resources in Bayview Hunters Point. The structure of a community has much to do with how neighborhoods and neighbors relate as a whole.

### Community Structure and Land Use

The Bayview Hunters Point community has many attributes of a small town that residents wish to preserve and strengthen. Map 10, *Neighborhoods and Districts*, shows the Town Center where locally-serving retail shops and commercial businesses are located along Third Street and other main streets, interspersed with civic and religious institutions. Residential neighborhoods extend from the central corridor of Third Street through a radiating hierarchy of streets that reflects the varying topography. Older industrial areas form edges to the north and east, and are also located in islands in the south-central portion of the community.

An official land use map in the City's *General Plan* guides the type of development that can occur in any section of the City. In Bayview Hunters Point, this official map closely resembles the actual patterns present in the community. As seen in Map 11, *1995 City of San Francisco Land Use Plan for Bayview Hunters Point*, the City's 1995 *General Plan* described existing land use patterns in the "South Bayshore Area" as a community with a well-defined core focused upon Third Street and with development "tending to be distributed in bands that stretch across the width of the district."

When the community's land use patterns are examined at the neighborhood scale and contemporary changes taken into consideration, these broad bands of land use are increasingly seen as a fine mosaic of residential, civic, institutional, commercial, and light industrial uses. Map 12, *Land Uses in Bayview Hunters Point*, shows how these broad land use bands are much richer in detail. The opportunity to live near one's work or access shops and services is provided by this mix of land uses in proximity to one another.

### Landmarks and Historic Resources

Cultural and historic sites are the backbone of a community's physical structure. In Bayview Hunters Point in particular, these facilities are a key part of the life of the community. Historically, the Town Center area along Third





*Designated Landmark No. 8 by the City and County of San Francisco, the Opera House is the sole surviving theatre of pre-fire San Francisco. Courtesy Bayview Opera House Ruth Williams Memorial Theatre.*

Street has been the heart of Bayview, with the once-vital commercial district and civic facilities. Although the Town Center commercial district is in need of physical and economic restructuring, the community's greatest assets are located in its midst. Among them are the historic Bayview Opera House, the Joseph Lee Recreation Center, the Southeast Community Facility, the Anna E. Waden Library, a number of community churches and a host of non-profit organizations providing valuable services to area residents. This is a particularly strong aspect of community form that already provides a strong setting for enhancing civic traditions.

A great aspect of the community structure is the interwoven presence of historic buildings, many of which have design merit and others where important historic events and activities occurred. A significant number of these historic structures cluster in the center of the community along Third Street between Evans and Oakdale. The Bayview

Opera House is located here, one of the most important historic buildings in the community and a center of activity and pride for the community. Other notable landmarks include the Albion Springs Water Company and the All Hallows Catholic Church.

Public buildings owned by local, state or federal government are located throughout the community. Particularly important public buildings include the new Bayview Police Station, the Anna E. Waden Library and the Southeast Community Facility. Valued community institutions in themselves, elementary schools serve a variety of civic uses in Bayview Hunters Point, becoming community and recreation centers for their neighborhoods. Some city-owned lots provide opportunities for expanding the amount of open space for both schools and daycare centers where appropriate.

### Residential Neighborhoods as a Community Resource

This community has the highest percentage of homeowners compared to others in the City; building upon existing assets clearly applies to stable residential areas. Bayview Hunters Point is comprised of several identifiable residential neighborhood districts with many smaller enclaves. Most notable in defining the residential geography are Hunters Point Hill, Silver Terrace, and Bayview Hill.

The larger residential neighborhoods, some named after the geography that defines them, include:

- Central Bayview
- Silver Terrace
- Hunters Point Hill
- Bret Harte/ Double Rock

Numerous smaller neighborhoods are located throughout the community. Some of these are shown in Map 10, *Neighborhoods and Districts*, though many more could be added. Along with these older established neighborhoods, emerging areas of homes are interspersed within the historically industrial district of South Basin, the growing residential area around Bayview Hill, and new housing built within Executive Park in the southern part of the community. Most new developments are not quite neighborhoods as of yet, but are beginning to form as enclaves.

