

FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF INFO@DOWNTOWNSF.ORG

From the San Francisco Business Times:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/news/2023/08/08/san-francisco-fares-well-in-return-to-office-study.html>

SUBSCRIBER CONTENT:

Commercial Real Estate

San Francisco fares surprisingly well in study of office workers returning to their offices



Bay Area residents got a bit of good news when San Francisco had a strong showing in an index measuring the pace of workers returning to their offices in July.

TODD JOHNSON | SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS TIMES



By **Mark Calvey** – Senior Reporter, San Francisco Business Times
Aug 8, 2023

San Francisco saw the biggest year-over-year recovery in office foot traffic in July, according to an 11-city study conducted by Placer.ai.

San Francisco, which at times feels like the national poster child of troubled downtowns in the wake of the pandemic, saw a 38.3% year-over-year increase in visits to office buildings spread throughout San Francisco.

Placer.ai, which measures foot traffic at 800 office buildings across the country, cautioned that San Francisco's foot traffic remains down almost 56% from July 2019, prior to the pandemic. Nationwide, office visits were down 37% in July compared to July 2019.

“On a nationwide level, return-to-office mandates appear to be slowly but surely moving the needle,” Placer.ai said in a blog post.

San Francisco’s strong showing in the Placer.ai Nationwide Office Building Index includes data from Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., New York, Miami, Denver, Boston, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas and Houston.

The strong showing is all the more surprising since July is in the heart of summer vacation season. But it comes as welcome news to those tackling downtown San Francisco’s challenges.

“As projected, fully remote work for certain industries, especially creative and collaborative business models, is not sustainable in the long-term,” said Robbie Silver, executive director of the Downtown SF Partnership. “We’ll see more and more companies institute return-to-work mandates.”

Zoom turned heads this week when it told employees within 50 miles of an office to come in for two days a week.

The Downtown SF Partnership, a community benefits district, has its own expansion plans underway. The nonprofit is moving to a larger office within the Russ Building at 235 Montgomery St., where it will go from 1,700 square feet to 2,600 square feet. Hiring is also on the agenda, with the staff expected to go from six employees to 10 by next spring.

The growth will support the Downtown SF Partnership’s efforts to draw more people downtown for arts, culture and various events outside regular business hours. When it was founded ahead of the pandemic, the organization primarily focused on downtown safety and cleanliness.

Silver hopes to build on San Francisco’s strong July showing in the Placer.ai study, especially with the prospect that more people may be required to return to office after Labor Day.

“For downtown San Francisco,” Silver said, “we have the most opportunity to gain, and we need the creative class to come back.”

T H E L I S T

100 Fastest-Growing Private Companies in the Bay Area

Percent growth, 2019-2021

Rank	Prior Rank	Business name
1	1	Uphold
2	2	Harness
3	3	Outschool Inc.

[View This List](#)