

1 [Planning Code - Landmark Designation - St. Nicholas Cathedral]

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3 **Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate St. Nicholas Cathedral, located at**  
4 **2005-15th Street, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3558, Lot No. 74, on the south side of**  
5 **15th Street between Sharon and Church Streets, as a landmark consistent with the**  
6 **standards set forth in Article 10 of the Planning Code; affirming the Planning**  
7 **Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and**  
8 **making public necessity, convenience, and welfare findings under Planning Code,**  
9 **Section 302, and findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority**  
10 **policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.**

11 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.  
12 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.  
13 **Deletions to Codes** are in *strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*.  
14 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.  
15 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~.  
16 **Asterisks (\* \* \* \*)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code  
17 subsections or parts of tables.

18 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

19 Section 1. Findings.

20 (a) Environmental and Land Use Findings.

21 (1) The Planning Department has determined that the Planning Code  
22 amendment proposed in this ordinance is subject to a Categorical Exemption from the  
23 California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et  
24 seq., hereinafter "CEQA") pursuant to Section 15308 of California Code of Regulations, Title  
25 14, Sections 15000 et seq., the Guidelines for implementation of the statute, for actions by  
regulatory agencies for protection of the environment (in this case, landmark designation).

1 Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No.  
2 \_\_\_\_\_ and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board of Supervisors affirms  
3 this determination.

4 (2) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board of Supervisors finds that  
5 the proposed landmark designation of St. Nicholas Cathedral will serve the public necessity,  
6 convenience, and welfare for the reasons set forth in Historic Preservation Commission  
7 Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_, recommending approval of the proposed designation, which is  
8 incorporated herein by reference.

9 (3) The Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed landmark designation of  
10 St. Nicholas Cathedral is consistent with the General Plan and with Planning Code Section  
11 101.1(b) for the reasons set forth in Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No.  
12 \_\_\_\_\_, which is incorporated herein by reference.

13 (b) General Findings.

14 (1) On October 21, 2025, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No.  
15 487-25, initiating landmark designation of St. Nicholas Cathedral as a San Francisco  
16 landmark pursuant to Section 1004.1 of the Planning Code. On October 24, 2025, the Mayor  
17 approved the resolution. Said resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in  
18 File No. 2520838.

19 (2) Pursuant to Charter Section 4.135, the Historic Preservation Commission  
20 has authority “to recommend approval, disapproval, or modification of landmark designations  
21 and historic district designations under the Planning Code to the Board of Supervisors.”

22 (3) The Landmark Designation Fact Sheet was prepared by Planning  
23 Department Preservation staff. All preparers meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional  
24 Qualification Standards for historic preservation program staff, as set forth in Code of Federal  
25

1 Regulations Title 36, Part 61, Appendix A. The report was reviewed for accuracy and  
2 conformance with the purposes and standards of Article 10 of the Planning Code.

3 (4) The Historic Preservation Commission, at its regular meeting of January 21,  
4 2026, reviewed Planning Department staff’s analysis of the historical significance of St.  
5 Nicholas Cathedral set forth in the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet dated January 21, 2026.

6 (5) On January 21, 2026, after holding a public hearing on the proposed  
7 designation and having considered the specialized analyses prepared by Planning  
8 Department staff and the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet, the Historic Preservation  
9 Commission recommended designation of St. Nicholas Cathedral as a landmark consistent  
10 with the standards set forth in Section 1004 of the Planning Code, by Resolution No.  
11 \_\_\_\_\_. Said resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board in File No. \_\_\_\_\_.

12 (6) The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that St. Nicholas Cathedral has a  
13 special character and special historical, cultural, architectural, and aesthetic interest and  
14 value, and that its designation as a landmark will further the purposes of and conform to the  
15 standards set forth in Article 10 of the Planning Code. In doing so, the Board hereby  
16 incorporates by reference the findings of the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet.

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18 Section 2. Designation.

19 Pursuant to Section 1004.3 of the Planning Code, St. Nicholas Cathedral, located at  
20 2005 15th Street, Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 3558, Lot No. 074, is hereby designated as a  
21 San Francisco landmark consistent with the standards set forth in Section 1004. Appendix A  
22 to Article 10 of the Planning Code is hereby amended to include this property.

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24 Section 3. Required Data.  
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1 (a) The description, location, and boundary of the landmark site consists of the  
2 footprint of the St. Nicholas Cathedral, located on Assessor's Parcel Block No. 3558, Lot No.  
3 074, on the south side of 15th Street between Sharon and Church Streets in San Francisco's  
4 Castro/Upper Market neighborhood, as shown in the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet.

5 (b) The characteristics of the landmark that justify its designation are described and  
6 shown in the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet and other supporting materials contained in  
7 Planning Department Record Docket No. 2025-010414DES. In brief, St. Nicholas Cathedral,  
8 located at 1660 Church Street, is eligible for local designation because it is significant as an  
9 exemplary example of Gothic Revival architecture. Originally St. Luke's German Evangelical  
10 Lutheran Church, the building was constructed to serve the religious needs of the growing  
11 population in Eureka Valley. By 1931, the church changed its name to Bethel Evangelical  
12 Church, and in 1960 the property was acquired by the Russian Orthodox Church and  
13 renamed St. Nicholas Cathedral, at which point the onion domed finial and Orthodox cross  
14 were added. Gothic Revival was a departure from the classical forms that were popular in  
15 America during the first half of the 19th century. Gothic Revival buildings expressed  
16 connections to medieval heritage, country landscapes, or religion. Gothic Revival style was a  
17 popular choice for residential and religious buildings during the early years of San Francisco's  
18 establishment and expansion, after initial Gold Rush-era settlement beginning in 1848. The  
19 style continued in popularity into the late 19th century. Extant examples of Gothic Revival  
20 architecture are rare in San Francisco, though most surviving buildings are churches.

21 (c) The particular features that should be preserved, or replaced in kind as determined  
22 necessary, are those generally shown in photographs and described in the Landmark  
23 Designation Fact Sheet, which can be found in Planning Department Record Docket No.  
24 2025-010414DES, and which are incorporated in this designation by reference as though fully  
25 set forth herein. Specifically, the features that are character-defining and shall be preserved or

1 replaced in kind are the exterior elevations, form, massing, structure, rooflines, architectural  
2 ornament, and materials of the property, identified as:

- 3 (1) Two-story massing and rectangular plan, wood frame;
- 4 (2) Stucco molded cladding at ground level of primary façade;
- 5 (3) Recessed heavy wood-paneled door primary entrance door and four street-  
6 facing ground level wood double hung windows;
- 7 (4) Primary façade with three bays;
- 8 (5) Slightly projecting second story center bay with corner boards and large  
9 pointed, arched, stained-glass window;
- 10 (6) Two side bays with pilaster corner boards terminating in egg and dart  
11 cornice at roofline, and cartouche and vine ornaments below the arched  
12 stained-glass windows and rose and cross motifs at the apex of the  
13 windows;
- 14 (7) Steeply-pitched front gable roof with asphalt shingle, square centered  
15 steeple with fish-scale shingles;
- 16 (8) Tower with pyramidal hipped roof with gable dormers with louvered vents;
- 17 (9) Onion finial and Russian Orthodox cross; and
- 18 (10) Pointed arched stain glass windows on exposed west elevation.

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20 Section 4. Effective Date.

21 This ordinance shall become effective at 12:00 a.m. on the 31st day after enactment.  
22 Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the ordinance  
23 unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within 10 days of receiving it, or the Board of  
24 Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

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APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

By: /s/ Peter Miljanich

PETER MILJANICH  
Deputy City Attorney