DATE: January 14, 2015
TO: Derrick Chang, Van Ness Post Center, LLC
FROM: David Lindsay, Planning Department
RE: PPA Case No. 2014.1616U for 1200 Van Ness Avenue

Please find the attached Preliminary Project Assessment (PPA) for the address listed above. You may contact the staff planner, Mary Woods, at (415) 558-6315 or mary.woods@sfgov.org, to answer any questions you may have, or to schedule a follow-up meeting.

David Lindsay, Senior Planner
Preliminary Project Assessment

Date: January 14, 2015
Case No.: 2014.1616U
Project Address: 1200 Van Ness Avenue (a.k.a. 1130, 1140 - 1180 Post Street)
Block/Lots: 0691/003 and 005
Zoning: RC-4 (Residential-Commercial, High-Density) District
Van Ness Avenue Special Use District (SUD)
Van Ness Automotive SUD
Van Ness Special Sign District
Height & Bulk: 130-V
Area Plan: Van Ness Avenue Area Plan
Project Sponsor: Derrick Chang, Van Ness Post Center, LLC
415-788-1133
Staff Contact: Mary Woods – (415) 558-6315
mary.woods@sfgov.org

DISCLAIMERS:

Please be advised that this determination does not constitute an application for development with the Planning Department. It also does not represent a complete review of the proposed project, a project approval of any kind, or in any way supersede any required Planning Department approvals listed below. The Planning Department may provide additional comments regarding the proposed project once the required applications listed below are submitted. While some approvals are granted by the Planning Department, some are at the discretion of other bodies, such as the Planning Commission or Historic Preservation Commission. Additionally, it is likely that the project will require approvals from other City agencies such as the Department of Building Inspection, Department of Public Works, Department of Public Health, and others. The information included herein is based on plans and information provided for this assessment and the Planning Code, General Plan, Planning Department policies, and local/state/federal regulations as of the date of this document, all of which are subject to change.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposal is to demolish two existing buildings: a circa 1947 four-story plus basement building (1130 Post Street) containing parking, retail and small offices on Lot 3, and a circa 1912 four-story plus basement building (1200 Van Ness Avenue and 1140 - 1180 Post Street) containing parking, retail, office space, medical clinics and a fitness facility on Lot 5. The proposed project is to construct a five-story medical office building, an eight-story residential tower above the medical office building, and a five-level parking garage for 339 spaces below the medical office building. The residential tower would include 84 dwelling units: 50 one-bedroom units and 34 two-bedroom units. The mixed-use development, totaling approximately 292,000 square feet, would be built in two phases. Phase 1 involves demolition of the building that occupies Lot 3 and a portion of the building that occupies Lot 5, and construction of the eastern portions of the parking garage and medical office building, and the residential tower. Phase 2 involves completing the demolition of the building on Lot 5 and construction of the remainder of the
underground garage and the medical office building. The underground garage and the medical office building would thus occupy all of Lots 3 and 5, serving as a podium for the eight-floor residential tower that would occupy the eastern portion of the project site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The project initially requires environmental review of the topics discussed below. This review may be done in conjunction with the required approvals listed below but, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), must be completed before any project approval may be granted. In order to begin formal environmental review, please submit an Environmental Evaluation Application (EEA) for the full scope of the project (demolition, construction and operation). EEA forms are available in the Planning Department lobby at 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, at the Planning Information Center at 1660 Mission Street, and online at:

In order to determine whether there is a potential for the project to have significant environmental impacts, an initial study must be prepared for CEQA review. The initial study may be prepared either by an environmental consultant from the Planning Department’s environmental consultant pool or by Department staff.

If the initial study determines that the project would not have a significant effect on the environment, the Department would issue a preliminary negative declaration (PND). If the initial study finds that the project would have significant impacts that could be reduced to a less-than-significant level by mitigation measures agreed to by the project sponsor, then the Department would issue a preliminary mitigated negative declaration (PMND). The PND or PMND would be circulated for public review for a period of 20 calendar days, during which time concerned parties may appeal the determination. If an appeal is filed, the Planning Commission would hold a hearing to decide the appeal. If no appeal is filed, the Planning Department would issue a final negative declaration (FND) or final mitigated negative declaration (FMND), and CEQA review is complete.

If the initial study indicates that the project would result in a significant impact that cannot be mitigated to below a significant level, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared by an environmental consultant from the Planning Department’s environmental consultant pool. The Planning Department would provide more detail to the project sponsor regarding the EIR process should this level of environmental review be required.

