



# PUBLIC MUSEUM AT THE PRESIDIO — MAIN POST

Presidio of San Francisco, San Francisco, California

## Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Conduct Scoping

August 8, 2007

To Interested Parties:

Pursuant to section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (Pub. L. 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Presidio Trust (Trust) is notifying interested parties that it will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a proposed museum at the Presidio (proposed action) and engage in a scoping process to seek public input. The EIS will discuss the significant environmental impacts of constructing a new public museum and related structures totaling approximately 100,000 square feet within the Main Post district of the Presidio of San Francisco (Presidio), California. The public scoping process will determine the range of actions, alternatives and impacts to be considered in the EIS.

### Background

The Trust has received for its review an offer to lease the area south of the Main Parade Ground on the Main Post bounded by Moraga Avenue to the south, Arguello Boulevard to the east, Montgomery Street to the west, and Sheridan Avenue to the north (project site) for the purpose of constructing a new 100,000 square-foot museum. The Trust is considering the proposal because it believes that the presence of a major cultural institution such as the one proposed could serve as a catalyst for attracting other compatible uses to the Main Post. The proposed action would entail the demolition of the existing 12,800 square-foot Bowling Center (Building 93), the 3,030 square-foot Red Cross Building (Building 97), a 450-square foot garage (Building 98) and a tennis court. The museum building would be planned and completed consistent with the general design and technical recommendations for new construction at the project site that are within the Trust's Main Post Planning & Design Guidelines. In order for the proposed action to be considered successful, it should:

1. Provide a cultural experience of distinction at the Main Post that engages the public and that enhances the Presidio as a national park
2. In keeping with the Presidio's character as a national park, ensure broad public accessibility to the premises and the program
3. Site and design new construction to enhance historically significant open spaces within the Main Post and to preserve the integrity of the National Historic Landmark District (NHLD)
4. Incorporate "green" design and sustainable principles and practices that lower energy consumption, conserve natural resources, and reduce pollution

5. Promote alternative forms of transportation to minimize the need for vehicle use by visitors as well as employees
6. Be economically feasible and enhance the viability of the Presidio as a self-sustaining national park

The Trust has determined that the proposed action may have significant effects on the human environment within the meaning of the NEPA. Because the project site was not identified as a "preferred location for a large museum" in the Presidio Trust Management Plan, the Trust's formally adopted policy statement for land use planning for Area B of the Presidio, the Trust intends to prepare an EIS to address potential environmental impacts from the proposed action and the range of reasonable alternatives.

In seeking tenants, the Trust is required to provide for "reasonable competition." The Trust will promote competition for the project site by widely publicizing a request for proposals (RFP). Proposals received in response to the RFP may yield alternatives for analysis in the EIS, including a "preferred alternative" that may differ from the proposed action. Other alternatives to be considered may include the museum's location at one or more sites at Crissy Field (Area B) or within existing buildings on the Main Post. Potential impacts to be evaluated in the EIS include those on parking and traffic, visual resources, and those to the NHLD. Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) will be a component of the EIS utilizing the public input, alternatives development, and assessment processes to address historic preservation requirements.

The Trust will announce the release of the EIS (expected to occur in early 2008) for review and comment through the publication of a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register, through postings on its Web site at <http://www.presidio.gov> and its regular electronic newsletter (Presidio E-news), as well as direct mailing to the project mailing list and other appropriate means.

## Dates

Written comments or suggestions to assist in identifying significant environmental issues and in determining the appropriate scope of the EIS should be submitted on or before **October 15, 2007**. A public meeting will be held on **September 24, 2007** beginning at 6:30 p.m., at the Presidio Officers' Club (50 Moraga Avenue) to accept oral comments on the scope of the EIS.

## Addresses

Electronic comments concerning this notice can be sent to [PresidioMuseum@presidiotrust.gov](mailto:PresidioMuseum@presidiotrust.gov). Written comments may be faxed to Presidio Museum at (415) 561-5308. Written comments may also be submitted to Presidio Museum, Attn: Compliance Manager, The Presidio Trust, 34 Graham Street, P.O. Box 29052, San Francisco, CA 94129-0052. Please be aware that all written comments and information submitted will be made available to the public, including, without limitation, any postal address, e-mail address, phone number or other information contained in each submission.

