



TODCO GROUP CENTRAL SOMA COMMUNITY PLAN KEY TOPIC:  
“Community Commercial”: How to Keep Small-Scale Enterprise Working in Central SOMA

Throughout its post-industrial history, the predominant commercial character of Central SOMA has been defined by its hundreds of small businesses. Historically, these small businesses served Central City markets with an array of Production, Distribution, Repair, and Services (PDRS), and provided everyday services for the neighborhood's residents and workers.

Central SOMA's economy and local resident and worker populations have evolved over the decades, but the fundamental demand and opportunities for PDRS and neighborhood-oriented small business remain. They are taking new forms that are relevant to 21st Century SOMA, and some will ultimately come to define the character and spirit of SOMA just as previous generations did before. Unlike formula retail, small businesses contribute to the unique and evolving character of the neighborhood. **Small-scale enterprise plays a vital role in serving our community, and an important provision of our Central SOMA Community Plan is to assure the ability of small businesses of all kinds to locate, prosper, evolve, and be an integral part of Central SOMA. After all, small is beautiful.**

Central SOMA's Microbusinesses

An important sub-class of small businesses in Central SOMA today are “microbusinesses,” defined in this Community Plan as retail operating in a space of 1,000 square feet or less.

The two great hurdles for SOMA's small businesses are a) finding retail space that is affordable to rent or buy in the current booming real estate market; and b) the capital investment needed to build out retail space. Microbusinesses have been successful in Central SOMA despite these challenges because, though small, they have access to a large customer base in this dense, transit-rich, central neighborhood.

Microbusinesses are small by conventional standards, but provide a truly outsized service for Central SOMA. The central characteristics of microbusinesses are as follows:

- **Microbusinesses provide essential neighborhood services and amenities to residents and workers.** Shoe repair shops, dry cleaners, small neighborhood restaurants, hair and nail salons, and other businesses meet day-to-day needs

within walking distance of work or home.

- Microbusinesses activate space that would not otherwise be utilized. They are found in untraditional spaces with unusual layouts, small footprints, or otherwise undesirable locations. At 500- to 1,000-square feet, **the spaces that are used by microbusinesses are too small to be of use to most chain shops and formula retail establishments.**
- **Small retail spaces and storefronts are places where unique, diverse, and character-rich businesses can take hold.** Unlike formula retail, microbusinesses have tremendous place-making value. By bringing activity to the street they enrich and define the distinct character of SOMA.
- **Microbusinesses provide excellent entry-level small business opportunities.** The cost of entry for a microbusiness is modest, allowing entrepreneurs to get a foot in the door. The cost to remodel an existing space that has already been built out is feasible for small entrepreneurs at \$50-\$100 per sf. This is compared to upwards of \$200+/sf to build out new, unfinished space.
- **Microbusinesses owners are exceptionally diverse.** They range from the traditional Central SOMA microbusinesses run by residents and longtime immigrant, LGBT, and arts communities to the New SOMA wave of food trucks, incubators, startups, hubs and pop-ups.

High land values and skyrocketing real estate costs in Central SOMA will put pressure on these microbusinesses. Some will be displaced as older buildings are demolished and replaced with new housing and offices. To offset this loss and add to the small retail spaces and storefronts in Central SOMA, our Community Plan calls for the following:

- **Space for small-scale enterprise should be required as a condition of approval** for certain new office and large residential developments, especially along alleys.
- **Storefront retail space of 1,000 square feet or less should be required adjacent to all street-level open spaces built for new office development.** Microbusinesses in these locations will help to activate office open spaces – which are so often dull and lifeless – while providing all of the community-serving benefits listed above. (For more, see the key topic paper titled “Integrating Community Building Public Open Spaces and Private Green Spaces in New SOMA Office Development.”)

## Microbusinesses and the New SOMA “Scene”

Microbusinesses are helping to shape the look and feel of New SOMA, particularly its food scene. Among New SOMA’s most popular and interesting lunch spots and coffee places are microbusinesses that, in spite of their small size, contribute mightily to the character and street life of the neighborhood. These include spots in untraditional storefronts, as well as food trucks and pop-up markets that temporarily occupy space in the public realm.

### *Untraditional Storefronts:*

- Several microbusinesses are clustered in small spaces fronting the neighborhood’s alleys. On Ritch St. between Brannan St. and Townsend St., Centro Coffee and Farmerbrown’s Little Skillet (one of the 10 best places in America for Fried Chicken according to Bon Appetit magazine) turn the alley into a meet-up for nearby office workers every day around lunch time, despite a noticeable lack of outdoor seating and streetscaping.