To determine fees for environmental review, please refer to page two of the current fee schedule, "Environmental Applications – Studies for Projects outside of Adopted Plan Area."1 Note that until an entitlement application is submitted to the Current Planning Division, only the proposed project description will be reviewed by the assigned Environmental Coordinator.

Below is a list of topic areas that would require additional study based on preliminary review of the project as it is proposed in the Preliminary Project Assessment (PPA) Application received on October 16, 2014.

---

Aesthetics. The proposed project would likely qualify as a “Transit-Oriented Infill Project” pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21099(d), which eliminates the need to evaluate aesthetics as a potential significant environmental effect of the proposed project. Therefore, preparation of photo simulations for purposes of aesthetic analysis as part of the CEQA review would not be required. However, given the degree of visual change anticipated as a result of the proposed project, the Planning Department recommends photo simulations of the proposed project in the context of its surroundings from nearby public viewpoints for informational purposes. Photo simulations of the proposed project were received with submittal of the Preliminary Project Assessment application and should be provided with the EEA. The project coordinator will advise the sponsor on the need for additional photo simulations if they are determined to be necessary by the Planning Department.

Air Quality. The proposed project, including demolition of two existing buildings, construction of a 161,391-gsf building with 112,280 gsf of medical offices, 19,020 gsf of retail and 84 dwelling units, exceeds the Bay Area Air Quality Management District’s (BAAQMD) construction and operational screening levels for criteria air pollutants. Therefore an analysis of the project’s criteria air pollutant emissions is likely to be required. Detailed information related to construction equipment, phasing and duration of each phase (including demolition), and cubic yards of both existing building material to be demolished and sub-surface material to be excavated for the proposed garage and foundation shall be provided as part of the EEA.

Project-related demolition, excavation, grading and other construction activities may cause wind-blown dust that could contribute particulate matter into the local atmosphere. To reduce construction dust impacts, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors approved the Construction Dust Control Ordinance (Ordinance 176-08, effective July 30, 2008) with the intent of reducing the quantity of dust generated during site preparation, demolition, and construction work in order to protect the health of the general public and of on-site workers, minimize public nuisance complaints, and to avoid orders to stop work by the Department of Building Inspection (DBI). Pursuant to the Construction Dust Ordinance, the proposed project would be required to comply with applicable dust control requirements outlined in the ordinance.

The project site is not located within an Air Pollutant Exposure Zone, as mapped and defined by Health Code, Article 38. The Air Pollutant Exposure Zone identifies areas with poor air quality based on an inventory and modeling assessment of air pollution, exposures, and health vulnerability from mobile, stationary, and area source emissions within San Francisco. Given the project site is not within an Air Pollutant Exposure Zone, no measures or additional analysis related to local health risks are likely to be required.

If the project would include new sources of toxic air contaminants including, but not limited to emissions from: diesel generators or boilers, or any other stationary sources, the project would result in toxic air contaminants that may affect both on-site and off-site sensitive receptors. Given the proposed project’s height of 130 feet, the proposed project would likely require a backup diesel generator. Detailed information related to any proposed stationary sources shall be provided with the EEA.

\[2\] BAAQMD, CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, May 2011, Chapter 3.
Archeological Resources. The PPA Application indicates that excavation would occur to a depth of about 52 feet below grade. The proposed project therefore requires a Preliminary Archeological Review (PAR), conducted in-house by a Planning Department archeologist, to determine whether or not additional archeological studies will be required as part of the environmental evaluation. The PAR will assess the type of soils disturbance/modification that would occur with construction of the project (for example, excavation, soils improvement, installation of foundations, and site remediation). If the PAR determines that there is a potential impact to archeological resources, an additional study may need to be prepared by an archeological consultant listed in the Planning Department's archeological consultant pool in accordance with the Planning Department's consultant selection procedures. The department will provide the project sponsor with a list of three consultants from the Archeological Resource Consultant Pool, which shall be known as the potential consultant list or PCL.

Greenhouse Gases. The City and County of San Francisco's Strategies to Address Greenhouse Gas Emissions provides a comprehensive assessment of policies, programs, and ordinances that represents San Francisco's Qualified Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Strategy. Projects that are consistent with San Francisco's Qualified GHG Reduction Strategy would result in less-than-significant impacts from GHG emissions. In order to facilitate a determination of compliance with San Francisco's Qualified GHG Reduction Strategy, the Planning Department has prepared a Greenhouse Gas Analysis Compliance Checklist. The project sponsor is required to submit the completed checklist regarding project compliance with the identified regulations. Please be specific and provide detailed information in the discussion column to clarify how the proposed project would comply with each item. This information will be reviewed by the environmental planner during the environmental review process to determine if the project would comply with San Francisco's GHG Reduction Strategy. Projects that do not comply with an ordinance or regulation may be determined to be inconsistent with the GHG Reduction Strategy.