## For Further Information Contact

John Pelka, 415-561-4183

## Attachment (New Construction Site Guidelines)

# Design Guidelines\*

## New Construction Site

In Major William Hart's 1907 grand plan for the Presidio, the land south of Sheridan Avenue was selected to be the site of Main Post support structures at the head of the Main Parade Ground. Hart's plan for this site was never fully realized. Rather, over the last 100 years this land has housed sports and recreational facilities and a succession of buildings. It never functioned as part of the Main Parade Ground, but always played a "supporting role" offering adjunct uses that complemented the featured performers, drill field and barracks.

A new building and landscape developed for this site must also support the contemporary uses envisioned for the Main Parade Ground. It must offer programmatic features and public spaces which complement the proposed uses of the Main Parade Ground. In form and appearance, it must be compatible with both the historic spatial context and the new landscape plan currently in development for the Main Parade Ground. Like the proposed landscape design developed by the Olin Partnership for the Main Parade Ground, this new building should be a contemporary intervention, intentionally differentiated from the historic landscape, site features, and buildings in style and appearance. The following general guidelines apply to this new construction:

### *I. General Planning and Design Guidelines*

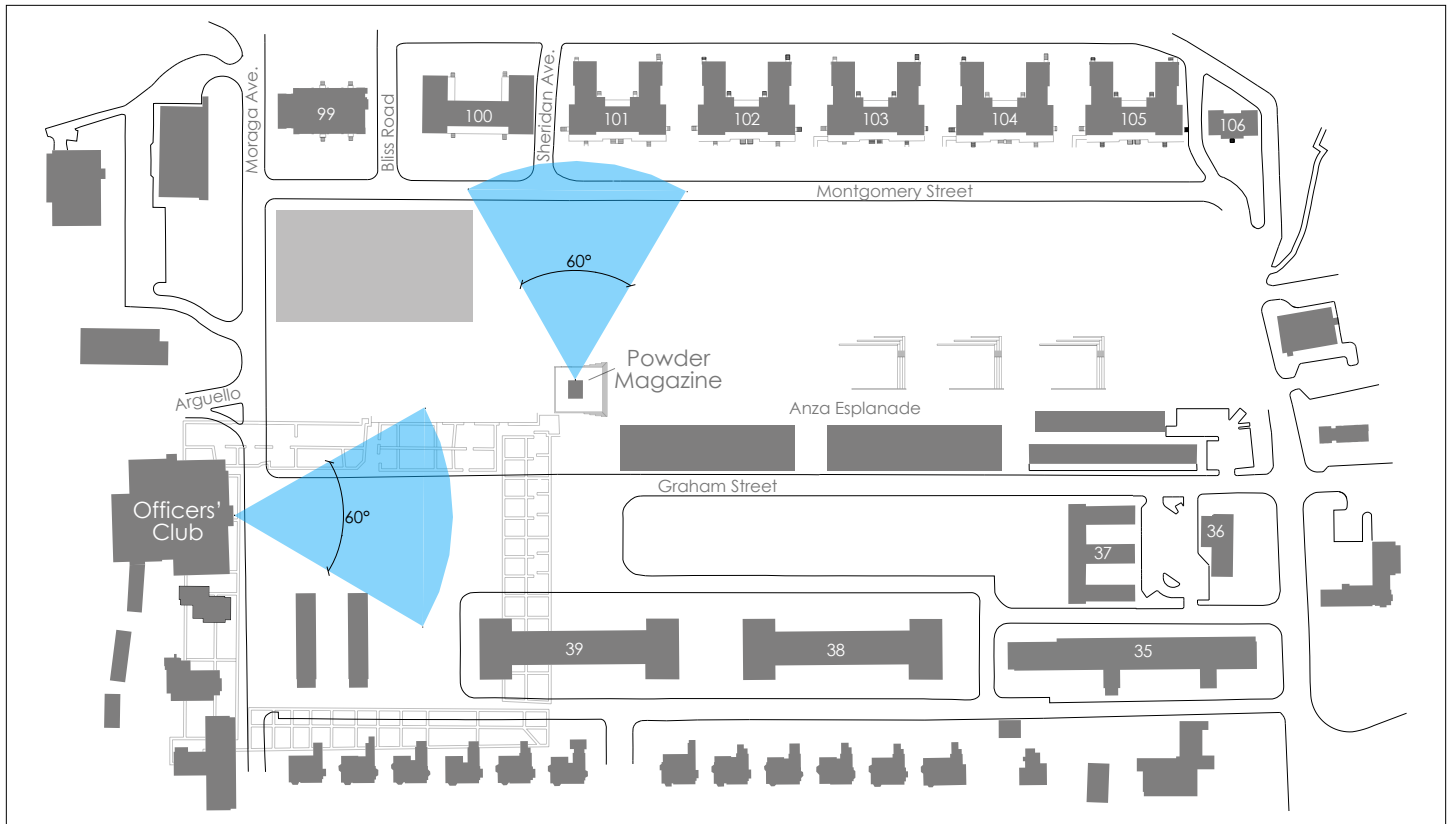
- Create a distinguished, contemporary building and associated landscape that will complement the landscape of the Main Parade Ground, recognizing both its historic character and the changes proposed by the new landscape design.
- Animate and activate adjacent open space development at the Main Parade Ground and Pershing Square.