The order window at Farmerbrown’s Little Skillet on Ritch Alley (left) and neighboring Café Centro (top right). Two women sit down for coffee on the historic loading dock across the alley from Café Centro (bottom right).

- A handful of businesses have been carved out of larger storefronts. Chrome Coffee runs out of a corner of the Chrome Store (messenger bags and apparel) on Fourth St. The storefront of Elite Audio Systems on Folsom St. is a hip coffee bar (it doubles as the entry way to the boutique showroom in the back). Box Kitchen is a popular takeout restaurant run out of the kitchen of the Tempest Bar on Natoma Alley. The side door to the kitchen doubles as an order window.



**Chrome Coffee Bar (left) and Box Kitchen (right) are literal “hole in the wall” microbusinesses. Chrome Coffee Bar is carved out of a corner of the Chrome Store’s frontage onto Fourth St. Box Kitchen runs out of the kitchen of the Tempest Bar and its order window opens onto Natoma Alley.**

*Food Trucks:*

- Food trucks can be found everyday serving lunch crowds, some on a regular schedule at the same spot, and others on a semi-regular basis. The Melt (grilled cheese sandwiches) parks a truck in front of Pacific Bicycles; Los Compadres (Mexican) parks at the entrance to a public parking lot at Second Street and Dow Place; Linda’s Catering (Ramen and Sushi) parks on Townsend St. near Fourth St.; La Fisheria parks in a corner of the Shell gas station parking lot at Fifth St. and Folsom St. Off the Grid, the self-proclaimed “roaming mobile food extravaganza,” hosts a pop-up market every weekday at Fifth St. and Minna Alley (the site of the old S.F. Examiner building) with six food trucks and dozens of folding chairs for the crowds that gather for lunch.

Food trucks have transformed the food scene in a big way in Central SOMA over the last few years, but the long-term effect of the food truck surge for the community is unclear. They undeniably enliven the neighborhood while they’re here, but they often leave the neighborhood on nights and weekends. Food trucks create unwelcome competition for permanent neighborhood dining establishments, and it has yet to be seen if the neighborhood will be able to provide enough market demand to support both.



**Minna Alley closes daily for Off the Grid (left), which brings in four or more food trucks. Organizers set up seating and occasionally hire a band to entertain lunch crowds. La Fisheria food truck (right) parks in the otherwise empty corner of the Shell gas station at Fifth St. and Folsom St.**

*Pop-Up Markets, Mercados, and Farmers' Markets:*

- Pop-up markets provide retail space in the form of booths and stalls for a handful of small entrepreneurs. They offer lunch options, crafts, and fresh produce shopping for the neighborhood's residents and workers. Some examples are a weekly farmers' market on Yerba Buena pedestrian lane; a semi-regular mercado at the well-designed outdoor POPO at the office complex at 303 Second Street; and a new coffee stall outside Public Bikes that caters to the South Park crowds.

The popularity of these New SOMA microbusinesses (long lines are a given at certain spots during peak hours) speak to the utility they serve to the neighborhood's residents and workers. Some seem destined to become neighborhood icons – and several arguably already are. A successful few might graduate to bigger, more expensive retail spaces.

Several of the New SOMA microbusinesses are expansion sites for local businesses moving into a second or third location. **These expansions are evidence that small entrepreneurs are still making it and even flourishing in SOMA, even if they operate out of small or untraditional spaces that formula retail would not – or could not – make use of.** Café Centro in South Park also serves the nearby Chrome Café, and it has a smaller second location on Ritch Alley. Farmerbrown's Little Skillet, the "offshoot" of the full-service Farmerbrown's Restaurant (Mason St. and Market St.), is itself set to expand into the space next door that was formerly occupied by the 330 Ritch night club.

In addition to providing a launching ground for new neighborhood-scale retail, microbusinesses bring a vibrant new street life into formerly neglected pockets of Central SOMA. Most notably, **small retail spaces and food trucks are contributing to the activation of the neighborhood's alleys.** Sections of Ritch Alley, Natoma Alley, Minna

Alley and others are noticeably busier during certain parts of the day because of the foot traffic generated by New SOMA microbusinesses. Our Community Plan includes recommendations for alleyway improvements aimed at creating new open spaces and integrated new pedestrian routes.