To build strong residential neighborhoods, efforts must focus on: 1) reinforcing the relationship of these neighborhoods to the central heart of the community, and 2) supporting the spirit and availability of homeownership. To own a home is to be a stakeholder and participant in the civic life of a community. The community has called for new programs

## Map 10

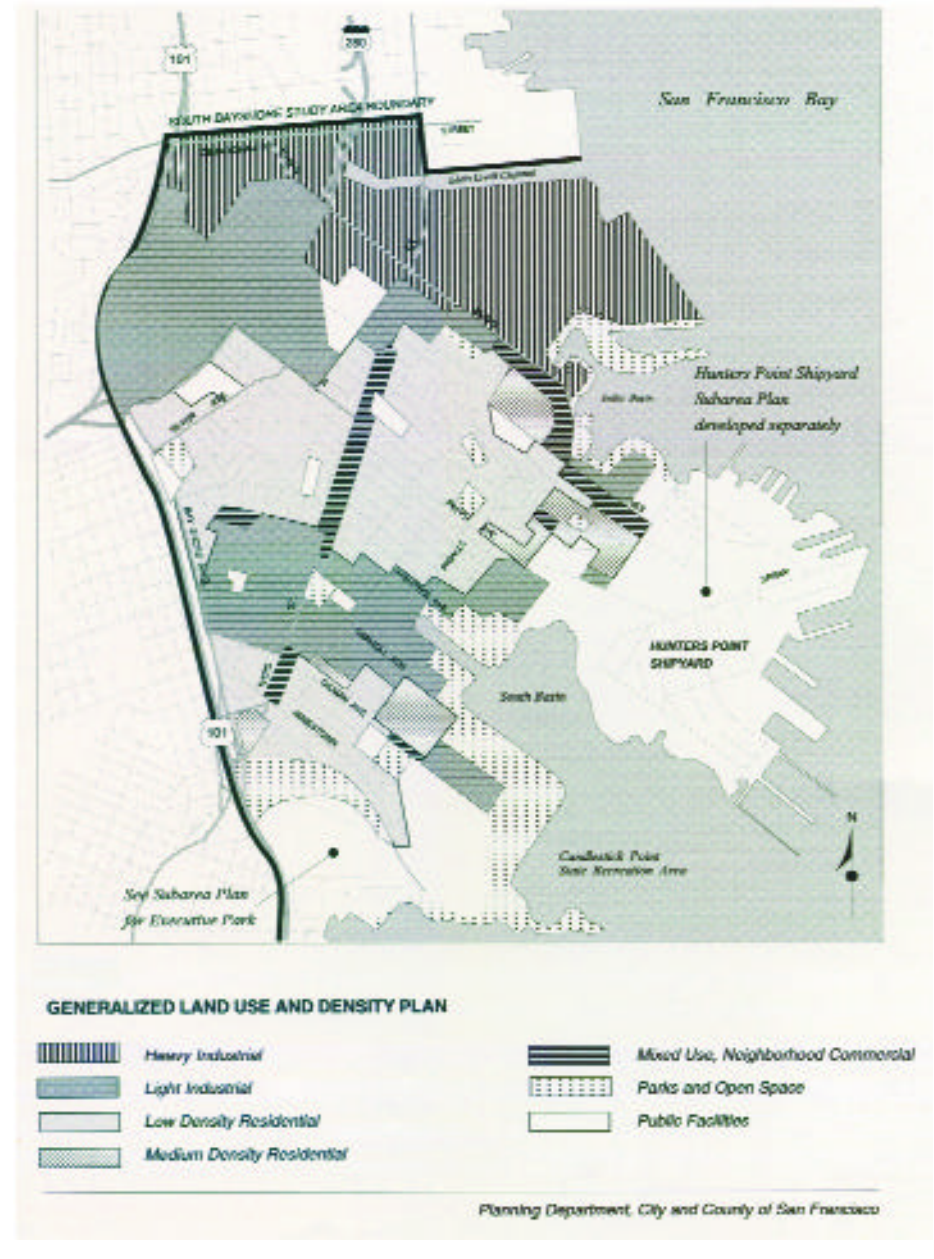
### Bayview Hunters Point Community Structure Neighborhoods and Districts





**Map 11**

### 1995 City of SF Land Use Plan for Bayview Hunters Point



that provide assistance to resident owners and tenants with home preservation, rehabilitation, maintenance and ownership. As these programs work to connect residents to civic life, physical connectivity of neighborhoods to the central heart of the community and its major resources must be built into every project. The regular grid of streets provides numerous opportunities for linking open space, civic or religious institutions, and commercial districts.

