

1 [Environment Code - Yellow Pages Distribution Pilot Program]

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3 **Ordinance adding Chapter 20 to the San Francisco Environment Code to establish a**  
 4 **three-year pilot program to reduce waste in the distribution of Yellow Pages Phone**  
 5 **Directories to private residences and businesses in San Francisco, and to reduce**  
 6 **neighborhood blight, by restricting distribution to circumstances where: (1) there is**  
 7 **personal delivery of the directory to a human being; (2) there has been a request for**  
 8 **delivery of the directory to the residence or business; or (3) directories are maintained**  
 9 **for pick-up at a distribution center or business open to the public; and mandating a**  
 10 **public outreach program to educate the public about the environmental harms**  
 11 **associated with excessive distribution of Yellow Pages Phone Directories, develop and**  
 12 **publicize alternatives to private possession of such directories, and inform the public**  
 13 **of the option and means of obtaining such directories; and making environmental**  
 14 **findings.**

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NOTE: Additions are *single-underline italics Times New Roman*;  
 deletions are ~~*strike-through italics Times New Roman*~~.  
 Board amendment additions are double-underlined;  
 Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough normal~~.

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

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Section 1. The San Francisco Environment Code is hereby amended by adding

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Chapter 20, to read as follows:

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Chapter 20: Yellow Pages Distribution Pilot Program

22

Sec. 20.1. Findings and Purpose.

23

Sec. 20.2. Definitions.

24

Sec. 20.3. Personal Delivery of Commercial Phone Directories; Restrictions.

25

Sec. 20.4. Public Outreach Program.

1           Sec. 20.5.       Promotion of General Welfare.

2           Sec. 20.6.       Conflict With State Or Federal Law.

3           Sec. 20.7.       Severability.

4           Sec. 20.8.       Operative Date; Sunset Provision; Departmental Report.

5  
6           **SEC. 20.1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

7           (a) Every year, private residences and businesses in San Francisco cumulatively receive,  
8           unsolicited, hundreds of thousands of Commercial Phone Directories, commonly known as "the Yellow  
9           Pages." These unsolicited Commercial Phone Directories cumulatively weigh thousands of pounds and  
10           contain millions of pages.

11           (b) The failure to target deliveries of Commercial Phone Directories to private residences and  
12           businesses where an owner or occupant has indicated an interest in receiving one or more Commercial  
13           Phone Directories results in significant wastage. In many cases unsolicited Commercial Phone  
14           Directories that have been delivered to private residences and businesses are not used by the recipient,  
15           and often are not picked up by the intended recipient. In other cases, they are only rarely used by the  
16           recipient. And, even when Commercial Phone Directories are used by the recipient, in many cases the  
17           same information is readily available to the recipient through electronic channels of communication.

18           (c) The wastage caused by delivery of unsolicited Commercial Phone Directories to private  
19           residences and businesses greatly exacerbates the environmental harms and economic costs inherent in  
20           the production and disposal of such directories.

21           (1) The wastage causes substantial and unnecessary depletion of natural resources that go into  
22           the production of Commercial Phone Directories, including substantial consumption of energy used in  
23           the production process. Further, overproduction of Commercial Phone Directories unnecessarily  
24           pollutes the environment.

1           (2) The wastage causes substantial and unnecessary environmental harms and economic costs  
2 associated with the disposal of Commercial Phone Directories, even if they are recycled, which they  
3 often are not. While recycling of Commercial Phone Directories is environmentally preferable to their  
4 being disposed of without recycling, the better approach from an environmental and economic  
5 standpoint is to prevent wastage in the first place, and thereby reduce the need for recycling, by  
6 devising a system tailored to match the production of Commercial Phone Directories with the demand  
7 for such directories. Not printing a Commercial Phone Directory reduces greenhouse gases to a far  
8 greater extent than printing the directory and eventually recycling it.

9           (d) Delivery of unsolicited Commercial Phone Directories to private residences and businesses  
10 also creates neighborhood blight. Unsolicited deliveries often sit on the porch, the steps, in front of the  
11 door to a home, or on the sidewalk, for days or even weeks. Piles of Commercial Phone Directories  
12 are often left in front of multi-unit residential buildings, to be battered and degraded by the elements  
13 rather than picked up by the intended recipients. The size, weight, and bulk of the product operates as  
14 a particular disincentive for people to pick it up. And the size and bulk of the product creates a  
15 particularly unsightly blight on City streets, especially in more densely populated areas, impeding the  
16 aesthetic enjoyment of the neighborhood.