To support SOMA's small time entrepreneurs and keep the New SOMA scene going strong, **our Central SOMA Plan proposes:**

- **Active efforts to improve Central SOMA's alleyways**, which are already home to a sizable number of the neighborhood's microbusinesses. The creation of a "Central SOMA Living Alleys Program" should be included as an implementation item in the city's plan and be acted upon as an immediate follow-up item, resulting in the adoption of detailed designs and secured funding.
- **Planning for the siting of food trucks as part of the alleyway revitalization efforts.** Central SOMA's network of alleyways include a number of sites suitable for food trucks (e.g. Clementina Alley and Gallagher Lane and the Lapu Lapu block, see Chapter 4: Neighborhood Building Opportunities at the Block/Alley Level). Our Community Plan includes food trucks as a component of the Neighborhood Building Toolkit that should be incorporated as an element of the Alleys Program for Central SOMA.
- **Provisions for the inclusion of pop-up markets as a condition of the approval for POPO office open spaces, where appropriate**, to activate the space and increase the number of low-overhead small business opportunities available to local entrepreneurs. Community markets may be particularly helpful in activating POPOs sited along alleyways, and might prove to be an essential ingredient in the programming for the proposed Levi Plaza South (see Chapter 4: Creating a Marvelous New SOMA Public Space: "Levi Plaza South").
- **Planning for the expansion of SOMA's network of parklets**, which can be an invaluable amenity for small restaurants and cafés without the space for patio seating (e.g. Darwin Café on Ritch Alley). The San Francisco Planning Commission's decision to make the approval of several new large office buildings contingent upon their inclusion of a parklet (including 333/345 Brannan St. and 270 Brannan St.) demonstrate the more active role the city can and should play in bringing parklets to areas that can benefit from the addition of well-designed community space.
- **Permit for temporary pop-up retail at appropriate sites in the neighborhood's public realm.** The festive environment created daily at Off The Grid demonstrates the potential that public markets and outdoor retail stalls can make in enlivening an underutilized alley. Streamlined permitting, as well as guidelines on street furniture and public programming (live music, etc.) could be established to provide a successful template for new venues.

## Traditional SOMA Microbusinesses and Where They Are

**Storefronts with small footprints provide affordable space to small businesses that provide essential neighborhood services to Central SOMA.** These traditional microbusinesses are shoe repair shops, dry cleaners, small neighborhood restaurants and other neighborhood-serving retail establishments. They are clustered in a variety of small storefront locations across the neighborhood:

- **The majority of traditional microbusinesses in Central SOMA are located in older commercial buildings or on narrow or irregular lots.** Old building stock often included smaller retail spaces than are typically built today. Examples in include the City Gourmet Deli and the South Park Cleaners on Third St. and corner stores, like Jack's Market at Third St. and Stillman St. South Park is bordered by irregular lots that host a number of small establishments like the Grasshopper Salon.



**City Gourmet Deli and South Park Cleaners on Third Street.**

- **Clusters of microbusinesses have formed to serve specialized needs.** In an older commercial retail building on the 200 block of Townsend St., a mini-green retail district has taken root with Gluten Free Grocery (in a space just over 1,000 square feet); the D'Urso Juice Bar and Deli (occupying two small storefronts); and Greenstreets Cleaners, a green dry cleaner in the large corner unit. Together with GSP Guitar Solo, the green small businesses share frontage with a parklet that occupies three parking spaces.
- **Several newer Central SOMA developments have included microbusinesses in order to better integrate themselves into the fabric of the neighborhood.** The SFMTA Moscone Center Parking Garage on Third St. includes pocket retail space at street-level, a solution that simultaneously avoids a street-level void in the form of a blank façade and creates small-scale retail opportunities for the neighbors and workers.

- **Two large residential developments host ground-level space for microbusinesses to provide amenities that would attract and retain tenants.** Museum Parc and Archstone South Market Apartments, two large residential projects developed in the 1980s on opposite sides of Third St., designed small street-level retail spaces in their buildings. Archstone’s ground-level onto Third St. has five businesses in small storefronts of 10 to 25 feet, and footprints of just a few hundred square feet. Marketing materials for Archstone continue to promote the “on-site dining, convenience store and dry cleaners” as community amenities.