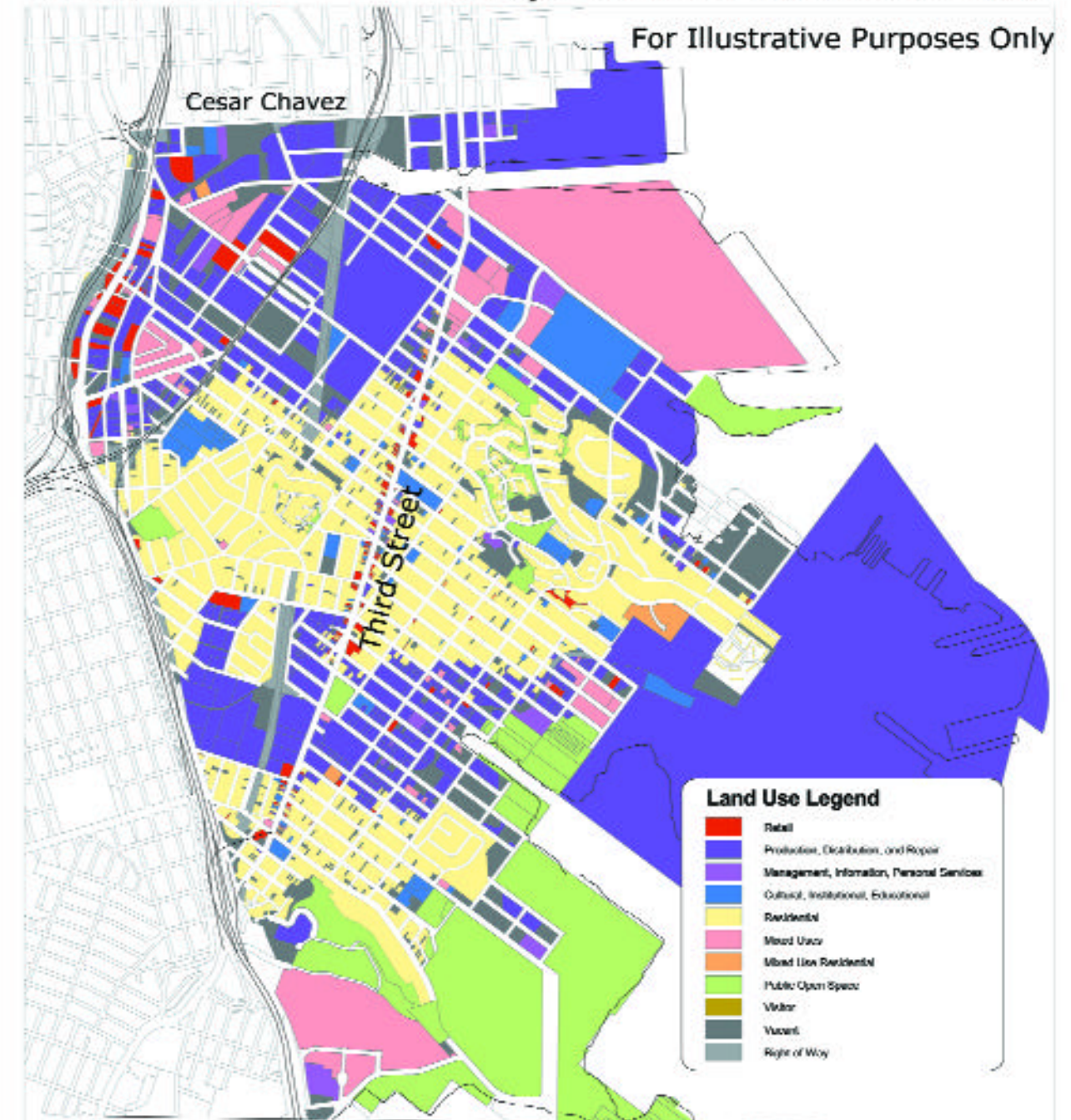
#### The Environment and Natural Resources