17           (e) The nature and magnitude of the environmental and related harms caused by delivery of  
18 unsolicited Phone Directories is unique to Phone Directories. In the experience of San Francisco and  
19 other cities, no product or object of similar size, weight, and bulk, whether made of paper or otherwise,  
20 and whether containing print or otherwise, is regularly left, unsolicited, at private residences and  
21 businesses throughout San Francisco. Commercial Phone Directories comprise a large subset –  
22 almost certainly a majority – of the Phone Directories delivered unsolicited to private residences and  
23 businesses in San Francisco.

24           (f) The information contained in Commercial Phone Directories is readily available on the  
25 Internet or may easily be made available on the Internet. The large majority of private residences and

1 businesses in San Francisco have access to the Internet, and the numbers of private residences and  
2 businesses with access to the Internet is expected to become even greater in the future. Access to the  
3 Internet has become increasingly common and convenient for residents and businesses in San  
4 Francisco with the advent of personal computers, including hand-held devices, and smart phones.

5 (g) The purpose of this Chapter is to significantly reduce the environmental and other harms  
6 and related costs caused by delivery of unsolicited Commercial Phone Directories to private residences  
7 and businesses in San Francisco. There is a compelling public interest in achieving this objective.

8 (h) The Pilot Program established by this Chapter directly advances the City's interest in  
9 significantly reducing the environmental and other harms and related costs caused by delivery of  
10 unsolicited Commercial Phone Directories to private residences and businesses in San Francisco. The  
11 Pilot Program is narrowly tailored to meet this objective. It does not prohibit the publication or  
12 distribution of Commercial Phone Directories but rather focuses on channeling their distribution to  
13 Persons and others who find a need to use such directories. And a central feature of the program is its  
14 public outreach component, which is designed in part to ensure that Persons and others who seek to  
15 obtain a Commercial Phone Directory are able easily to do so.

16 **SEC. 20.2. DEFINITIONS.**

17 For purposes of this Chapter, the following definitions apply.

18 (a) "City" means the City and County of San Francisco.

19 (b) "Commercial Phone Directory" means a printed publication (a hard copy) of at least 100  
20 pages (counting the front and back of a page as two pages), consisting of nonresidential phone number  
21 listings and advertisements for those listed in the publication, with the listings segregated under  
22 headings for similar types of businesses. A "Commercial Phone Directory" is commonly, but not  
23 necessarily, printed on yellow paper.

24 (c) "Commission" means the Commission on the Environment.

25 (d) "Department" means the Department of the Environment.

1 (e) "Director" means the Director of the Department of the Environment.

2 (f) "Distribute" means to physically deliver Commercial Phone Directories to private  
3 residences and/or businesses in San Francisco. "Distribute" does not include storage of Commercial  
4 Phone Directories by a Distributor or Phone Company at a site under the control of the Distributor or  
5 Phone Company, at which site Persons and others may come to receive Commercial Phone  
6 Directories.

7 (g) "Distributor" means a company or other entity or Person contractually obligated to  
8 physically deliver or cause the physical delivery of Commercial Phone Directories to private  
9 residences and/or businesses in San Francisco. "Distributor" includes a Phone Company that does not  
10 contract for the physical delivery of Commercial Phone Directories to private residences and/or  
11 businesses in San Francisco but instead itself physically delivers the Commercial Phone Directories.  
12 "Distributor" does not include a Person whose sole role in the distribution of Commercial Phone  
13 Directories is limited to driving the streets and physically delivering Commercial Phone Directories.  
14 "Distributor" does not include the United States Postal Service, a commercial courier, or a commercial  
15 package delivery service that allows a customer to track the status of a shipment by destination, date,  
16 and time of delivery.

17 (h) "Person" means a human being.

18 (i) "Phone Company" means a company or other entity that provides telephone service to  
19 private residences and/or businesses in San Francisco.

20 (j) "Phone Directory" includes Commercial Phone Directories but also includes an  
21 alphabetical compilation of phone listings for residences, businesses, and government offices,  
22 commonly known as "the White Pages." A "Phone Directory" is a printed publication (a hard copy).

