

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



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## MEMORANDUM

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Date: June 18, 2026  
To: Planning Department/Planning Commission  
From: John Carroll, Assistant Clerk, Land Use and Transportation Committee  
Subject: Board of Supervisors Legislation Referral - File No. 260679  
Planning Code - Signs in Mixed Use Districts

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- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Determination  
(*California Public Resources Code, Sections 21000 et seq.*)
  - Ordinance / Resolution
  - Ballot Measure
  
- Amendment to the Planning Code, including the following Findings:  
(*Planning Code, Section 302(b): 90 days for Planning Commission review*)
  - General Plan     Planning Code, Section 101.1     Planning Code, Section 302
  
- Amendment to the Administrative Code, involving Land Use/Planning  
(*Board Rule 3.23: 30 days for possible Planning Department review*)
  
- General Plan Referral for Non-Planning Code Amendments  
(*Charter, Section 4.105, and Administrative Code, Section 2A.53*)  
(Required for legislation concerning the acquisition, vacation, sale, or change in use of City property; subdivision of land; construction, improvement, extension, widening, narrowing, removal, or relocation of public ways, transportation routes, ground, open space, buildings, or structures; plans for public housing and publicly-assisted private housing; redevelopment plans; development agreements; the annual capital expenditure plan and six-year capital improvement program; and any capital improvement project or long-term financing proposal such as general obligation or revenue bonds.)
  
- Historic Preservation Commission
  - Landmark (*Planning Code, Section 1004.3*)
  - Cultural Districts (*Charter, Section 4.135 & Board Rule 3.23*)
  - Mills Act Contract (*Government Code, Section 50280*)
  - Designation for Significant/Contributory Buildings (*Planning Code, Article 11*)

Please send the Planning Department/Commission recommendation/determination to John Carroll at [john.carroll@sfgov.org](mailto:john.carroll@sfgov.org).

1 [Planning Code - Signs in Mixed Use Districts]

2

3 **Ordinance amending the Planning Code to increase the allowable number and size of**  
 4 **signs in Mixed Use Districts on lots over one-half acre and in the Mixed Use-Office**  
 5 **District south of Townsend Street; affirming the Planning Department's determination**  
 6 **under the California Environmental Quality Act; making findings of consistency with**  
 7 **the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1; and**  
 8 **making findings of public necessity, convenience, and welfare pursuant to Planning**  
 9 **Code, Section 302.**

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

14

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

16

17 Section 1. Environmental and Land Use Findings.

18 (a) The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this  
 19 ordinance comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources  
 20 Code Sections 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of  
 21 Supervisors in File No. \_\_\_\_ and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board affirms this  
 22 determination.

23 (b) On \_\_\_\_\_, the Planning Commission, in Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_,  
 24 adopted findings that the actions contemplated in this ordinance are consistent, on balance,  
 25 with the City's General Plan and eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1. The

1 Board adopts these findings as its own. A copy of said Resolution is on file with the Clerk of  
2 the Board of Supervisors in File No. \_\_\_\_\_, and is incorporated herein by reference.

3 (c) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board finds that these Planning Code  
4 amendments will serve the public necessity, convenience, and welfare for the reasons set  
5 forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_, and the Board incorporates such  
6 reasons herein by reference. A copy of said resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of  
7 Supervisors in File No. \_\_\_\_\_.

8  
9 Section 2. General Findings.

10 (a) Mixed-Use Districts are characterized by a variety of different co-existing uses,  
11 which could include, depending on the district, office, retail, PDR (Production, Distribution, and  
12 Repair), and high-density housing. Properties range in size from small buildings on small  
13 parcels with one street frontage, to multi-story buildings occupying full city blocks and having  
14 multiple frontages.