The characteristics of the natural and built landscape are another critical aspect of community form and heritage. Street tree plantings tend to include several species of magnolia, reflecting the Southern heritage of many residents. Views to the bay are provided by the varied topography, orientation of wide east-west streets, and the smaller

**Map 12**

### Land Uses in Bayview Hunters Point

For Illustrative Purposes Only



Source: San Francisco Planning Department, 2000  
Map not to scale





Youth learning about Bayview's rich waterfront environment at Pier 98. Courtesy Port of San Francisco.

## COMMUNITY LAND USE PATTERNS AND ISSUES FOR PROBLEM-SOLVING

The key problems with land use patterns in Bayview Hunters Point include introduction of new forms of development into the older historic framework and conflicts between industrial and residential areas, such as the barrier formed by the South Basin Industrial area isolating the southern half of the community. The Town Center and residential neighborhoods of Double Rock/Bret Harte and Silver Terrace experience heavy truck traffic on increasingly residential streets bisecting the community. Community leaders have worked with City staff to identify how these impacts can be mitigated through alternative trucking routes, traffic calming street design and the conversion of defunct facilities into new residential areas.

A major issue for community residents is the fear of displacement. As affordable housing disappears in the City at large, with families and artists displaced from the South of Market neighborhood, and newcomers to San Francisco find little in the way of rental accommodations, there will be an increasing pressure placed upon Bayview. Many older homeowners are taking advantage of the seller's market advantage to capitalize on their greatest investment: their homes.

Simultaneously, residents who have increased financial capacity have few local options available to them and may be drawn to live elsewhere. With the influx of new residents and continued need for a range of housing opportunities to retain its current residents, finding the means to provide a well-considered balance of new housing types will be one of the greatest challenges the community faces. As will be explored in Chapter 4, the community has debated how to make positive revitalization occur without causing the negative aspects of gentrification.

Another challenge related to outside forces affecting the community has to do with multimedia or "new media" businesses seeking to locate along the Third Street corridor or in the India Basin Industrial Park. On one hand, computer-based businesses meet the goals of non-polluting business development. However, many residents have expressed the desire to retain a traditionally industrial job base, including smaller industry and crafts-based businesses. Building an infrastructure to support computer-based businesses is possible in conjunction with the Third Street Light Rail Project underway by Muni. Getting actual residents connected to the wealth of information and economic opportunities associated with new media businesses is another

## THE "VOICES OF HOPE" SURVEY

DURING THE COURSE OF 1998 AND EARLY 1999, members of the community and local leaders shared their thoughts and visions for Bayview Hunters Point during interviews with participants of "The Hunters Point Environmental Health Project."<sup>1</sup> These were published in 1999 as "Voices of Hope, Dreams of a Community: A Dialogue in Progress." The following are excerpts from that document, reorganized into important topics for the *Revitalization Concept Plan*.

## COMMUNITY IDENTITY & CREATING A SHARED COMMUNITY VISION

"The key is to focus folks on the whole through their parts; this is crucial to having a shared community vision."

"I would look for a bigger plan to address Bayview Hunters Point as a whole. We could begin by doing planning exercises, looking at the actual physical environment... We need to start asking: 'Where do we want our hospital, our park?' There's a lot of opportunity here."

"At bottom is the issue of power to the people. I want people to know they can accomplish change."

"There's never been one homogeneous group within the community. When it was known as "Butchertown," it was mainly Italian. Now it's majority African American, but there are other ethnic groups present."

"In contrast to the history of the Fillmore and desegregation, how do we restore community while acknowledging that people are walking away? What do we do individually and collectively, given what we know about history and the current process?"

"We need to put energy into community festivals to encourage people to celebrate their cultures. We need social events that will bring people together."

"The various organizations in Bayview Hunters Point should come together in an umbrella organization or coalition of all community groups. Groups could send one or two representatives to come together and create a shared vision and, as a coalition or umbrella group, plan Bayview Hunters Point's future."

"Community input and participation are indispensable from concept to implementation, working together with a framework."