**The marketing materials for the Archstone South Market Apartments advertise the retail space it rents at ground-level on Fourth Street as an amenity for residents.**

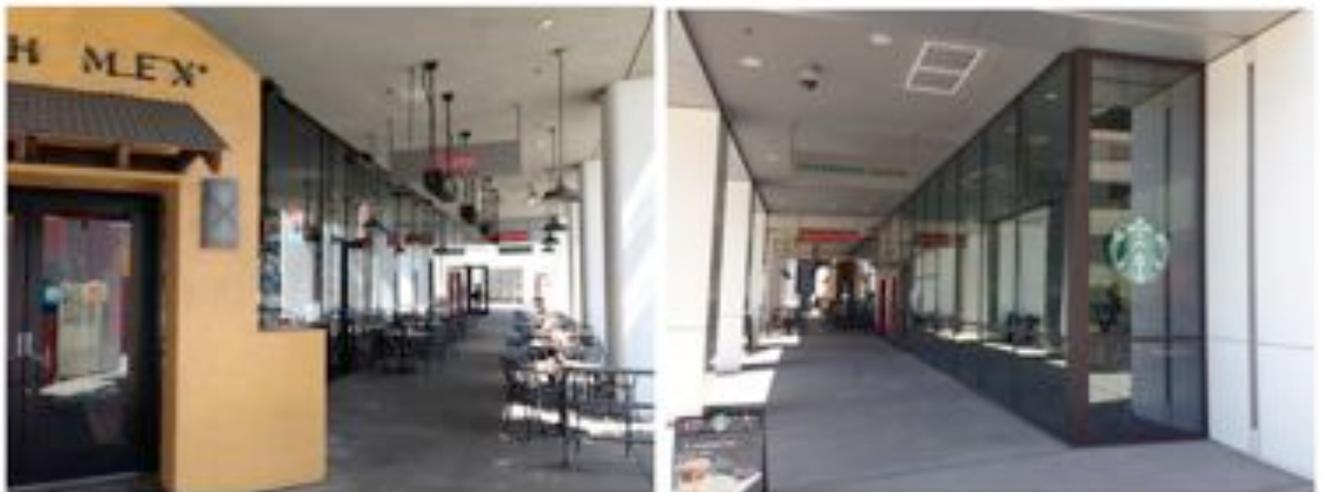
- **The S.F. Planning Commission has taken the action of requiring the inclusion of micro retail spaces as a condition of approval for three recent office developments in SOMA,** at 270 Brannan St. and at two adjacent office buildings at 333 and 345 Brannan St. The Planning Commission based their decision in part on the desirability of retaining small business opportunities in the neighborhood as it undergoes great changes, and in part to ensure space for businesses that might serve the people that will come to Central SOMA to work in these office buildings. This should be a routine requirement for all future Central SOMA projects
- PENDING: Analysis of 303 Folsom ground-floor retail to propose a preferred balance of regular business : microbusiness.

## Formula Retail Creates Neighborhood Dead Zones

Formula retail is antithetical to community character by its very nature. Where formula retail is widespread it creates a district that is without neighborhood life, especially on nights and weekends. An example of this in eastern SOMA in the Transbay Terminal area.

Experience with new office development in Central SOMA shows that to the extent developers elect to include ground-level retail space in their buildings, much of it is designed for and rented to formula retail operations like chain restaurants and fast food (e.g. Starbucks and Subway).

Central SOMA is a center of expansion for large office buildings, with more than 4 million square feet of new office development currently proposed, approved, or under construction, and more to be expected based on the rezoning that is proposed in both the Planning Department's draft Central SOMA Plan and in this Community Plan (See Central SOMA "Pipeline" Development Projects Key Topic Paper). **It is imperative that the expansion of office development does not result in the continued growth of formula retail, which saps the distinctive character of the neighborhood and detracts from an active and vibrant street life.**