15 (b) Some existing sign regulations are generally applicable to all parcels in Mixed-Use  
16 Districts, including limits on the number and size of Identifying Signs, Wall Signs, and  
17 Projecting Signs per parcel. While these controls are appropriate for smaller sized parcels in  
18 the Mixed-Use Districts, these limits do not provide sufficient signage opportunities for large  
19 parcels. This ordinance addresses this problem by tying the number and size of signs to the  
20 size of the parcel and number of street frontages. Larger parcels that are at least one-half  
21 acre are permitted larger Identifying, Wall, and Projecting Signs, an Identifying Sign for each  
22 street frontage, and an additional Projecting Sign per street frontage. These signage  
23 regulations will assist residents and patrons in identifying buildings, businesses, and services  
24 located in different portions of those larger parcels. This improved wayfinding will promote the  
25 public welfare by reducing congestion, confusion, and access issues that could otherwise be

1 caused by individuals being unable to identify the address or location they are seeking within  
2 a larger property.

3 (c) The parcels in the Mixed-Use Office District south of Townsend Street are  
4 elongated rectangular parcels occupying full city blocks and are located across major  
5 thoroughfares – King Street and Third Street – from the San Francisco Giants baseball  
6 stadium. One of the parcels abuts the Mission Creek Channel and Third Street Bridge, with  
7 relatively narrow street frontage on Third Street and one longer side of the rectangular parcel  
8 abutting a creekside pedestrian walkway, making it a large parcel with limited visibility and  
9 signage opportunities.

10 (d) Businesses in San Francisco have struggled to recover since the COVID-19  
11 pandemic. The Controller's March 2024 report on the "Status of the San Francisco Economy"  
12 found that although tourism and commercial vacancy rates are slowly improving, they remain  
13 below pre-pandemic levels, as shown in the City's diminished sales tax revenue compared to  
14 pre-pandemic years. Amidst troubling economic indicators and a broader shift away from  
15 brick and mortar commercial businesses, it is vital that the City encourage vibrant  
16 streetscapes to attract and orient pedestrians in our mixed-use districts. This is especially  
17 important in the area of the San Francisco Giants baseball stadium and nearby mixed-use  
18 developments including Mission Bay and Mission Rock.

19 (e) Large parcels in mixed-use districts serve an essential role in shaping the area's  
20 identity and vitality, often providing anchor businesses, restaurants, entertainment, and  
21 services. Identifying Signs, Projecting Signs, and Wall Signs, help attract foot traffic in these  
22 areas and orient individuals to their destination and other nearby offerings. This ordinance  
23 supports the vitality of these mixed-use areas that continue to struggle to attract tenants,  
24 workers, and visitors in the current economic environment.

25 (f) The ordinance furthers the purposes of Planning Code Sections 101 and 601,

1 including:

2 (1) Protecting the character and stability of residential, commercial, and  
3 industrial areas within the City, and promoting the orderly and beneficial development of such  
4 areas;

5 (2) Providing an environment which will safeguard and enhance neighborhood  
6 livability and property values, and promote the development of business in the City;

7 (3) Ensuring that signs are designed and proportioned in relation to the  
8 structures to which they are attached, adjacent structures, and the streets on which they are  
9 located;

10 (4) Promoting the aesthetic and environmental values of San Francisco by  
11 providing for signs that serve as effective means of communication while preserving the City's  
12 attractiveness as a place to live, work, visit, and shop;

13 (5) Aiding in the attraction of tourists and other visitors who are so important to  
14 the City's economy; and

15 (6) Enhancing sidewalks as public spaces by preserving sunlight and views and  
16 fostering the unobstructed growth of street trees.

17

18 Section 3. Article 6 of the Planning Code is hereby amended by revising Section  
19 607.2, to read as follows:

20

21 **SEC. 607.2. MIXED USE DISTRICTS.**

22 Signs located in Mixed Use Districts shall be regulated as provided herein, except for  
23 Signs in Residential Enclave Districts, which are regulated by Section 606, and those Signs  
24 which are exempted by Section 603. Signs not specifically regulated in this Section 607.2  
25 shall be prohibited. In the event of conflict between the provisions of Section 607.2 and other

1 provisions of Article 6, the provisions of Section 607.2 shall prevail in Mixed Use Districts.

2 \* \* \* \*

3 (c) **Identifying Signs.** Identifying Signs, as defined in Section 602, shall be permitted  
4 in all Mixed Use Districts subject to the limits set forth below.