### *II. Specific Guidelines for New Construction by Category*

#### A. VIEWS

- The new building should not obstruct the façade of Building 100 when viewed from the Powder Magazine.
- The new building should not obstruct views of the bay from the Presidio Officers' Club.
- The building should open up to views both to and from the Main Parade Ground and Pershing Square to connect it visually to public art that may be placed there and to promote the museum and its collection to Presidio visitors in the surrounding open spaces.

\*Complete *Main Post Planning & Design Guidelines* are available online at [www.presidio.gov](http://www.presidio.gov) or in the Presidio Trust Library.



View Diagram

#### B. HEIGHT LIMIT & SETBACKS

- Maximum height is 45 feet.
- Maintain the openness of historic roadway alignments.

#### C. MASSING AND SCALE

- The new building should respond to the topography of the existing site and relate to the natural slope from the Main Parade Ground up to Infantry Terrace.
- The new building should not be a monolithic volume and should not emphasize its vertical height. Instead, its massing should be modulated, stepped, or in some way subdivided horizontally to diminish its perceived height.
- Minimize the perceived size of the building by placing portions of it underground.

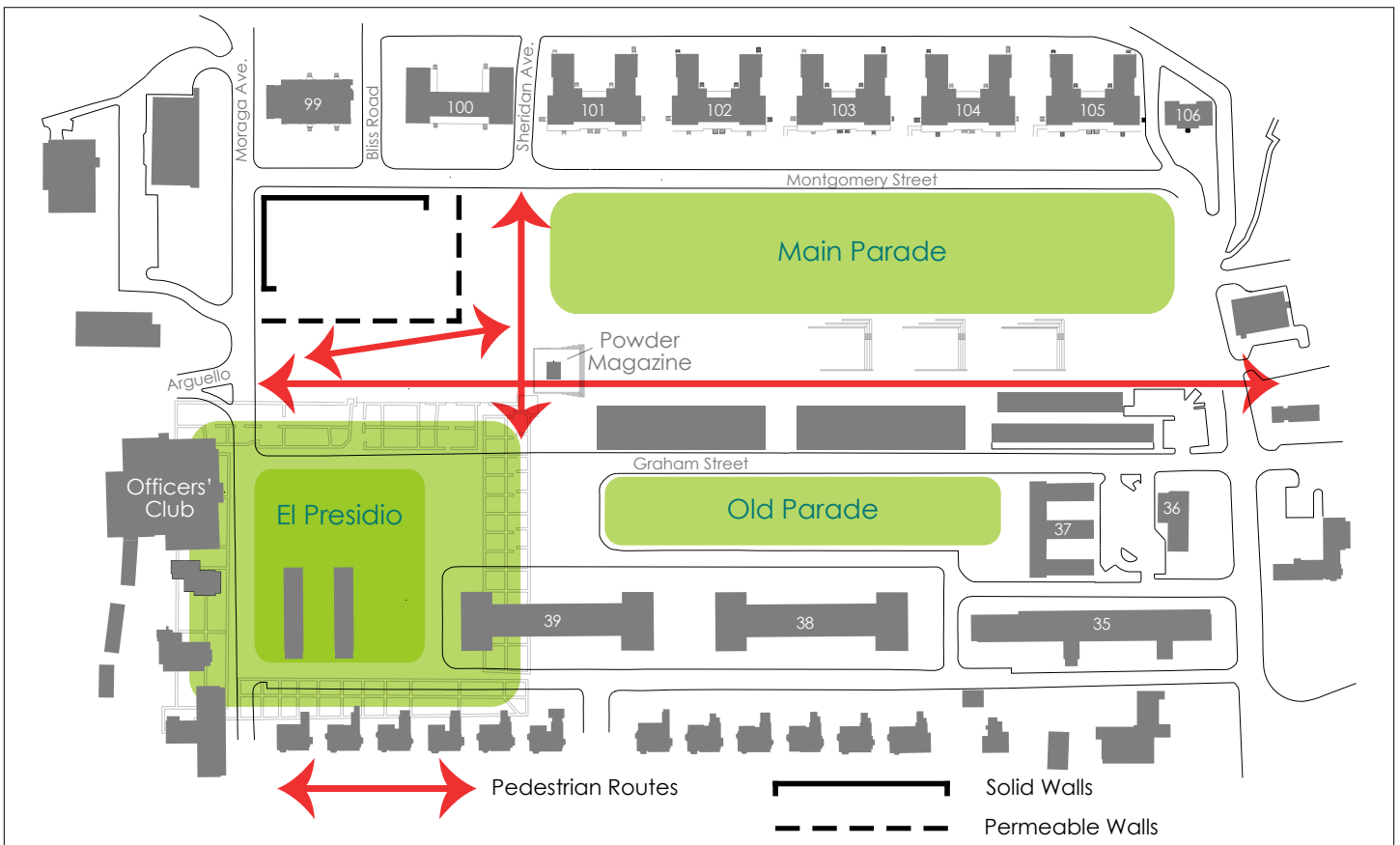
- The new building should take advantage of roof levels for display of art. Public access to the building's roof should be encouraged.
- The building should be a composition of simple geometric forms. These should primarily align with and relate to the rectilinear grid plan of the Main Post and, secondarily, may respond to the Arguello Street alignment.

D. FENESTRATION (SOLID vs. VOID)