"We need to find ways to deal tactfully with the Mayor and bypass the stereotypes of Bayview Hunters Point facing us. Our strategies have to address all our programs and not just one issue."

"Groundwork needs to be done to prepare individuals for leadership."

"We need to reach out and organize the community of newcomers, not any particular ethnicity, but all newcomers."

scale of buildings near the shore. These views can be amplified through additional urban design elements including tree plantings, while the typically wide right-of-way of streets provide ample opportunities for enhancing pedestrian and public space where children already play and adults visit neighbors.

Features of landscape itself are valued community landmarks. Double Rock is named for the two rock projections in the bay that give the southern part of the community its name. Unfortunately, the signature rock formation called the Candlestick that gave its name to the stadium was blown up with dynamite to enlarge the Navy's ship operations in the 1940s. The existing waterfront parks, historic neighborhood parks and undeveloped hill areas provide a visual and experiential structure of natural open space that is a priority for preservation and enhancement. Open lots and vacant properties within the community could provide greenways and community gardens. Additional landscaping can help offset carbon dioxide emissions, mitigate pollutants and absorb stormwater runoff, especially as new development occurs.



# COMMUNITY ASSETS

“Bayview Hunters Point has location, location, location.

We have perennial sunlight, proximity and views of the waterfront.

This is the only available land mass—besides some in Potrero and the Presidio—in San Francisco.”

“Churches are key in African American communities. Convince them something is true and they can quickly get information out (to the people).”

“The waterfront is Bayview Hunter Point’s major asset. We have to protect the waterfront and use it as a major resource for (the community). The waterfront provides opportunities for everyone. The waterfront needs to be keyed upon by the community.”



Sharing resources and information at the Third Street Faire.

“Mixed-use is what best makes Bayview Hunters Point a community. The neighborhood is a different place, a day and night difference, on weekends...”

On weekdays my street is very busy. On weekends there are children playing here, the neighborhood comes alive in a different way.”

matter altogether. All industrial and office development in Bayview Hunters Point will require balance with the larger economic and education objectives of the community.

Challenges in land use patterns and revitalization are also related to the economic leakage issues discussed in Chapter 2. There is a need to connect local business to the funding required to establish new operations or expand existing ones. Coordination between existing business owners has been difficult because of the lack of retail commercial synergy along the corridor. The challenge is to promote retail commercial infill and a critical mix of services within a focused area while creating façade and business improvement programs for existing businesses along Third Street. Opportunities for concentration are provided with each of the three Muni Light Rail stations.

Another important issue for problem-solving is the proliferation of adult-oriented businesses in the heart of the community. The numerous liquor stores located along the Third Street corridor cause major impacts on the health and image of the community. Every survey and workshop identified the reduction in their number as a major community need. Coupled with this desire to eliminate liquor stores is the desire for high-quality fresh food outlets and full-service grocery stores. Large grocery stores require minimum population thresholds combined with truck access to build new facilities in a community. Sensitive placement is also a consideration.

Finally, the industrial areas of Bayview Hunters Point provide one of the most compelling examples of being able to build on strengths in the face of daunting challenges. The historical practices of Bayview’s industrial businesses have left a legacy of contaminated lands, water and air. Studies are underway to investigate the environmental damage that many believe has already affected the health of the people who live in Bayview. In response, the community has become more environmentally aware, active and innovative than any other San Francisco community.

The industrial areas and their businesses can become places that can give back by cleaning up their practices and providing job opportunities for Bayview residents. These areas are emphasized in this *Revitalization Concept Plan* as economic and environmental opportunities. Both industries and residents can benefit from embracing emerging environmental technologies and industries. Dispelling environmental myths through continued research and education is an important factor in revitalizing the image of the community. Encouraging redevelopment of these

areas will serve to increase the job base, provide new and improved public access to the waterfront, and increase the tax base that both the City and the community reinvest into Bayview Hunters Point.

## THE COMMUNITY VOICE: “WHAT DO YOU THINK?”

This section reports on the community voice and provides a foundation for understanding what is held important, what is needed, and what is most desired for the future of Bayview Hunters Point. We will look at two recent resident surveys that help to bring a deeper understanding to both those who currently live in the Bayview, for newcomers wishing to understand what is at stake here as the future unfurls, and for those who propose to join in community revitalization efforts.