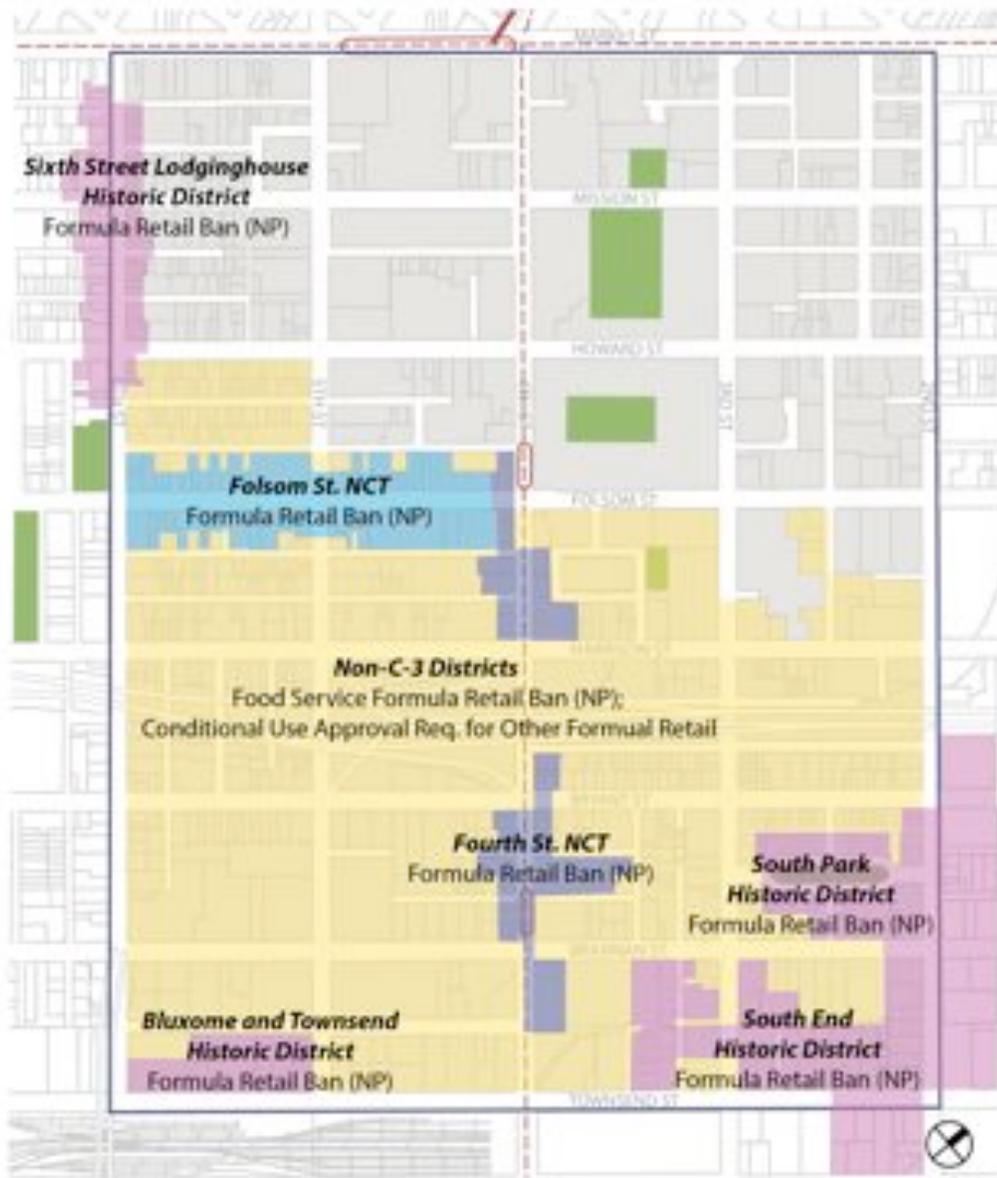
**Chain Store "Dead Zone":** The ground-level view of the 200 Third St. office building looking South (left) and the same stretch looking North (right). This stretch of chain retail could easily be mistaken for a strip mall in Anywhere, USA, but it is directly across busy Third St. from the Moscone Convention Center.

Formula retail operates with a competitive advantage over the neighborhood's independent retail sector and small-time entrepreneurs. This Community Plan envisions policies to support entry-level small-business opportunities, which are at the foundation of our neighborhood's unique identity and character. But to reach their full potential, Central SOMA small businesses will require protection from the proliferation of chains and formula retail.

**While the Planning Department's Draft Plan does not propose any additional requirements to limit the development of formula retail (as defined in section 703.3 of the San Francisco Planning Code), our Central SOMA Plan proposes that:**

- **Formula food-service chains will be classified “NP” – Not Permitted – for all non-C-3 zoning district within Central SOMA.** This applies to the following use categories: bar; drive-up facility; eating and drinking use; restaurant, large-fast food; restaurant, small self-service; restaurant, full-service; take-out food; specialty food, self-service.
- **Other non-food-service formula retail uses will be classified “CU” – Conditional Use – and must apply for Conditional Use Authorization before the Planning Commission.** There is such a wide range of business types that are formula retail that no general rule makes sense – some have their place, even in a neighborhood. Thus, approval for non-food-service formula retail should be closely evaluated on a project-by-project basis, and consideration should be made for the potential benefits or downsides for residents and workers, as well as the impact on SOMA small businesses.
- **Formula retail will be completely prohibited (NP) inside the boundaries of the historic districts within Central SOMA,** including the South End Historic District (both within the existing district and the proposed expansion area), the Bluxome and Townsend Warehouse Historic District, the South Park Historic District, and the Sixth Street Lodginghouse Historic District. This designation will help to retain the historic character of these districts
- **Formula retail restrictions will be strengthened within the Folsom and Fourth Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit Districts (NCTs) to completely prohibit formula retail (changing its current classification of CU to NP).** Our Community Plan would extend the F-NCT zoning two blocks eastward along Folsom Street from Sixth Street to the Yerba Buena Central Subway Station (see Chapter 4: New Zoning and Development Controls). This update is in keeping with the intent of the NCT zoning designation, which was designed to create traditional shopping districts in order to better provide neighborhood-serving retail and commercial businesses.