- Employ glazing and architectural elements on the west elevation of the building opposite Building 100 to provide visual relief.

E. MATERIAL PALETTE

- The building should employ a contemporary architectural language, but relate to the texture, scale, and color of the historic Main Post. It should strive to be distinct from the Main Post's historic buildings while being compatible with them.
- The building should acknowledge and be compatible with the material palette and style of the Olin design for the Main Parade Ground.



Pedestrian Circulation and Building Edges

#### F. LANDSCAPE

- Plantings around or on the new building should evoke the character of the Main Post landscape.
- Plant species must conform to the Presidio *Vegetation Management Plan* plant list or be approved by the Trust.

#### G. PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION AND ACCESS

- The pedestrian walks defined by Arguello and Sheridan are the key pedestrian routes adjacent to the building. The building's public pedestrian entrances should be accessible from these routes.
- The building's east and north facades should be inviting and permeable. Incorporate glazing on the ground floor along these sides so pedestrians can see into the building.
- Locate the public components of the program so as to be visible from the principle pedestrian routes.
- Incorporate an open space into the Sheridan frontage that relates to the scale and configuration of the Main Parade Ground.

#### H. PARKING AND LOADING

- Montgomery Street is the preferred street on which to locate access to parking, drop-off, and loading docks.
- Loading docks should be developed in such a way that they will minimize the need for trucks to back out onto Moraga Avenue or Montgomery Street.