Geology and Soils. The PPA application indicates that excavation would occur to 52 feet below grade. Given the potential depth and amount of excavation, a geotechnical study prepared by a qualified consultant must be submitted with the EEA that provides recommendations regarding any identified geotechnical concerns. To assist Planning Department staff in determining whether the project would result in environmental impacts related to the project's proposed foundations, a copy of the geotechnical information with boring logs for the proposed project should accompany the EEA. This study will also help inform the Planning Department Archeologist of the project site's subsurface geological conditions.

Hazardous Materials. The proposed project would require more than 50 cubic yards of excavation on a site with an existing non-residential use (commercial building). In addition, the project site is included on the citywide Maher map, indicating the presence of soils with known or suspected soil and/or groundwater contamination. As such, the project would be subject to Article 22A of the Health Code, also known as the Maher Ordinance, which is administered and overseen by the Department of Public Health (DPH). The Maher Ordinance requires the project sponsor to retain the services of a qualified professional to prepare a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) that meets the requirements of Health Code Section 22.A.6. The ESA determines the potential for site contamination.
contamination and level of exposure risk associated with the project, the need for soil and/or groundwater sampling and analysis and, if necessary, appropriate remediation of any site contamination. These steps must be completed prior to the issuance of any building permit.


Fees for DPH review and oversight of projects subject to the ordinance would apply. Please refer to DPH’s fee schedule, available at: [http://www.sfdph.org/dph/EH/Fees.asp#haz](http://www.sfdph.org/dph/EH/Fees.asp#haz). Please provide a copy of the submitted Maher Application and Phase I ESA with the EEA.

**Historical Resource Evaluation (HRE).** The proposed project includes demolition of two potential historic resources (buildings constructed 50 or more years ago). Therefore, the project is subject to the Planning Department’s Historic Preservation review which would include preparation of a Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) by a qualified professional who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards. The Department will provide the project sponsor with a list of three consultants from the Historic Resource Consultant Pool. Once the EEA is submitted, please contact Tina Tam, Senior Preservation Planner, via email (tina.tam@sfgov.org) for the list of three consultants. Upon selection of the historic resource consultant, the scope of the HRE shall be prepared in consultation with Planning Department Preservation staff.

**Noise.** The Planning Department’s noise maps indicate that existing ambient noise levels on surrounding streets are at or exceed 65 decibels. As the project involves the siting of a new noise-sensitive (residential) use, an acoustical analysis demonstrating that the project will comply with the California Noise Insulation Standards found in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (Title 24) is required. Title 24, administered by the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) as part of their Building Permit Application process, specifies the extent to which walls, doors, and floor ceiling assemblies must block or absorb sound to limit noise transmitted between adjacent dwelling units. In order to limit noise from exterior sources, the noise insulation standards set forth an interior standard of 45 dBA (Ldn) in any habitable room and, where such units are proposed in areas subject to noise levels greater than 60 dBA (Ldn), demonstration regarding how dwelling units have been designed to meet this interior standard. If the interior noise level depends upon windows being closed, the design for the structure must also specify the ventilation or air-conditioning system to provide a habitable interior environment.

The proposed project’s open space areas should be protected to the maximum extent feasible from existing ambient noise levels that could prove annoying or disruptive to its users. Mitigation measures to limit construction noise may also apply to the proposed project.

**Shadow.** The proposed project would result in construction of a building approximately 130 feet in height. Planning Code Section 295 requires that a shadow analysis be performed to determine whether a project has the potential to cast shadow on properties under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission. Department staff has prepared a preliminary shadow fan that indicates the project would not cast new shadow on any properties under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department, nor would it cast shadows on any other parks or open spaces (see attached). Therefore, a detailed shadow study is not required.
Stormwater and Flooding. The proposed project would disturb more than 5,000 sf of ground surface and is therefore subject to San Francisco's stormwater management requirements as specified in the Stormwater Management Ordinance and the corresponding San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) Stormwater Design Guidelines (Guidelines). Projects that trigger the stormwater management requirements must prepare a Stormwater Control Plan demonstrating project adherence to the performance measures outlined in the Guidelines including reduction in total volume and peak flow rate of stormwater. Responsibility for review and approval of the Stormwater Control Plan is with the SFPUC, Wastewater Enterprise, Urban Watershed Management Program. SFPUC approval of a Stormwater Control Plan is required prior to site or building permit issuance. The Guidelines also require a signed maintenance agreement to ensure proper care of the necessary stormwater controls. The project's environmental evaluation should generally assess how and where the implementation of necessary stormwater controls would reduce the potential negative impacts of stormwater runoff. To view the Stormwater Management Ordinance, the Stormwater Design Guidelines, or download instructions for the Stormwater Control Plan, go to http://sfwater.org/sdg.