TODCO Group Central SOMA Community Plan  
Formula Retail Restrictions



This Community Plan proposes no additional restrictions on formula retail within the portions of Central SOMA within C-3 zoning districts (including C-3-R, C-3-O, and C-3-S). Outside the C-3 Districts, the Community Plan would ban food service formula retail and require that all other formula retail be allowed only if it obtained a Conditional Use Permit. Along the Folsom St. and Fourth St. Neighborhood Commercial Transit (NCT) districts, which are designed to be neighborhood-serving shopping centers, a full formula retail ban is proposed. In the four historic districts that fall within or partially within Central SOMA, a full formula retail ban is likewise proposed.

## The Role of Collective Workspace for Today's Small Entrepreneurs

SOMA has always been a center for the segments of the economy that are today drawn to collective workspaces. In its past, SOMA provided a home for such endeavors through readily available cheap space in old industrial buildings (though sometimes illegally or in buildings that were not up-to-code). A new model of collective workspaces is capable of filling the void as commercial gentrification makes SOMA unaffordable to start-ups, low-margin, and non-profit endeavors.

Co-working spaces provide desk space and use of shared facilities (bathrooms, meeting spaces, reception, etc.) to freelance workers, businesses or nonprofits with a small number of employees, and startups not ready for permanent office space. This type of workspace is highly flexible, as "tenants" can move in and out on an as-needed or short-term (even daily) basis. It is generally cheaper to work from a co-working space than from a typical office, at least one in downtown San Francisco. The setup allows for easy socialization and casual conversations among workers from different companies and industries. These encounters create opportunities for cross-company collaboration and discussion, and produce a social office vibe that is well-liked by many employees in today's workforce.

Central SOMA's ecosystem of co-working spaces includes a wide variety of operations. Mission\*Social (972 Mission St.), Sandbox Suites (404 Bryant), Hatch Today (645 Harrison), and Citizen Space (425 Second St.) are all marketed as affordable, flexible, and fun alternatives to traditional office space.

Several of SOMA's co-working spaces are outwardly mission-driven, presenting themselves as agents that are reshaping the way the office segment of the economy is structured to better cater to creative and socially beneficial endeavors.

- Hub SoMa, located in the old S.F. Chronicle Building, is a preeminent example. According to its website, Hub SoMa has 20,000 square feet of co-working space, including 125 workspaces at open desks and 20 private offices for use by social enterprises.
- Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, at Fifth Street and Clementina Alley, is a non-profit with specific programs targeted at low-to-moderate income individuals. In addition to renting space at reasonable rates, the Center provides training, coaching, and classes to members.
- WeWork (156 Second St.), provides members with affordable health care and touts the opportunities for cross-collaboration and social interaction as key selling points – WeWork's website describes its regular social events as "an integral part of the WeWork experience."

Operating along a similar model to the co-working spaces are collective workspaces for non-office uses called "hackerspaces." These are a blend of DIY'ism and tech. They are guided by the philosophy that by allowing for flexible production space they can serve a capacity-building role for the community and also serve as an incubator for a renewed local manufacturing movement.

- TechShop SF (926 Howard St.) provides shop workspace and a wide variety of industrial equipment and tools (welding equipment, wood working equipment, industrial sewing machines, etc.) to members, as well as a wide variety of classes on the use of their equipment. TechShop’s website acclaims that it has provided “the tools and support” that have helped to “launch dozens of companies and create thousands of new jobs in the process” from its seven locations across the country.
- For two months during the summer of 2013, a warehouse at 1131 Mission St. was rented for a volunteer-programmed space called Freespace, which functioned as a mix of community center, artist studio, and co-working venue. A self-described “civic hack experiment,” Freespace published a downloadable toolkit based on its two-month run in the hopes of inspiring similar uses in vacant or underutilized buildings.