5 (1) One Sign per lot shall be permitted and such Sign shall not exceed 20  
6 square feet in ~~an~~Area, except that for lots one-half acre or larger, one Sign for each frontage shall be  
7 permitted and each such Sign shall not exceed 100 square feet in Area. The Sign may be a  
8 Freestanding Sign, if the building is recessed from the Street Property Line, or may be a Wall  
9 Sign or a projecting Sign. The existence of a Freestanding Identifying Sign shall preclude the  
10 erection of a Freestanding Business Sign on the same lot. A Wall Sign or projecting Sign  
11 shall be mounted on the first-story level; and a Freestanding Sign shall not exceed 15 feet in  
12 ~~the~~Height, except that for lots one-half acre or larger, both Wall Signs and projecting Signs shall not  
13 exceed 40 feet in Height. Such Signs may be Nonilluminated, Indirectly Illuminated, or Directly  
14 Illuminated.

15 \* \* \* \*

16 (f) **Business Signs.** Business Signs, as defined in Section 602, shall be permitted in  
17 all Mixed Use Districts subject to the limits set forth below.

18 \* \* \* \*

19 (3) **Chinatown Community Business District, Eastern Neighborhoods**  
20 **Mixed Use Districts, and Downtown Residential Districts.**

21 \* \* \* \*

22 (B) **Wall Signs.**

23 (i) ~~In districts other than the Urban Mixed Use District.~~ Unless  
24 otherwise specified in subsections (B)(ii) or (iii):

25 a. The Area of all Wall Signs shall not exceed three square

1 feet per foot of street frontage occupied by the ~~#~~Use measured along the wall to which the  
2 Signs are attached, or 150 square feet for each street frontage, whichever is less; provided,  
3 however, that in no case shall the Wall Sign or combination of Wall Signs cover more than  
4 75% of the surface of any wall, excluding openings.

5 b. The Height of any Wall Sign shall not exceed 24 feet, or  
6 the height of the wall to which it is attached, or the height of the lowest of any residential  
7 windowsill on the wall to which the Sign is attached, whichever is lower. Such Signs may be  
8 Nonilluminated, Indirectly Illuminated, or Directly Illuminated.

9 (ii) **In the Urban Mixed Use District.** The Area of all Wall Signs  
10 shall not exceed three square feet per foot of street frontage occupied by the use measured  
11 along the wall to which the Signs are attached for up to 50 feet of street frontage, and an  
12 additional one square foot per foot of street frontage thereafter; provided, however, that in no  
13 case shall the Wall Sign or combination of Wall Signs cover more than 75% of the surface of  
14 any wall, excluding openings. The Height of any Wall Sign shall not exceed 60 feet, or the  
15 height of the wall to which it is attached, or the height of the lowest of any residential  
16 windowsill on the wall to which the Sign is attached, whichever is lower. Such Signs may be  
17 Nonilluminated, Indirectly Illuminated, or Directly Illuminated.

18 (iii) **Mixed Use-Office District.** In the Mixed Use-Office District, for  
19 lots south of Townsend Street, in addition to Wall Signs allowed under subsection (i), one additional  
20 Wall Sign for each street frontage shall be permitted, provided it: a. does not exceed a Height of 80  
21 feet; b. does not exceed an Area of 80 square feet; c. does not project more than eight inches; d. is  
22 comprised of individual opaque elements for each numeral, letter, insignia, symbol, contiguous word,  
23 or other representation used, no element is coterminous with any other, and each element is  
24 independently affixed to the wall; and e. if Illuminated, all light sources are affixed to the rear of the  
25 Sign where they cannot be easily seen and are positioned to cast illumination toward the wall, not

1 outward toward or through the Sign, such that they create a “halo” effect.