Transportation. Based on review of the PPA submittal, a transportation study is likely required for this project. Whether a transportation impact analysis is required will be determined after submittal of an EEA. In order to assist Planning staff in making that determination, please provide the following information in the EEA:

- Length of time Lot 3 (1130 Post) retail space has been vacant;
- Specify what the total 6,216 square feet of “other uses” are for the two existing buildings;
- Provide the number of existing parking spaces in the two buildings;
- Provide an estimated number of staff and staffing hours for the Medical Office Building; and
- Provide dimensions of driveways and loading areas on plans.

If required, the scope of work and the transportation report must be prepared by a qualified consultant working at the direction of the Planning Department staff. The consultant must be selected from one of three transportation consultants assigned to this project by the Department during the environmental review process. The Planning Department’s list of approved transportation consultants is available at:

Tree Planting and Protection Checklist. The Department of Public Works (DPW) Code Section 8.02-8.11 requires disclosure and protection of landmark, significant, and street trees located on private and public property. Any such trees must be shown on the Site Plans with the size of the trunk diameter, tree height, and accurate canopy drip line. Please submit a Tree Planting and Protection Checklist with the EEA and ensure that trees are appropriately shown on site plans.4

Wind. The proposed project would involve construction of a building over 80 feet in height and a wind tunnel analysis is needed. A wind consultant will be required to prepare a proposed scope of work for review and approval by the Environmental Planning case manager prior to preparing the analysis. (See also Planning Code Section 243(c)(15) related to ground level wind currents)

Notification of a Project Receiving Environmental Review. Notice is required to be sent to occupants of the project site and properties adjacent to the project site, as well as to owners and, to the extent feasible, occupants of properties within 300 feet of the project site at the initiation of the environmental review. Please be prepared to provide mailing labels upon request during the environmental review process.

Disclosure Report for Developers of Major City Projects. The San Francisco Ethics Commission S.F. Campaign & Government Conduct Code § 3.520 et seq. requires developers to provide the public with information about donations that developers make to nonprofit organizations that may communicate with the City and County regarding major development projects. This report must be completed and filed by the developer of any "major project." A major project is a real estate development project located in the City and County of San Francisco with estimated construction costs exceeding $1,000,000 where either: (1) The Planning Commission or any other local lead agency certifies an EIR for the project; or (2) The project relies on a program EIR and the Planning Department, Planning Commission, or any other local lead agency adopts any final environmental determination under CEQA. A final environmental determination includes a project approval by the Planning Commission that adopts CEQA Findings. (In instances where more than one of the preceding determinations occurs, the filing requirement shall be triggered by the earliest such determination.) A major project does not include a residential development project with four or fewer dwelling units. The first (or initial) report must be filed within 30 days of the date the Planning Commission (or any other local lead agency) certifies the EIR for that project or, for a major project relying on a program EIR, within 30 days of the date that the Planning Department, Planning Commission, or any other local lead agency adopts a final environmental determination under CEQA. Please submit a Disclosure Report for Developers of Major City Projects to the San Francisco Ethics Commission. This form can be found at the Planning Department or online at http://www.sfethics.org.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT APPROVALS:

The project requires the following Planning Department approvals. These approvals may be reviewed in conjunction with the required environmental review, but may not be granted until after the required environmental review is completed.

Conditional Use Authorization from the Planning Commission is required for the proposed project per the following Planning Code Sections:

- Limitation of Non-Residential Uses (Section 243(c)(8); see also below link to new legislation). The project is proposing less residential use than generally required by both the Van Ness Avenue Area Plan, and by the Planning Code with respect to the ratio between the amount of occupied floor area of residential and non-residential uses. However, the Planning Code does allow relief from this requirement by seeking a Conditional Use Authorization. The Board of Supervisors recently adopted new legislation that became effective on December 26, 2014, which amended provisions in the Planning Code. A link to the new legislation is attached for more detailed information: https://sfgov.legistar.com/View.asmx?M=F&ID=3395373&GUID=865394CC-7771-46ED-9D30-39F6987DA43B
• **Office Development (Sections 320 through 324).** An Office Allocation Application from the Planning Commission is required per Planning Code Section 321 et seq. to establish more than 25,000 gross square feet of new office space.