The market will continue to supply co-working space as long as demand exists and an adequate supply of Class C and Class B office space remains. As covered elsewhere in this Community Plan (see Chapter 3: The Complete Tech Industry Office Continuum), new office development in Central SOMA almost without exception produces “Class A” office space – that is, high-end, high-rent buildings that are designed with major Tech companies in mind. That smaller Tech startups and many other industries will be priced out of new development speaks to the importance of retaining an adequate supply of less expensive spaces in older buildings. As mentioned, **our Community Plan proposes restrictions on mergers of small lots to discourage the demolition of 2+ story buildings that will supply a long-term supply of smaller commercial space and thus help to maintain space for a broader spectrum of commercial office users.** (See Chapter 4: Protecting Vital Space for the Future by Restricting Mergers of Small Lots).

TODCO Group Central SOMA Community Plan  
Central SOMA Collective Workspaces



The collective workspaces of Central SOMA, which are primarily for-profit shared office facilities, but also include the non-profit business development organization Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, the mission-driven Hub SoMa, and the industrial “hackerspace” TechShop SF. It is too early to say if these collective workspaces will come to fill the void left by the cheap old industrial buildings that once attracted small entrepreneurs and startups, or if some will contribute to the commercial gentrification of Central SOMA.

## Retaining SOMA's PDRS Small Businesses

SOMA has not been an industrial area for decades, but its character and identity is still very much shaped its many PDRS small businesses (Production, Distribution, Repair, and Services). While the ongoing commercial gentrification of SOMA has pushed some PDRS small businesses out of the neighborhood, others will survive, evolve, and prosper given their proximity to the Central Business District and many potential customers.

**The greatest challenge for PDRS small businesses is the loss of affordable building space as old buildings change to non-industrial uses or are demolished to make way for new office and residential development.** As in many other “warehouse districts” across the country, a great number of SOMA’s industrial buildings have changed to new uses over the years. When SOMA’s arts community established itself here beginning in the 1970s, the many old vacant industrial buildings offered cheap space for workshops, galleries, performance venues, and artists’ residences. The loft apartments that artists popularized eventually became a hot real-estate product, pricing out many of the artists and shifting the neighborhood into a center for luxury condo construction. The office market similarly embraced the loft aesthetic, and new construction now often mimics the open floor plans found in large industrial buildings.

While many industrial buildings have changed use, a significant number continue to be used as sites for PDRS. SOMA contains a mix of traditional PDRS uses (e.g., auto service shops, the S.F. Flowermart, independent printers), and newly emerging uses and industries (e.g., breweries and wineries). The need for PDRS businesses near the Central Business District of San Francisco will remain strong (perhaps more so for those businesses focused on Production, Repair, and Services, and less so for those focused on Distribution), and **recent experience demonstrates the ways in which the PDRS model has remained viable despite the expense of doing business in a high-cost urban area:**