### The Third Street Faire Survey

The Bayview Hunters Point community came together at the first annual Sojourner Truth Third Street Faire sponsored by the PAC in mid-July, 1998. PAC members were there to ask community members what they would like to see happen in the heart of Bayview Hunters Point. In order to open the revitalization visioning process up to the community, the PAC asked fair-goers to fill out a written survey and comment upon a set of picture boards set up to help people visualize potential ideas for improvements. This outreach effort was very successful with 243 “What Do You Think” surveys filled out during the two-day event and numerous comments made about the desired character of a revitalized Bayview.

The first question of the “What Do You Think” survey asked about preferences and ideas for the identity of Third Street. “Great landscaping with trees” was the favorite with 141 votes and “a gateway area that says welcome” came in a close second with 108 votes. Images that were favored by respondents included views of streetscapes that offered protected pedestrian areas, a large canopy of trees, and numerous amenities such as benches and special lighting fixtures.

The next question of the survey asked respondents to define the Third Street commercial center. The majority saw the center as a “cultural and entertainment area” (145 votes) and many called for its re-establishment as a “neighborhood shopping area” (100 votes). An important issue of great debate since the proposal for a regional mall at Candlestick Point some years ago has been how



“We need a **strong economic base** that is community-generated and family oriented.”

“We need businesses that **promote the well-being of the community,** not more liquor stores that promote bad health.”

“We need to reduce liquor stores. We need other types of businesses: retail stores, theaters, cultural centers, restaurants...”

# WE NEED...

“There is a need for food stores and supermarkets that have quality produce and meats available.”

“Bayview Hunters Point lacks a (central) gathering place and needs a farmers’ market.

A market is a central meeting place, where the vibrancy of the community stands out.

The market is central to African American culture... Our marketplace would be a place for food, culture, trading, people walking, hanging out, and shopping. We need opportunities for this type of socializing.”

“We need jobs. **Without jobs,** there’s no hope.”

“We need to focus on subsidized housing. This means creating a long-term plan that would turn the project units over to tenants; home ownership is key. The projects occupy a lot of space and we need a plan on what to do so tenants can become owners.”

“We need to **develop a jazz club** in Bayview Hunters Point because a lot of people are into music. Overall, **expanding cultural activity, art and entertainment** would be very good and central to the community’s revitalization.”

“There is a lot of support and need for having a hospital and emergency provided at the Southeast Health Center.”

“We need activities (for youth), sports, mid-night basketball... after-school programs while parents are still at work.”

“The Bayview Hunters Point agenda **needs to address the overwhelming number of liquor stores.** We need to learn what is legally permitted and how to change the ordinances.”

“We need to build support for community-owned businesses and entrepreneur training.”

“There is a need for a big intergenerational community center that could have swimming pool, sports activities and lounge, and be a space for different activities.”

“It is only African American and Latino communities that do not have their own banks. Banks play a crucial role in the awarding of contracts (and) are key to breaking the pattern of exclusionary economic development that **does not benefit the Bayview Hunters Point community.**”

“We need to develop a community bank for Bayview Hunters Point. **Financing economic development plus creating necessary business skills, incubating entrepreneurship** (getting technical assistance) is **at the top of the agenda.**”

“One-third of all children in the neighborhood go to schools in Bayview Hunters Point; **two-thirds are bussed out.** This is the result of the uneven distribution of school-age children in the City and this is an increasingly urban issue.”

“The Shipyard DEIR (Environmental Impact Report) has a section on schools that says it will lead to an increase of 700 students who will probably be bussed out **instead of building a new school.**”

San Francisco has a problem that no one could foresee: **the uneven distribution of children within the City limits...** Existing schools are fine; children should be sent there. **However,** the SFUSD (San Francisco Unified School District) needs to recognize **the need to build a community partnership** to address the impact of various options.”



Bayview youth learn that science is fun! Courtesy Port Authority of San Francisco.

## EDUCATION AND YOUTH

“Youth want to take the lead. By getting youth involved, you can also get their parents involved.”