23 (k) "Pilot Program" means the Yellow Pages Distribution Pilot Program established by this  
24 Chapter.

1           (l) "State law" means the entire corpus of State law, including decisions and regulations of the  
2 California Public Utilities Commission.

3           **SEC. 20.3. PERSONAL DELIVERY OF COMMERCIAL PHONE DIRECTORIES;**  
4 **RESTRICTIONS.**

5           (a) A Distributor may not distribute or cause to be distributed a Commercial Phone Directory  
6 to a private residence or business in San Francisco unless:

7           (1) The Distributor delivers the Commercial Phone Directory to a Person at the private  
8 residence or business who is an occupant or authorized representative of the private residence or  
9 business and who personally accepts the Commercial Phone Directory; or

10          (2) The Distributor delivers the Commercial Phone Directory to a private residence or  
11 business after having received a request from an occupant or authorized representative of the private  
12 residence or business for the Commercial Phone Directory to be delivered there.

13          (b) Subsection (a) shall not be construed to prevent the placement of Commercial Phone  
14 Directories in a business open to the public, with the consent of the occupant or authorized  
15 representative of the business, to be available for pick-up by patrons or other members of the public.

16          (c) For purposes of the exception in subdivision (a)(2), the Distributor has a duty to maintain  
17 documentation of requests for a Commercial Phone Directory to be delivered to private residences or  
18 businesses. In any proceeding to determine whether a Distributor has violated subsection (a) because  
19 of not qualifying for the exception in subdivision (a)(2), the absence of documentation of a request shall  
20 raise an inference that the request was not made.

21          (d) A Distributor may not evade the prohibition contained in subsection (a) by:

22          (1) Dividing a Commercial Phone Directory into two or more volumes, when at least one of the  
23 volumes does not meet the pages requirement in the definition of Commercial Phone Directory but the  
24 volumes combined would meet the pages requirement; or

1           (2) Including in a Commercial Phone Directory listings the distribution of which are required  
2 by State law, or other information the distribution of which is required by State law.

3           (e) A Distributor who violates subsection (a) of this Section may be subject to administrative  
4 penalties, as follows. The Director or a designee of the Director may issue administrative citations for  
5 violations of subsection (a). San Francisco Administrative Code Chapter 100, "Procedures Governing  
6 the Imposition of Administrative Fines," is hereby incorporated in its entirety and shall govern the  
7 amount of fees and the procedure for imposition, enforcement, collection, and administrative review of  
8 administrative citations issued under this subsection (d). The Director or a designee of the Director  
9 shall impose fines as set forth in Section 100.5(a) of the San Francisco Administrative Code.

10           (f) The Director is authorized to adopt regulations to implement this Section following a public  
11 hearing. At the Director's discretion, the Director may delegate this hearing function, but not the  
12 authority to adopt regulations, to a designee.

13           (g) This Section shall not preclude a Distributor, Phone Company, or anyone else from using  
14 any lawful means to inform Persons or others that they may request delivery of a Commercial Phone  
15 Directory to a private residence or business, to publicize the process for making such a request, or to  
16 inform Persons or others of the availability of Commercial Phone Directories at a distribution center  
17 or business where Commercial Phone Directories are available to members of the public. These means  
18 of providing information may include but are not limited to: Notices inserted in phone bills sent to  
19 phone customers; notices in other communications from Phone Companies to their customers; notices  
20 in Phone Directories that are not Commercial Phone Directories and that are distributed to residences  
21 and businesses; notices on handbills distributed to residences and businesses in conformity with  
22 provisions of local law regarding distribution of handbills; notices posted on doors, similar to notices  
23 posted by commercial mail services when no one answers the door; notices sent by U.S. mail or email;  
24 phone calls; advertisements on television, radio, or the Internet; and press releases.

25           **SEC. 20.4. PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAM.**

1           (a) The City shall develop and implement a public outreach program to educate San Francisco  
2 residents and businesses about the environmental harms associated with excessive distribution of  
3 Commercial Phone Directories; develop alternatives to private possession of Commercial Phone  
4 Directories to obtain the information contained in those directories, and inform the public of those and  
5 other alternatives; and inform the public about the option and means of obtaining a Commercial Phone  
6 Directory from a Distributor or other private source. The public outreach program shall include a  
7 special emphasis on outreach to seniors, the disabled, and low-income persons.