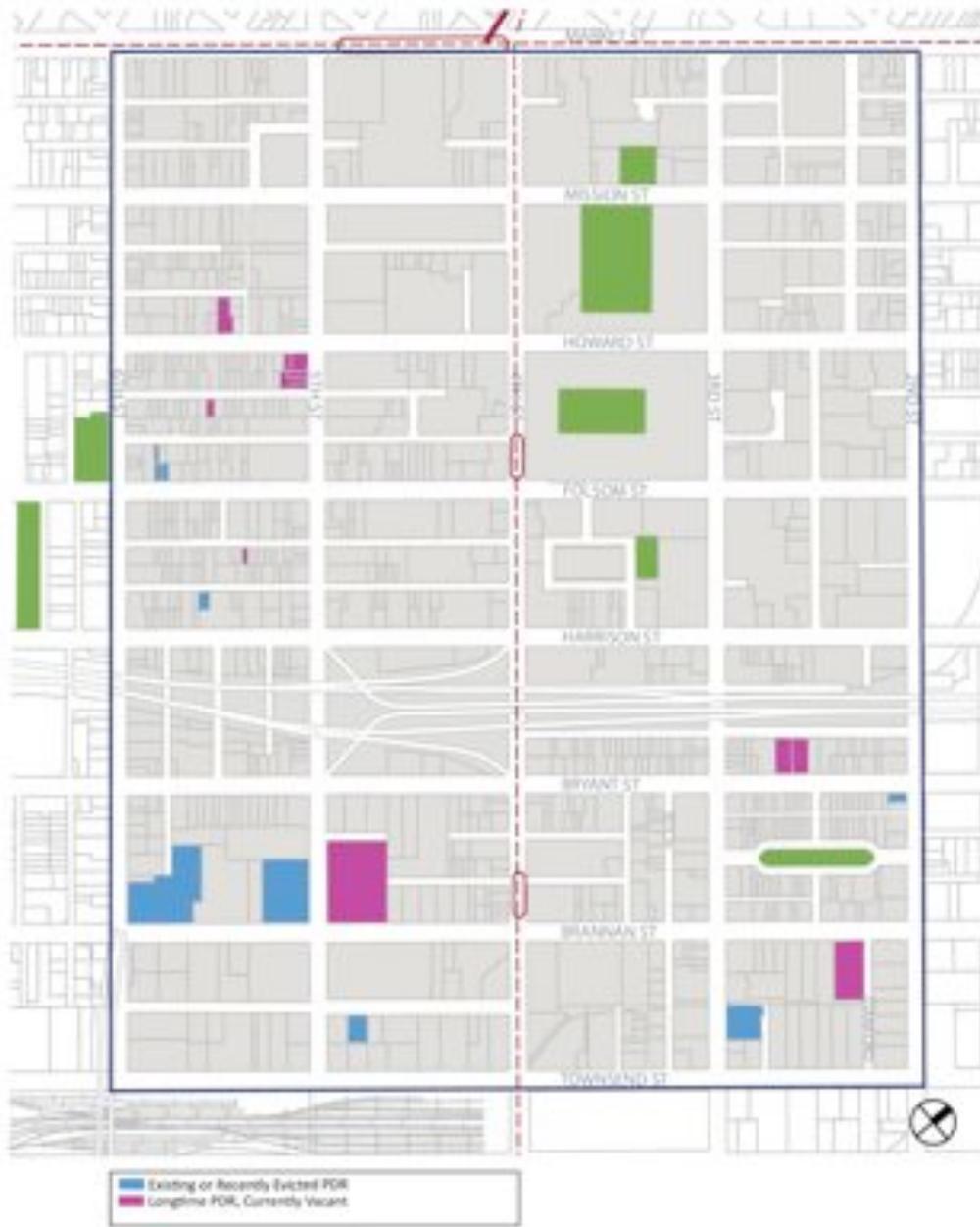
- **High-value, specialized PDRS businesses are capable of generating higher sales per square foot of building area than old PDRS businesses ever did.** The PDRS businesses that survive will tend to be less space-intensive, and they will tend to specialize on high-end markets. This evolution is observable in SOMA’s auto services industry, which increasingly specializes in expensive cars (catering to its Central Business District clientele). Another example are high-end custom manufacturing and craft work PDRS businesses, which will always need to showcase their work to customers and clients. For businesses such as these, a showroom or studio in a central location makes sense (e.g. the Arc Wood and Timbers Studio for reclaimed wood on Clyde Alley, the Elite Audio Systems boutique showroom on Folsom Street).
- **PDRS businesses that must locate in San Francisco but cannot afford other, even higher-cost locations may move to Central SOMA.** The automotive industry is the primary example of this. American-made dealers have all moved out of the city (the last hold-out was the Ford dealership on Market and Dolores, which is now a Whole Foods with luxury condos), but the luxury dealers must stay close to their customers and maintain a brick and mortar presence in the city. They may choose to cash out of sites on the Van Ness corridor in favor of SOMA, which is more PDRS-

friendly and is a good venue for auto sales. Mercedes moved from Van Ness to 9<sup>th</sup> and Bryant where they got more space, a new building, and visibility from the freeway.

- **Successful PDRS businesses are adaptive to new conditions and capture emerging markets.** Several of SOMA's "new PDRS" businesses include a retail component to maximize the income they can generate on-site. ThirstyBear Brewing Company (Howard St.) and 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment (Second St.) are "brewpubs," combining restaurants with on-site craft breweries. Likewise, Bluxome Street Winery includes a tasting room and a Sonoma-esque events space for weddings and corporate events. The Factory (Clara St. and Forth St.) is another unique hybrid PDRS and retail model. It is a production house that provides service to independent fashion designers, but to support itself off-season, it also produces its own line of clothing, which it manufactures and sells on site.

PDRS small businesses that own their own buildings are in the best position to survive the commercial gentrification of SOMA. **This Community Plan includes controls that restrict mergers of many of the neighborhood's small lots, which would help to maintain the long term supply of smaller commercial spaces for rent, many of which are sites for PDRS businesses** (see Chapter 4: Protecting Vital Space for the Future by Restricting Mergers of Small Lots).

TODCO Group Central SOMA Community Plan  
PDRS Change of Use to Office or Residential



**PDRS properties proposed for or presently undergoing a change of use to commercial or residential, as of October 2013.**