



# *San Francisco Tomorrow*

*Working to Protect the Urban Environment*

## **February 2020 News**

### **Yes on E – Putting Affordable Housing First**

Proposition E on the March 3rd ballot provides an update to Proposition M, passed in 1986, that created a cap on new high-rise office development. That cap helped insulate San Francisco against recession in the 1990s and early 2000s. In recent years, office development began to bump up against the Prop M cap, even though large development areas like Mission Bay, Hunters Point, Treasure Island and the Transbay Terminal Area are exempt. Meanwhile, San Francisco's population has grown by more than 10% in the last decade as new high-rise housing has also increased dramatically. But the increase in market-rate housing stock has not brought down housing prices, and construction of new affordable housing has not kept up with our housing crisis.

Prop E aims to cool San Francisco's flaming hot housing market by tamping down demand. It will add teeth to the 1986 law by tying office building caps to the provision of affordable housing. If the production of affordable housing falls short of annual quotas, office development will be reduced by a similar percentage. This will create a shared incentive to fill that affordable housing gap.

Proposition E gives San Francisco voters an important role in influencing future development. We've seen the proliferation of high-rise offices and luxury housing, while middle and low-income residents are being pushed out of the City. Past mayors, current Mayor Breed and a series of Planning Commission members have deferred to developers, allowing them to continue to build the most lucrative projects despite the high cost to San Franciscans' quality of life and ability to remain in the City.

It's time to renew our commitment to San Francisco neighborhoods. Vote Yes on E.

*Jennifer Clary*

## Update on the City's Response to the Climate Emergency



In mid-December, SF Climate Emergency Coalition sent [a second letter](#) to the Mayor and Supervisors, signed by 11 organizations including SFT, about why all-electric buildings are essential to achieving the City's climate emergency goals. Supervisor Mandelman's ordinance incentivizing developers to build all-electric, passed before the end of 2019, is in effect now.

Supervisor Mandelman agreed to duplicate the legislation - so that electric-ready amendments could be considered for new mixed-fuel buildings. He also committed to drafting a natural gas ban in new construction by this April. However, while such a ban is moving through the requisite channels, too many buildings already approved for development but not yet permitted would still use fossil fuel. As an interim fix, we advocated amending the duplicate ordinance with an electric-ready requirement as soon as possible.

The city now has over 73,000 new housing units in the pipeline - the vast majority in the eastern neighborhoods, where climate change has most affected residents least able to cope. If all these projects are not required to be at least electric-ready (equipped with the necessary electric infrastructure for a seamless future switch to electric appliances), we are missing a huge opportunity to reach our climate goals while protecting people's health. Electric-readiness will also protect consumers from future higher utility bills and expensive retrofitting.

Supervisor Mar meanwhile has commissioned a Legislative Budget Analyst report on the cost of decarbonizing existing residential building stock, hoping for the results this month. His office is intensely interested in converting existing buildings to all-electric while ensuring a just transition, and the Coalition is and will continue to work with him. If you are a D4 constituent, be sure to thank him for being proactive!

People need to know that, for example, a modern induction cooktop is nothing like your grandparents' electric stove with coils on top. Modern electric heat pumps, unlike furnaces, can double as air conditioners - who knew we might need such a thing here? Consumer education & outreach, and funding for economic incentives and reparations, are crucial to assure a cleaner and cheaper energy future for all of us.

In a blog on the Coalition web site, member Chris Naso sums up the current situation for activists nicely: "Incremental as they are, these are important victories in light of the surprisingly difficult political landscape in 'progressive' San Francisco, and if nothing else are evidence of this movement's growing strength."

If you'd like to join us, you can do so [here, on our web site](#). We'll invite you to constituent meetings with Supervisors as well as alert you to other opportunities to get involved, such as testifying at relevant Committee hearings.

Want to learn more about building electrification?

- **Tuesday, February 11th**, 6 - 9pm, *How to Move CA to All-Electric Gas-Free Homes Powered by Clean Energy*, sponsored by Climate Reality Bay Area, tickets \$7.50. Speakers from Sierra Club Bay Area, refreshments, breakout sessions. [More info and register here.](#)
- **Tuesday, February 25th** from 3 to 8pm: The Department of the Environment is sponsoring an [Energy Fair](#), really an Electrification Expo, at the County Fair Building, 1199 9th Ave. Speakers live cooking demos! workshops and energy exhibits. Click for more info and [register](#)

*Joni Eisen*