• **New Construction over 50 Feet in Height (Sections 253 and 253.2).** Conditional Use Authorization is required for new construction of a building greater than 50 feet in height in an RC District. In reviewing such proposals, the Planning Commission shall consider the expressed purposes of the RC Districts, and of the height and bulk districts, as well as the criteria stated in Section 303(c) of this Code and the objectives, policies and principles of the General Plan, and may permit a height of such building or structure up to but not exceeding the height limit prescribed by the height and bulk district in which the property is located. For properties within the Van Ness Special Use District, pursuant to Planning Code Section 253.2, setback requirements above 50 feet may be imposed as a condition of approval of the Conditional Use Authorization under this section.

• **Planned Unit Development/PUD (Sections 303(c) and 304).** A PUD is allowed for a lot area exceeding one-half acre pursuant to the authorization of a Conditional Use. The subject lot is over three-quarters of an acre at approximately 37,800 square feet. The procedures for Planned Unit Developments are intended for projects on sites of considerable size, developed as integrated units and designed to produce an environment of stable and desirable character which will benefit the occupants, the neighborhood and the City as a whole. In cases of outstanding overall design, complementary to the design and values of the surrounding area, such a project may merit a well-reasoned modification of certain of the provisions contained elsewhere in this Code.

• **Bulk (Sections 243(c)(3), 253.2, 270 and 271).** The project site is located in the 130-V Height and Bulk District. Based on this designation, the bulk of the building above 50 feet would need to be in compliance with Section 253.2. The submitted plans indicate that the bulk limit would be exceeded; therefore, a PUD modification for bulk would be necessary.

• **Rear Yard (Sections 134 and 243(c)(6)).** The project requires a rear yard of at least 25 percent of the lot depth beginning at the lowest story containing a dwelling unit. However, in the Van Ness Special Use District, the rear yard requirement may be modified or waived by the Zoning Administrator provided that all the conditions stated under Section 243(c)(6) are met. Otherwise, a PUD modification for rear yard would be necessary.

• **Usable Open Space (Section 135).** The project requires 36 square feet of open space if private or 68 square feet if common for each dwelling unit. Additionally, any such open spaces must meet the dimensional requirements of Section 135(f) and (g). If the project does not meet this requirement, a PUD modification for usable open space would be necessary. The Department generally would recommend providing an equivalent amount of open space.

• **Exposure (Section 140).** All dwelling units must face directly onto an open area. The open area may be a public street, alley or side yard measuring at least 25 feet in width or an inner court which is at least 25 feet in every horizontal dimension for the floor at which the dwelling is located and the floor immediately above it, with an increase of five feet in every horizontal
dimension at each subsequent floor. If the project does not meet this requirement, a PUD modification for exposure would be necessary. The Department generally encourages projects to minimize the number of units needing an exposure exemption.

- **Off-Street Parking (Sections 150, 151 and 243; see also below link to new legislation).** The project is permitted to provide one parking space for every two dwelling units or 0.50 space per dwelling unit. Conditional Use Authorization is required pursuant to Planning Code Section 151.1(g) if providing up to 0.75 spaces per dwelling unit. Parking provision above the 0.75 per dwelling unit is prohibited. The Board of Supervisors recently adopted new legislation that became effective on December 26, 2014, which amended provisions in the Planning Code. A link to the new legislation is attached for more detailed information:

- **Off-Street Freight Loading (Section 152; see also below link to new legislation).** If the proposed project will not meet this requirement; a PUD modification for freight loading would be necessary. The Board of Supervisors recently adopted new legislation that became effective on December 26, 2014, which amended provisions in the Planning Code. A link to the new legislation is attached for more detailed information:

A **Building Permit Application** is required for the proposed new construction on the subject property.

A **Demolition Permit Application** is required for the demolition of the existing buildings.

Conditional Use authorization and Variance applications are available in the Planning Department lobby at 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400; at the Planning Information Center at 1660 Mission Street, First Floor; and online at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org). Building and Demolition Permit applications are available at the Department of Building Inspection at 1660 Mission Street.

**NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATIONS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH:**

Project Sponsors are encouraged to conduct public outreach with the surrounding community and neighborhood groups early in the development process. Additionally, many approvals require a public hearing with an associated neighborhood notification. Differing levels of neighborhood notification are mandatory for some or all of the reviews and approvals listed above.