“Tell the youth: **we need your ideas and creativity.** 14 and 15 year olds will inherit this visioning over the next 10 - 25 years.”

“If parents see their children caring about an issue, getting involved and changing their lives, it creates space for adults to get involved.”

“The **youngest and largest population segment** in Bayview Hunters Point is **under 25 years of age,** younger than any other community. Whoever can figure out what this population is going to do and can rally them is going to control this situation in Bayview Hunters Point.”

“From middle-schools to junior-high schools, **(high)drop out rates** are due to a lack of community-based schools.”

“The **greatest** need is **education...** not schools alone, but personal literacy, information imparted to know the issues... We need to equip the community with information first and the skills to figure out the next steps.”

“We need to bring elders and youth together: one has wisdom and the other energy and, together, we create hope for the future.”



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

“The main issue is **economic development and how to make it work** for Bayview Hunters Point. We need to **bring together like-minded community individuals** and organizations to jointly develop a community project.”



*Third and Palou community mural in the heart of Bayview's commercial corridor.*

“We need to take control, create our own businesses, own the development, and own our communities over the next 100 years.”

“My biggest concern is that economic development means change. In the process, lots of people will be lost. People are being displaced by high rents. They're selling their homes. The demographics of Bayview Hunters Point will change.”

“All of a sudden, with the Shipyard base closure, you have a community which (had) its economics thrown out from under its feet. A lot of people ended up selling their homes.”

“We need to press for economic development strategies that attract community-led investment and loans— Bayview Hunters Point has land as collateral. The City should take the initiative to provide first-time business start-up loans.”

“The industries that operate in Bayview Hunters Point create the second largest source of revenue for the City after the Financial District: \$300–\$500 million in tax base. This is not connected to Bayview Hunters Point residents... Bayview Hunters Point taxes go into a general fund. (But) whenever we need something, the reply is always (that) a bond measure is needed. Third Street is the only bond that can pay for itself—but what about the rest of Bayview Hunters Point?”

“There is one word to describe our community agenda: the struggle against gentrification...”

“The polluting industries' jobs are **not an option for our community.**”

“We need to advocate for alternatives that both provide jobs and protect the environment. We should be fighting for industrial business that is as clean as possible.”

“Black people are being left out of technology—our communities don't have fiber optics. Guns for computers programs give us the oldest computers; we don't even have access to internet shopping. How are we going to develop black businesses without computers in the computer age?”

“We need to define for ourselves community economic development that we then take to the Redevelopment Agency, the Planning Department and other city agencies.”

“The argument in the community debate is not about blocking development but about what kind of development and its impacts on our sons, daughters, children, adults, and elders.”



*Bayview once had a theatre on Third Street. The Bayview Theatre at 4935 Third Street opened in 1924 and closed in 1957. Courtesy San Francisco Public Library.*

such a development might affect commercial businesses on Third Street. Based on the survey responses, residents want to balance the emphasis of commercial revitalization efforts and resources placed in the community's center with the types of uses appropriate to a regional mall set at the southern edge.

The next question asked what residents wanted for a desirable mix of commercial, cultural, and recreational uses along the Third Street Corridor. Many stated conversationally that they looked forward to an exciting mixed-use district and one that offered a safe but vital nightlife, with comfortable promenades for window shopping. Each person who visited the display was asked to fill out a preference checklist of potential new businesses on Third Street. “Bookstores” was

the most popular item on the list of choices provided, followed by:

- “ethnic and family restaurants,”
- “gym or fitness center,”
- “Farmers' Market, green grocer” and “large supermarket,” and
- “performing arts center.”

Other choices included coffee shops, bakeries, floral shops, and computer supply stores. The most popular write-in was “movie theater,” followed closely by “no more liquor stores.”

The “What Do You Think” survey asked residents what should be done with the PG&E property along India Basin at Evans Avenue and Jennings Street. The power plant is currently slated to be torn down and the site cleaned up.



The overwhelming majority of those who filled out the survey stated that the property should be redeveloped to include a large waterfront community park with stores and restaurants.