8           (b) The Department shall coordinate with other City offices, departments, boards, and  
9 commissions the development and implementation of the public outreach program mandated by  
10 subsection (a). These other City entities may include but are not limited to the Office of the Mayor, the  
11 Office of the City Administrator, the Department of Public Works, and the Department of Technology.  
12 All City offices, departments, boards, and commissions shall cooperate with and reasonably assist the  
13 Department in its efforts to coordinate the development and implementation of the program.

14           (c) In developing and implementing the public outreach program mandated by subsection (a),  
15 the City shall consider the following methods of providing information to the public: Phone calls from  
16 the City to private residences and businesses; a notice on the City's website and the Department's  
17 website; notices on regular meeting agendas of the Commission and possibly of other City boards and  
18 commissions; public service announcements on local television stations and the City's television  
19 station; press releases; and mailings to private residences and businesses and possibly to centers in the  
20 City that house senior citizens or disabled persons. In addition, the City may consider any other  
21 methods it concludes may be useful in providing information to the public that will further the goals of  
22 the public outreach program as stated in subsection (a).

23           (d) In developing and implementing the public outreach program mandated by subsection (a),  
24 the City shall consider the feasibility of making Commercial Phone Directories available to the public  
25 in City buildings such as branches of the San Francisco Public Library. Recreation Centers, and City



1 Hall; the feasibility of making electronic copies of Commercial Phone Directories more accessible to  
2 members of the public; and the feasibility of providing a service by which members of the public can  
3 call a City phone number and request information in a Commercial Phone Directory.

4 (e) While subsections (c) and (d) require the City to consider various matters in developing and  
5 implementing the public outreach program mandated by subsection (a), they do not require that the  
6 public outreach program include any particular component.

7 **SEC. 20.5. PROMOTION OF GENERAL WELFARE.**

8 In adopting and implementing this Chapter, the City is assuming an undertaking only to  
9 promote the general welfare . It is not assuming, nor is it imposing on its officers and employees, an  
10 obligation for breach of which it is liable in money damages to any person who claims that such breach  
11 proximately caused injury.

12 **SEC. 20.6. CONFLICT WITH STATE OR FEDERAL LAW.**

13 Nothing in this Chapter shall authorize the City to impose any duties or obligations in conflict  
14 with limitations on municipal authority imposed by federal or State law. This Chapter shall be  
15 construed so as not to conflict with applicable federal or State law. In adopting regulations pursuant  
16 to subsection 20.3(e) or engaging in enforcement actions pursuant to subsection 20.3(d), the City is  
17 authorized to implement this Chapter so as to avoid a conflict with applicable federal or State law.

18 **SEC. 20.7. SEVERABILITY.**

19 If any of the provisions of this Chapter or the application thereof to any person or circumstance  
20 is held invalid, the remainder of those provisions, including the application of such part or provisions  
21 to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid, shall not be affected thereby  
22 and shall continue in full force and effect. To this end, the provisions of this Chapter are severable.

23 **SEC. 20.8. OPERATIVE DATE; SUNSET PROVISION; DEPARTMENTAL REPORT.**

24 (a) This Chapter shall become operative on June 1, 2011 and shall remain operative through  
25 May 31, 2014. Thereafter, this Chapter shall no longer have the force of law.

1           (b) The Department shall report to the Board of Supervisors by no later than March 1, 2014 on  
2 the efficacy of this Chapter as a means of reducing wastage in the distribution of Commercial Phone  
3 Directories in San Francisco, and any other matters pertaining to this Chapter. All City offices,  
4 departments, boards, and commissions shall cooperate with and reasonably assist the Department in its  
5 efforts to prepare the report. This subsection (b) shall not preclude the Board of Supervisors or a  
6 committee thereof, or the Commission, or any other City entity or official, from holding hearings at any  
7 time on the same subject.

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9           Section 2. Environmental Findings. The Planning Department has determined that the  
10 actions contemplated in this Ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental  
11 Quality Act (California Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq.). Said determination is  
12 on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. \_\_\_\_\_ and is incorporated  
13 herein by reference.

14  
15 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
16 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

17 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
18 PAUL ZAREFSKY  
19 Deputy City Attorney