This project is required to conduct a **Pre-application** meeting with surrounding neighbors and registered neighborhood groups before a development application may be filed with the Planning Department. The Pre-application packet, which includes instructions and template forms, is available at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org) under the “Permits & Zoning” tab. All registered neighborhood group mailing lists are available online at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org) under the “Resource Center” tab.
Preliminary Project Assessment

Case No. 2014.1616U
1200 Van Ness Avenue

PRELIMINARY PROJECT COMMENTS:

The following comments address specific Planning Code and other general issues that may significantly impact the proposed project.

1. **Van Ness Avenue Area Plan.** The subject property falls within the area covered by the Van Ness Avenue Area Plan in the General Plan, which can be viewed at: http://www.sf-planning.org/ftp/General_Plan/Van_Ness_Ave.htm

   The Van Ness Avenue Area Plan of the General Plan identifies the subject area as a prime location for residential development, due in part because of its proximity to jobs, transit, and other infrastructure; the availability of large underutilized lots; the width of Van Ness and therefore the appropriateness of larger buildings; the taller height zones; and the location of smaller side streets that can be utilized for parking and loading. As such, both the General Plan and the Planning Code generally require that a ratio of 3 square-feet of residential use to 1 square foot of non-residential use be included for new construction projects. To enable a reduction of such requirement, a Conditional Use Authorization and an in-lieu fee for the forgone units would be required. Please note that in-lieu fees are subject to annual indexing. (See the Impact Fee register for the most updated rate for this in-lieu fee as well as other impact fees at: www.sfdbi.org.)

   Given the City's need for additional housing and the appropriateness for housing at this location, maximizing the number of dwellings at this location is strongly encouraged (Van Ness Avenue Area Plan: Objective 1, Policy 1.1 and Policy 1.4).

2. **Floor Area Ratio (Section 243(c)(1)).** Planning Code Section 243(c)(1) establishes a basic floor area ratio limit of 7.0 to 1 in the 130-foot height district. This limit applies to dwellings notwithstanding Section 124(b) of this Code, including floor space used for non-accessory off-street parking, driveways, and maneuvering areas. For definitions of floor area ratio and gross floor area, see Sections 102.11 and 102.9, respectively. The provisions allowing a floor area premium set forth in Section 125(a) shall not apply in the Van Ness Special Use District.

3. **Upper Level Stepback (Sections 243(c)(7) and 253.2).** The Van Ness Avenue Area Plan recommends a setback of up to 20 feet at the height of the prevailing street wall, as established by the existing buildings along Van Ness Avenue on blocks adjacent to the subject property (Van Ness Avenue Area Plan, Policy 5.3; see also below section related to Preliminary Design Comments). Planning Code Sections 243(c)(7) and 253.2 also establish required setbacks for buildings exceeding a height of 50 feet.

4. **Reduction of Ground Level Wind Currents (Section 243(c)(15)).** Planning Code Section 243(c)(15) establishes wind level standards so that new developments would not cause year-round ground level wind currents to exceed more than 10 percent of the time during certain times of the day. (See also Wind topic discussed under Environmental Review)

5. **Street Trees (Section 138.1; see also below link to new legislation).** Planning Code Section 138.1 requires one street tree for every 20 feet of frontage where dwelling units are being added or where
the addition of gross floor area equal to 20 percent or more of the gross floor area of an existing building is proposed. The Board of Supervisors recently adopted new legislation that became effective on December 26, 2014, which amended provisions in the Planning Code. A link to the new legislation is attached for more detailed information:

6. Standards for Bird-Safe Buildings (Section 139). Planning Code Section 139 establishes standards for bird-safe buildings to help reduce injury and mortality to birds caused by certain types of new construction, replacement facades, and building features considered to be “bird-hazards” due to either location-related hazards or feature-related hazards.

7. Street Frontages (Sections 145.1(c)(4) and 145.1(c)(6)). Per Planning Code Sections 145.1(c)(4) and 145.1(c)(6), ground floor non-residential uses in all RC districts shall have a minimum floor-to-floor height of 14 feet, as measured from grade and 60 percent transparency into the interior of the ground floor spaces.

8. Bicycle Parking (Sections 155.1 and 155.2). Both Class One and Class Two bicycle parking spaces are required for the proposed project. Future submittals should depict proposed bicycle spaces as outlined in the Zoning Administrator Bulletin No. 9: Bicycle Parking Standards: Design and Layout.

9. Car-Share Parking Spaces (Section 166). The proposed project is required to provide car-sharing service parking spaces.