Muni will soon be building the new light rail line along Third Street. The “What Do You Think” survey asked what type of design concept would be most appropriate for the three light rail stations slated in Bayview Hunters Point: whether the design should be culturally based, historically based, or modern. Respondents generally thought it should be a combination of all three in a design that captured the essence of the rich cultural heritage of the area, respected the historic importance of the corridor and existing architectural style and scale of buildings, and be built of modern materials.

At the 1999 and 2000 Third Street Faire, the PAC met with many community members to discuss the evolution of this *Revitalization Concept Plan* and how they could and should become directly involved with the many on-going civic efforts. Once detailed plans for specific parts of the community are developed, the community voice can be engaged again at this and other events to build meaning into what is defined as “community preferences.”

## PRESERVING COMMUNITY CHARACTER WITH FOCUSED AND STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

We have looked at the character of Bayview Hunters Point, identified numerous assets and strengths, considered issues and challenges, and heard the voice of the community. In keeping with the philosophy of building on the community’s assets, this *Revitalization Concept Plan* is concerned with preserving the positive aspects of the existing community character. In the current marketplace, this is often discussed but requires diligence to succeed. The stimulation of social and economic benefits through new development must include processes related to community-building and preservation to meet the goals of creating a clean, safe and healthy place to live, work and raise one’s children.

The most compelling strategy is to build on community strengths through focusing on existing assets. By redeveloping key underutilized parcels in the heart of the Town Center in conjunction with the Muni Light Rail project, a critical phase of revitalization will be achieved. Economic strengthening through new development is often seen as being at odds with preservation goals. However, there is a

clear directive to preserve existing assets that provide cultural context and character of place. This includes projects such as the rehabilitation and/or expansion of historic resources such as the Bayview Opera House and other buildings. Strengthening also refers to building connectivity into the area through enhanced public infrastructure, streetscape design for pedestrians and bicyclists, and greenway paths throughout the community.

Revitalization efforts should build upon Muni’s Third Street Light Rail Project with coordinated opportunities for transit-based, pedestrian-oriented development and potential for wiring the community for computer-related economic development. The mix of residential neighborhoods and areas of industry can be capitalized upon if direct employment connections to residents are emphasized and good planning involved. Using a public workshop process for developing specific plans around the stations that build upon the concepts illustrated within this Plan will ensure the essential character of Bayview Hunters Point is preserved and amplified. While major physical and economic improvements are necessary for the commercial district and should be focused around light rail stops along Third Street, preserving the smaller scale of neighborhood character is also an important priority.

Some revitalization measures will not require large-scale change, but instead focus on improving existing conditions. For example, many community members feel strongly about preserving the prevailing land use patterns because it is what makes Bayview Hunters Point unique. As long as the industrial businesses become cleaner operations, provide solid buffers for adjacent properties, and keep trucks off residential streets, most residents don’t seem to mind living near light industry. Historic buildings along the Third Street corridor require restoration to advance vitality goals through the creation of a uniquely marketable identity. New development must take architectural harmony into account. As well, existing parks and playgrounds can be remodeled, but maintenance plans and funding are required to ensure their continued benefit to the community.

Finally, ongoing and planned regional projects such as Mission Bay, the San Francisco International Airport Expansion, the redevelopment of the Hunters Point Shipyard, and the Third Street Light Rail Project will bring change and opportunities to the Bayview Hunters Point community. In light of this larger context, Bayview must have a plan that can clearly capitalize on regional projects to the benefit of the existing community.

The following chapters will first define area-wide recommendations for programs and policies and then follow with detailed development visions in the form of *Focus Area Plans* that reflect the community’s recommendations at the neighborhood scale. Finally, steps towards implementation of projects and programs advanced within the plan are defined, including a process for prioritization. It is the intent that these ideas presented in the *Revitalization Concept Plan* embody the spirit and enhancement of Bayview Hunter Point’s unique character while stimulating the right kinds of economic investment, all in keeping with the community’s vision, goals, and strategies for revitalization. ■ ■ ■

### CHAPTER NOTES

<sup>1</sup> “*The Hunters Point Environmental Health Project*”—a collaboration of Golden Gate University School of Law’s Environmental Law and Justice Clinic, the Southeast Alliance for Environmental Justice (SAEJ), and the Urban Habitat Program. Thank you to these groups for sharing their research.