



The Yerba Buena Neighborhood Consortium

c/o 230 Fourth St. San Francisco, CA 94107

A Council of the Yerba Buena Neighborhood's Residents and Community Organizations

Moscone Center Expansion Project Draft EIR: 2013.015E

Design Comments

Yerba Buena Gardens is a San Francisco Treasure, a wonderful amenity enjoyed by people of all ages and all walks of life. The current Yerba Buena Gardens are the result of a “grand compromise” to build the Convention Center underground and maintain the beautiful, beloved gardens above, with public, recreational, and cultural facilities. There was a commitment that no one use would dominate the space.

The Proposed Moscone Expansion project has major impacts on Yerba Buena Gardens public space:
a.) The 95-foot tall proposed meeting and ballroom structure on the South Block will cast shadows on the current Children's Garden; b.) Convention Center circulation and fire exits will remove land from the play area; c.) The north edge of the Children's Garden, which currently has views of the San Francisco downtown skyline, will be boxed in by a dominant, imposing building face – the back of the meeting and ballroom structure.

In order to mitigate these negative impacts on the gardens, and maintain the commitment to balance of all uses in Yerba Buena, there must be real and substantial improvements to the public areas in the South Block **at the time of construction**. We respectfully request that the Commission require the project team to commit to the following:

- Adopt the May 2014 Project Design, most similar to Alternative 3, which resolved issues that were not part of the design in the Draft EIR and incorporated community input.
- The following improvements must be funded, coordinated, and built at the same time with the Moscone Expansion: the new Tot Lot; the relocated and improved Learning Garden; the removal of at least the southern most span of the existing Howard Street pedestrian bridge, which has created unusable space underneath; and the expansion of the carousel café and accompanying improved seating area. **The environmental analysis of these Children's Garden improvements must be also analyzed and incorporated within the Moscone Expansion Project EIR so that these improvements can completed as part of the Expansion project.**
- The proposed 'Green Wall' on the building facing the Children's Play area must be of the highest landscaping quality. More of the cheap, rat-infested ivy like the current Moscone South landscaping cannot be considered a mitigation for the loss of iconic city skyline views and building Convention uses above ground.