10. Unbundled Parking (Section 167). All off-street parking spaces accessory to residential uses in new structures of 10 dwelling units or more shall be leased or sold separately from the rental or purchase fees for dwelling units for the life of the dwelling units.

11. Inclusionary Affordable Housing Program (Sections 243(c)(8) and 415 through 415.11). Affordable housing is required for a project proposing ten or more dwelling units. The Project Sponsor must submit an Affidavit of Compliance with the Inclusionary Affordable Housing Program: Planning Code Section 415, to the Planning Department identifying the method of compliance, on-site, off-site, or in-lieu fee. Any on-site affordable dwelling-units proposed as part of the project must be designated as owner-occupied units, not rental units. Affordable units designated as on-site units shall be sold as ownership units and will remain as ownership units for the life of the project.

For your information, if a project proposes rental units, it may be eligible for an On-site Alternative to the Affordable Housing Fee if it has demonstrated to the Planning Department that the affordable units are either: 1) ownership only or 2) not subject to the Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act (a Costa Hawkins exception). Affordable units are not subject to the Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act under the exception provided in Civil Code Sections 1954.50 through one of the following methods:

a. direct financial construction from a public entity
b. development bonus or other form of public assistance
A Costa Hawkins exception agreement is drafted by the City Attorney. You must state in your submittal how the project qualifies for a Costa Hawkins exception. The request should be addressed to the Director of Current Planning. If the project is deemed eligible, we may start working with the City Attorney on the agreement.

First Source Hiring Agreement (Administrative Code Chapter 83). A First Source Hiring Agreement is required for any project proposing to construct ten or more dwelling-units. For more information, please contact:

Ken Nim, Workforce Compliance Officer  
CityBuild, Office of Economic and Workforce Development  
City and County of San Francisco  
50 Van Ness, San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 581-2303

12. Impact Fees. This project will be subject to various impact fees. An initial review indicates the following impact fees, which are assessed by the Planning Department, will be required:

- **Transit Impact Development Fee (Sections 411 through 411.9).** Any new construction that cumulatively results in at least 800 gross square feet or more of a use covered by the TIDF chart in Section 411.3 is required to pay TIDF impact fees. Residential is excluded, and in some cases, credit may be given to the square footage of uses being eliminated.

- **Jobs-Linkage Housing Fee/JLHF (Section 413).** Any new construction that cumulatively results in at least 25,000 gross square feet or more of a use covered by the Jobs-Linkage Housing Fee is required to pay the JLHF impact fee. Residential is excluded, and in some cases, credit may be given to the square footage of uses being eliminated.

- **Child Care Fee (Section 414).** Any new construction that cumulatively results in at least 50,000 gross square feet of office use is required to pay the Child Care Impact fee. This fee would apply if it is determined that the proposed project includes 50,000 gross square feet or more of office use.

**Note:** All impact fees are indexed annually. The most recent fee rates can be found at the Department of Building Inspection's web site at: [www.sfdbi.org](http://www.sfdbi.org).

13. **Van Ness Special Sign District (Section 607.3 and Article 6).** Planning Code Section 607.3 establishes standards for signs located within the Van Ness Avenue Special Use District.

**PRELIMINARY POLICY AND DESIGN COMMENTS:**

The following comments address preliminary design issues that may significantly impact the proposed project:
Both the City's General Plan and the Van Ness Avenue Area Plan call for new architecture that is complementary to the existing building pattern in terms of scale and rhythm and architectural expression.

**Urban Design Element of the City's General Plan**

Policy 3.6  Relate the bulk of building to the prevailing scale of development to avoid an overwhelming or dominating appearance in new construction.

Policy 3.8  Discourage accumulation and development of large properties, unless such development is carefully designed with respect to its impact upon the surrounding area and upon the city.

**Van Ness Avenue Area Plan**

Objective 6  Encourage distinguished architecture whose scale, composition and detailing enhances the overall design structure of the avenue and relates to human scale.

Policy 6.2  Create varied rhythms in development on large lots by inserting vertical piers/columns, or changes in fenestration and materials to articulate what otherwise would be an undifferentiated façade plane.

Policy 6.4  Differentiate bases of buildings and incorporate detail at ground level through variety in materials, color, texture and architectural projections.

1. **Site Design, Open Space, and Massing.** The proposed treatment to the podium portion of the building feels massive and horizontal in relationship to the rest of the neighborhood. The overall massing should more appropriately respond to the massing, scale, and modulation of the context on Van Ness. To address this, the Planning Department supports retention and adaptive re-use of the existing building on Van Ness. This would help break-up the apparent size of the podium portion of the project, avoid demolishing a possible historic resource, and would help retain the existing character of Van Ness Avenue built environment, which the Area Plan encourages. (Policy 1.2, Objective 5, Policy 5.2, Policy 11.1)

Staff is also concerned with the siting and size of the proposed tower. While the Planning Code enables exceptions to the bulk controls, which the project would be required to seek, the design must meet five design criteria and eleven sub-criteria that, in total, assure the tower design performs aesthetically as a tower that meets the bulk limits (see Planning Code Section 271). Staff is concerned that these criteria have not been sufficiently met, particularly on the southern side of the tower, where there is no beak or relief along its width. Staff encourages you to reconsider the design of the tower and to either reduce its bulk or find other design interventions to reduce its apparent bulk.

Unless the original portion of the building is retained, staff also recommends that the tower be moved closer to Van Ness Avenue (with at least a 20-foot setback as required by Section 253.2) to reinforce and define this major street. Finally, the Planning Department recommends lower massing on Hemlock Street and recommends that the massing be further modulated to step up with the grade.
2. **Street Frontage.** All frontages are required to have active uses. The ground floor of Phase 1 along Hemlock Street is entirely dedicated to service functions. Staff recommends consolidating these, and providing active uses.

3. **Vehicle Circulation, Access and Parking.** Staff recommends limiting the vehicular access to a single frontage. Furthermore, consider locating the loading and trash functions behind the garage entrance to consolidate the vehicle entries and curb cuts to a single and minimal building frontage devoted to vehicle access.

4. **Architecture.** Staff recommends that the residential architecture responds to patterns of proportion, scale detailing and materiality found in the immediate context. The current residential portion of the proposal seems more commercial or institutional in temperament. You are encouraged to find ways to make the residential portion appropriately read as residential.

5. **Required Streetscape and Pedestrian Improvements.** Per Planning Code Section 138.1, the project sponsor will be required to submit a Streetscape Plan illustrating the location and design of streetscape improvements appropriate to the street type, including site furnishings, landscaping, corner curb extensions, and sidewalk widening as appropriate. The Planning Department may require these elements as part of conditions of approval.

   See [http://www.sfbetterstreets.org/design-guidelines/street-types/](http://www.sfbetterstreets.org/design-guidelines/street-types/) to identify relevant street types for the project frontage.

   Staff recommends that the project sponsor explore public realm features, such as a bulb-out at the corner of Post Street and Van Ness Avenue subject to feasibility with the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) plans. The Van Ness BRT is a proposal to improve bus transit that proposes design alternatives that may affect the provision of bulb-outs that extend into Van Ness Avenue.

   Planning staff is happy to review proposals or meet with the project sponsor to explore ideas.

   The furnishing zone of the sidewalks should consider special paving, and enhanced planting and other site furnishing such as seating, bike racks, and pedestrian lighting.

   The Planning Department would like to see improvements along Hemlock Street, particularly at the west end, including a raised crosswalk along Van Ness roadway, and special paving treatments and streetscape elements.

   For more information on process, guidelines, and requirements for street improvements, refer to [www.sfbetterstreets.org](http://www.sfbetterstreets.org).

   Required streetscape and pedestrian improvements are not eligible for in-kind fee credit.

**PRELIMINARY PROJECT ASSESSMENT EXPIRATION:**

This Preliminary Project Assessment is valid for a period of 18 months. An Environmental Evaluation, Conditional Use Authorization, or Building Permit Application, as listed above, must be submitted no
later than July 14, 2016. Otherwise, this determination is considered expired and a new Preliminary Project Assessment is required. Such applications and plans must be generally consistent with those found in this Preliminary Project Assessment.

Enclosure:
Shadow Fan Analysis

cc: Derrick Chang, Van Ness Post Center LLC, Property Owner
    Mary Woods, Current Planning
    Christopher Thomas, Environmental Planning
    Mathew Snyder, Citywide Planning and Analysis
    David Winslow, Urban Design
    Jonas Ionin, Planning Commission Secretary
    Jerry Robbins, MTA
    Jerry Sanguinetti, DPW
Title: 1200 Van Ness Avenue - Case No. 2014.1616U
Comments: Shadow Fan Analysis
Modeled at 150 Feet
Printed: 13 January, 2015

The City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) does not guarantee the accuracy, adequacy, completeness or usefulness of any information. CCSF provides this information on an "as is" basis without warranty of any kind, including but not limited to warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, and assumes no responsibility for anyone's use of the information.