2 (C) **Projecting Signs.** The number of projecting Signs shall not exceed  
3 one per business, or two per business for businesses located on lots one-half acre or larger. The  
4 Area of any such ~~s~~Sign or Signs combined when there are multiple Signs shall not exceed ~~32~~  
5 80 square feet. The Height of the Sign shall not exceed 24 feet, or the height of the wall to  
6 which it is attached, or the height of the lowest of any residential windowsill on the wall to  
7 which the Sign is attached, whichever is lower. No part of the Sign shall project more than  
8 75% of the horizontal distance from the Street Property Line to the curblin, or six feet six  
9 inches, whichever is less. Such Signs may be Nonilluminated, Indirectly Illuminated, or  
10 Directly Illuminated.

11 \* \* \* \*

12  
13 Section 4. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors  
14 intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles,  
15 numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal  
16 Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment  
17 additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the “Note” that appears under  
18 the official title of the ordinance.

1           Section 5. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective on the 31st day after  
2 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the  
3 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within 10 days of receiving it, or the Board  
4 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

5  
6 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
7 DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

8 By: /s/ HEATHER GOODMAN  
9 HEATHER GOODMAN  
Deputy City Attorney

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11 4899-8147-0387, v. 1  
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**LEGISLATIVE DIGEST**

[Planning Code - Signs in Mixed Use Districts]

**Ordinance amending the Planning Code to increase the allowable number and size of signs in Mixed Use Districts on lots over one-half acre and in the Mixed Use-Office District south of Townsend Street; affirming the Planning Department’s determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; making findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1; and making findings of public necessity, convenience, and welfare pursuant to Planning Code, Section 302**

Existing Law

The Planning Code currently regulates the number and size of signs in various zoning districts throughout San Francisco. In Mixed-Use Districts, one identifying sign is permitted per lot, up to 20 square feet in size, and wall signs or projecting signs must be mounted on the first-story level. One projecting sign is permitted per business, up to 32 square feet.

In specified Mixed-Use Districts including the Mixed Use-Office District, wall signs are subject to size limitations based on the amount of street frontage, not to exceed 150 square feet for each street frontage, and are subject to a height limit of 24 feet.

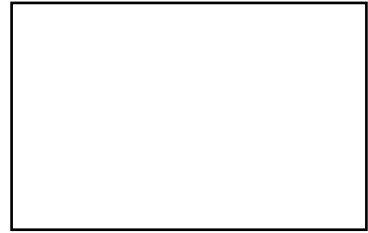
Amendments to Current Law

This ordinance amends the Planning Code to allow additional and larger signs in Mixed Use Districts. On lots that are one-half acre or larger, one identifying sign per frontage is permitted, up to 100 square feet in size, wall signs and projecting signs are permitted up to 40 feet in height, and two projecting signs per business are permitted, up to 80 square feet.

The ordinance also allows, in the Mixed Use-Office District south of Townsend Street, one additional wall sign for each street frontage, subject to size increased limitations, including 80-foot height, 80 square-foot size, projection up to eight inches, and requirements regarding other physical characteristics, as specified in the ordinance.

## Introduction Form

*(by a Member of the Board of Supervisors or the Mayor)*



I hereby submit the following item for introduction (select only one):

- 1. For reference to Committee (Ordinance, Resolution, Motion or Charter Amendment)
- 2. Request for next printed agenda (For Adoption Without Committee Reference)  
*(Routine, non-controversial and/or commendatory matters only)*
- 3. Request for Hearing on a subject matter at Committee
- 4. Request for Letter beginning with "Supervisor  inquires..."
- 5. City Attorney Request
- 6. Call File No.  from Committee.
- 7. Budget and Legislative Analyst Request (attached written Motion)
- 8. Substitute Legislation File No.
- 9. Reactivate File No.
- 10. Topic submitted for Mayoral Appearance before the Board on

The proposed legislation should be forwarded to the following (please check all appropriate boxes):

- Small Business Commission       Youth Commission       Ethics Commission
- Planning Commission       Building Inspection Commission       Human Resources Department

General Plan Referral sent to the Planning Department (proposed legislation subject to Charter 4.105 & Admin 2A.53):

- Yes                       No

*(Note: For Imperative Agenda items (a Resolution not on the printed agenda), use the Imperative Agenda Form.)*

Sponsor(s):

Subject:

Long Title or text listed:

Signature of Sponsoring Supervisor: