



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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July 11, 2012

Supervisor Chiu and  
Ms. Angela Calvillo, Clerk  
Board of Supervisors  
City and County of San Francisco  
City Hall, Room 244  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Transmittal of Planning Case Number 2012.0352T  
BF No. 12-0220: Signage Requirements for Privately-owned  
Public Open Spaces**

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

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**415.558.6377**

**Recommendation: Approval with Modifications**

Dear Supervisor Chiu and Ms. Calvillo,

On June 7th, 2012, the San Francisco Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the proposed Ordinance under Board of Supervisors File Number 12-0220.

At the June 7<sup>th</sup> Hearing, the Commission voted 6-0 to recommend approval with modifications of the proposed Ordinance which would modify existing signage requirements to lay out the specific details for design and content of informational plaques for Privately-owned Public Open Spaces.

Supervisor, please advise the City Attorney at your earliest convenience if you wish to incorporate the changes recommended by the Commission. The attached resolution and exhibits provides more detail about the Commission's action. If you have any questions or require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AM Rodgers", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

AnMarie Rodgers  
Legislative Affairs

Cc: City Attorneys Cheryl Adams and Andrea Ruiz-Esquide

Attachments (one copy of the following):

Planning Commission Resolution No. 18641  
Department Executive Summary  
Exhibit B- Zoning Administrator Bulletin No. 8



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Planning Commission Resolution

HEARING DATE: JUNE 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012

*Project Name:* **Signage Requirements for Privately-owned Public Open Spaces**

*Case Number:* 2012.0352T [Board File No. 120220]

*Initiated by:* Supervisor Chiu / Introduced March 6, 2012

*Staff Contact:* Kimia Haddadan, 415.575.9068  
[kimia.haddadan@sfgov.org](mailto:kimia.haddadan@sfgov.org)

*Reviewed by:* AnMarie Rodgers, Manager Legislative Affairs  
[anmarie.rodgers@sfgov.org](mailto:anmarie.rodgers@sfgov.org), 415.558.6395

*90-Day Deadline:* June 13, 2012

*Recommendation:* **Recommend Approval with Modifications**

**RECOMMENDING THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PASS AN ORDINANCE WITH MODIFICATIONS THAT WOULD INITIATE AMENDMENTS TO THE SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING CODE BY 1) AMENDING SECTIONS 135(H)(4), 135.3(G), AND 138(I) TO IMPOSE ADDITIONAL SIGNAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR PRIVATELY OWNED PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACES; 2) AMENDING SECTION 603(K) TO MAKE A CONFORMING AMENDMENT; AND 3) MAKING ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS, PLANNING CODE SECTION 302 FINDINGS, AND FINDINGS OF CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL PLAN AND PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1.**

### PREAMBLE

Whereas, on March 6, 2012 Supervisor Chiu introduced a proposed Ordinance under Board File Number 12-0220 that would amend Planning Code Section 135(h)(4), 135.3(g), and 138(i) to impose additional signage requirements for privately owned publicly-accessible open spaces; 2) amending Section 603(k) to make a conforming amendment; and 3) making environmental findings, Planning Code Section 302 findings, and findings of consistency with General Plan and Planning Code Section 101.1; and

Whereas, since the introduction of the proposed Ordinance, the Planning Department recommended modifications to the proposed Ordinance; and

Whereas, on June 7th, 2012 the San Francisco Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the proposed Ordinance and the proposed modification; and

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Whereas, the proposed Ordinance have been found exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act per section 15060 (c ) (3) and 15378 on March 15, 2012; and

Whereas, the Commission has heard and considered the testimony presented to it at the public hearing and has further considered written materials and oral testimony presented by Department staff, and other interested parties; and

Whereas, the all pertinent documents may be found in the files of the Department, as the custodian of records, at 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco; and

Whereas, the Commission has reviewed the proposed Ordinance; and

**MOVED**, that the Commission hereby recommends that the Board of Supervisors recommend **approval with modification** of the proposed Ordinance, makes recommendations to add to the Zoning Administrator Bulletin, and adopts the attached Draft Resolution to that effect.

- **The recommended modifications include modifying the Supervisor’s proposed Ordinance to create a new Zoning Administrator bulletin that contains detailed design and graphics requirements for the POPOS informational plaque; and to provide a toolkit in the Adobe Illustrator file format that includes default dimensions, font type and size for the plaque’s features; and to apply the new requirements to the existing POPOS that are not in compliance with existing signage requirements; and to consolidate Sections 135, 135.3, and 138 to reflect consistency in their requirements for POPOS and make the Code succinct and clear .**
- **The recommended additions to the Zoning Administrator bulletin include requiring employers at buildings that have POPOS to train their staff on how to direct the public to use the open space, and identifying smoking rules within the open space.**

## **FINDINGS**

Having reviewed the materials identified in the preamble above, and having heard all testimony and arguments, this Commission finds, concludes, and determines as follows:

1. In the past few years, some studies<sup>1</sup> have evaluated POPOS in San Francisco and identified deficiencies in their design and function. These studies found that insufficient and deficient signage has made POPOS hard to find and sometimes invisible in Downtown. Existing POPOS plaques are deficient and insufficient mainly because: 1) many of the existing POPOS plaques do not comply with all of the existing Code provisions; and 2) the existing provisions in the Code focus on the general content and location of POPOS plaques without providing detailed design and location specifications. Additionally, staff found some inconsistencies within the three Sections in the Code that regulate POPOS.

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<sup>1</sup> SPUR, *Secrets of San Francisco*, January 2009, accessed May, 2012 from : [http://www.spur.org/publications/library/report/secretsofsanfrancisco\\_010109](http://www.spur.org/publications/library/report/secretsofsanfrancisco_010109); and King, John. *Privately-owned Public Spaces: Guidance Needed*, February 19, 2012, accessed May 2012 from: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2012/02/18/MN3S1N8PUQ.DTL>

2. In order to both regulate the detailed design of POPOS informational plaque and keep the Code clean and succinct, the Department suggests creating a new Zoning Administrator bulletin that would include all the detailed design and graphics provisions. Provisions regarding fundamentals such as location and placement of plaques will remain in the Code. The Department suggests minor modifications to proposed code. These modifications would add way finding directions for POPOS located or accessed through indoor structures. Additionally, as a part of these modifications, staff proposes that if no improvements or building façade are found within five feet of the nearest sidewalk, the plaque may be installed on a free standing post.
3. Staff has developed a toolkit for the plaque and suggests making it available for property managers and project sponsors in the Adobe Illustrator format. Using this toolkit for all POPOS informational plaque would provide consistency and integrity to all POPOS in the city. It will also significantly reduce financial costs of graphic design work. Staff suggests that improving visibility through size will be ensured as long as the text stating "Public Open Space" is about one inch tall.
4. The Ordinance as proposed does not require existing POPOS to abide by the new standards regarding the informational plaque. As a result, the Department proposes to include language in the Code to apply these new standards to existing POPOS. Staff proposed allowing one year for existing POPOS to comply with the new standards. This would brand all POPOS in the city and would help the greater public to more easily identify these spaces and use them. Additionally, the Department Code Enforcement staff has committed annual inspection of these spaces to ensure compliance with the Code.
5. Staff finds that Section 138 is the most suitable place in the Code to house all the provisions regarding POPOS. Other sections in the Code should cross-reference this Section when regulating POPOS for other uses and districts. Additionally, staff also suggested some minor changes in the language of Sections 135 and 135.3 in order to further clarify that POPOS under Sections 135 and 135.3 are only provided optionally as an alternative to private and common open space and are not required as they are under Section 138 in C-3 Districts.
6. **General Plan Compliance.** The proposed Ordinance is, on balance, consistent with the following Objectives and Policies of the General Plan:

**Downtown Plan**

**POLICY 9.1**

**Require usable indoor and outdoor open space, accessible to the public, as part of new downtown development.**

A requirement to provide needed open space should be extended to non-residential uses in the downtown. Each development should be required to provide open space in a quantity that is directly proportional to the amount of nonresidential space in the building.

*The proposed Ordinance would enhance implementation of this policy by ensuring that provided open space is visible and the public is best informed of its existence.*

**POLICY 10.3**

**Keep open space facilities available to the public.**

Locked gates or restricted passages negate the purpose of "open" space. All outdoor ground level features which are accessible from the public sidewalk, such as parks, plazas, snippets, and sitting areas in arcades, should always be open to the public during daylight hours. On the other hand, features which require entry through the building such as atriums, greenhouses, sitting areas in gallerias, sun and view terraces can more reasonably be restricted to normal business hours since office workers (shoppers, in the case of a galleria) are the primary users of the space.

*The proposed Ordinance would enhance implementation of this policy by informing the public of open accessibility of the space through proper signage.*

**POLICY 10.4**

**Provide open space that is clearly visible and easily reached from the street or pedestrian way.**

Open spaces should be accessible, visible, and generally be at or near grade level to facilitate use. Plazas and parks more than three feet above or below grade are less inviting, and as a result, are less frequently used. Any plaza or park not at street level should be connected to the street system by wide, visible, and inviting stairways or ramps. Terraces located on upper levels or on top of buildings should be readily accessible to the public. Their availability should be marked visibly at street level. Adequate signs in hallways and elevators should aid in locating the facility.

*The proposed Ordinance would implement this policy by requiring way finding directions included in the informational plaque as well as more direction signage inside the building.*

**Eastern Neighborhoods Plan**

**POLICY 5.1.2**

**Require new residential and commercial development to contribute to the creation of public open space.**

**POLICY 5.2.4**

**Encourage publicly accessible open space as part of new residential and commercial development.**

*The proposed Ordinance would enhance the implementation of these policies by ensuring that the open space provided is visible and the public are best informed of its existence.*

7. The proposed replacement project is generally consistent with the eight General Plan priority policies set forth in Section 101.1 in that:
  - A) The existing neighborhood-serving retail uses will be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses will be enhanced:

*The proposed Ordinance will have no adverse impact on the neighborhood-serving retail uses.*

- B) The existing housing and neighborhood character will be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods:

*The proposed Ordinance will have no adverse effect on existing housing and neighborhood character.*

- C) The City's supply of affordable housing will be preserved and enhanced:

*The proposed Ordinance will have no adverse effects on the City's supply of affordable housing.*

- D) The commuter traffic will not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking:

*The proposed Ordinance will not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI transit service or overburdening the streets or neighborhood parking.*

- E) A diverse economic base will be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development. And future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors will be enhanced:

*The proposed Ordinance will not result in displacement of industrial or service sectors.*

- F) The City will achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

*The proposed Ordinance would not affect the preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.*

- G) That landmark and historic buildings will be preserved:

*The proposed Ordinance would not adversely affect landmark and historic buildings.*

- H) Parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas will be protected from development:

*The proposed Ordinance would not adversely affect parks and open spaces in terms their access to sunlight and vistas.*

I hereby certify that the Planning Commission ADOPTED the foregoing Resolution on February 23, 2012.

Linda Avery

**Resolution NO. 18641**  
**Hearing Date: June 7th , 2012**  
**BF 12-0220**

**CASE NO. 2012.0352T**  
**Signage Requirements for Privately-**  
**owned Public Open Spaces**

Commission Secretary

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED:



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Executive Summary Planning Code Text Change HEARING DATE: JUNE 7TH , 2012

*Project Name:* **Signage Requirements for Privately-owned Public Open Spaces**

*Case Number:* 2012.0352T [Board File No. 120220]  
*Initiated by:* Supervisor Chiu / Introduced March 6, 2012  
*Staff Contact:* Kimia Haddadan, 415.575.9068  
[kimia.haddadan@sfgov.org](mailto:kimia.haddadan@sfgov.org)

*Reviewed by:* AnMarie Rodgers, Manager Legislative Affairs  
[anmarie.rodgers@sfgov.org](mailto:anmarie.rodgers@sfgov.org), 415.558.6395

*90-Day Deadline:* June 13, 2012

*Recommendation:* **Recommend Approval with Modifications**

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### PLANNING CODE AMENDMENTS

The proposed Ordinance would initiate amendments to the San Francisco Planning Code by 1) amending Sections 135(h)(4), 135.3(g), and 138 (i) to impose additional signage requirements for privately owned publicly-accessible open spaces; 2) amending Section 603(k) to make a conforming amendment; and 3) making environmental findings, Planning Code Section 302 findings, and findings of consistency with General Plan and Planning Code Section 101.1.

#### The Way It Is Now:

Privately-owned public open spaces (POPOS) are publicly accessible spaces in forms of plazas, terraces, atriums, small parks, and even snippets that are provided and maintained by private developers. In San Francisco, POPOS mostly appear in the Downtown office district area. Prior to 1985, developers provided POPOS under three general circumstances: voluntarily, in exchange for a density bonus, or as a condition of approval. The 1985 Downtown Plan created the first systemic requirements for developers to provide publicly accessible open space as a part of projects in C-3 Districts. The goal was to “provide in the downtown quality open space in sufficient quantity and variety to meet the needs of downtown workers, residents and visitors.”<sup>1</sup> The Downtown Plan also established guidelines that define eleven types of open spaces in Downtown. These guidelines prescribe detailed standards regarding each open space type size, location, access, seating, landscaping, food service, sunlight and wind, and public accessibility. Section 138 of the San Francisco Planning Code (herein after the “Code”) refers to these guidelines and establishes required amount of open space in C-3 Districts. It also regulates POPOS signage which is the

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<sup>1</sup> Downtown Area Plan, 1985, Objective 9



focus of the proposed Ordinance. The Planning Department designed a customized plaque template for POPOS featuring a distinctive logo and required project sponsors to install the plaque at the space. However, while the Code specified what information to include in the plaque, it did not identify the location and the size of the plaque. As a result, many of these sites do not include proper informational signage, which has created a deficiency in informing the public about the existence of open space. Section 135 and 135.3 also provide provisions for POPOS in other Districts such as Downtown Residential and Eastern Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts. Some provisions in these two Sections regarding POPOS are not in consistence with provisions in Section 138.

### **The Way It Would Be:**

The proposed Ordinance would amend Section 138 to include more specific requirements and standards for the informational plaques of POPOS. In order to maintain consistency in the Code, Section 135 and 135.3 of the Code will also be amended to match the same standards.

## **ISSUES AND CONSIDERATION**

Valuable assets to the dense urban fabric of Downtown San Francisco's office district, POPOS offer office employees, residents, and visitors a breathing room to rest and refresh. POPOS bear a more critical role in Downtown considering the lack of traditional parks and open spaces in this part of the city. In a study conducted in 2009<sup>2</sup>, San Francisco Planning and Urban Research evaluated POPOS in San Francisco and identified deficiencies in their design and function. These studies found that insufficient and deficient signage has made POPOS hard to find and sometimes invisible in Downtown. This issue has also been highlighted in the San Francisco Chronicle in an overview of POPOS in San Francisco<sup>3</sup>. Existing POPOS plaques are deficient and insufficient mainly because: 1) many of the existing POPOS plaques do not comply with all of the existing Code provisions; and 2) the existing provisions in the Code focus on the general content and location of POPOS plaques without providing detailed design and location specifications. Additionally, staff found some inconsistencies within the three Sections in the Code that regulate POPOS. Further analysis of these issues is provided below.

### **I. Signage design and content**

While the Code currently requires informational plaques for POPOS, the requirements do not specifically prescribe the location, design, and the size of these plaques. Improving requirements for signage would significantly help the public's access to these spaces.

1. **Size of the sign:** Currently, section 138 does not specify any size requirements for the information plaque while Section 135(h) requires a 24 by 36 inch sign. Figures 1 to 3<sup>4</sup> illustrate how existing POPOS use plaques with a variety of font and sign sizes. Regulating the size of the plaque or the text font could bring consistency and ensure readability for POPOS signage.

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<sup>2</sup> SPUR, *Secrets of San Francisco*, January 2009, accessed May, 2012 from : [http://www.spur.org/publications/library/report/secretsofsanfrancisco\\_010109](http://www.spur.org/publications/library/report/secretsofsanfrancisco_010109); and

<sup>3</sup> King, John. *Privately-owned Public Spaces: Guidance Needed*, February 19, 2012, accessed May 2012 from: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2012/02/18/MN3S1N8PUQ.DTL>

<sup>4</sup> Exhibit A

2. **Information on the sign:**

- a. **Public access-** POPOS are usually small or tucked away inside, on the back, or on the roof of buildings. These characteristics might create an impression that the space is private and only to be used by building occupants. The existing template for POPOS plaque includes a statement identifying the space as public open space. However, existing POPOS plaques use different statements to indicate this fact. A universal public open space statement for all POPOS plaques can help brand such spaces and better inform the public.
  - b. **A logo-** At the time that the Downtown Plan was approved, the Planning Department designed a logo for POPOS plaques (Figure 4). Almost all POPOS include this logo in their plaques, albeit with different designs and colors. Including this logo in the information plaque for all of the POPOS with a consistent design, size, and color could brand these spaces as one specific type of open space and provide consistency and context for users.
  - c. **Hours of operation-** Including hours of operation on the plaque clarify the duration for which the space is open.
  - d. **Principal features-** This is to inform the public about what amenities would be found in POPOS, helping users to decide if this space would match their needs. These features include: number of seating, restrooms, availability of food service, and accessibility. Although this is currently required by the Code, almost none of existing POPOS have provided such information in their plaques.
  - e. **Contact list-** In order to allow the public to inquire information about access or maintenance issues, or relay their complaints to the owner, the plaque should also include phone number, email and postal address of the owner or the maintenance agent for the site.
  - f. **Way finding directions-** POPOS that are built inside of a building or are accessed through a building are sometimes hard to find. Providing such information would help users find the space more easily. Figures 5 & 6 illustrate one good example of how this could be achieved.
3. **Location of the sign-** While the Code currently requires the plaque to be located in a conspicuous location, it does not define the term conspicuous in detail. Some existing POPOS have their plaques located in less conspicuous locations, for example on less visible side walls of the building, on glass, or on the ground (See Figure 7). For POPOS located inside buildings, it is even more important to install the sign on a conspicuous location, as the space is usually not visible from the outside.
4. **Placement of the sign-** Where the plaque should be positioned also affects visibility of the sign. In order to ensure a convenient visibility, the plaque should be placed within the average eye-level height. Figures 2, 8, and 9 show examples where the plaque is positioned at knee level or on the ground surface.
5. **Clarity of the sign-** The materials and coloring used to design the plaque also helps in making the sign more readable and visible. Figures 5 & 9 illustrate examples where a lack of contrast between lettering and background makes signs hard to find and read.

## II. Enforcement

Currently, the Department enforces the existing requirements regarding POPOS by approving the satisfaction of provisions prior to issuance of a permit of occupancy. However, since some requirements were not laid out in detail in the existing code, many existing POPOS have not provided proper signage. The existing guidelines have not always been followed when providing signage for POPOS. The proposed Ordinance, as currently drafted, would apply only to future POPOS and would not correct existing POPOS signage. Applying improvements to existing POPOS palques could provide consistency and clarity for all POPOS in the city.

## III. Inconsistencies in POPOS provisions in Sections 135 (h), 135.3, and 138

There are three sections in the Code that regulate POPOS in different areas of the city. Section 138 regulates privately-owned public open space in C3 districts. Section 135 regulates any usable open space for dwelling units in certain districts<sup>5</sup> and determines standards for when these usable open spaces are provided as publicly accessible<sup>6</sup>. Finally, Section 135.3 regulates usable open space for uses other than dwelling units in certain districts<sup>7</sup> and includes provisions when these spaces are publicly accessible<sup>8</sup>. Currently, there are some inconsistencies under these Sections regarding POPOS signage provision. Consolidating these provisions in one section of the Code and adding cross-references to other sections would bring consistency in regulating POPOS in the city.

## REQUIRED COMMISSION ACTION

The proposed Resolution is before the Commission so that it may recommend adoption, rejection, or adoption with modifications to the Board of Supervisors.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department recommends that the Commission recommend *approval with modification* of the proposed Ordinances and adopt the attached Draft Resolution to that effect. The recommended modifications suggest additions to the content of informational plaques for better design and awareness. Proposed changes would also allow applying these new standards to the existing POPOS. The recommended modifications include:

### I. Informational Plaque Improvements:

- a. Include the proposed provisions regarding location and placement of the plaque in the Code as suggested by the Supervisor with minor modifications but move provisions regarding design and size from the Code to a new Zoning Administrator bulletin which would be referenced in the Code. Exhibit B illustrates this bulletin and how it would regulate POPOS plaque design.

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<sup>5</sup> Dwelling units and group housing, R, NC, Mixed Use, C, and M districts

<sup>6</sup> This option is only allowed for DTR and EN Mixed Use Districts.

<sup>7</sup> Uses other than dwelling units, group housing, and live/work units within the South of Market, and Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts, and DTR districts

<sup>8</sup> This option is only allowed for DTR and EN Mixed Use Districts.

- b. Within this bulletin, regulate the font type and size in the signage instead of the plaque size.
  - c. Make the informational plaque template available in the Adobe Illustrator file format in order to make such signs consistent across the city and at the same time reduce the costs of designing the plaque for property managers and project sponsors
- II. Enforcement:** Include language in the Code to apply these standards to the existing POPOS.
- III. Consolidate Code Sections:** Consolidate POPOS requirements in Sections 138, 135 (h), and 135.3, by incorporating all provisions in Section 138 and adding cross-references to other two sections.

### **Basis for Recommendation of Support and Modifications**

Insufficient and deficient signage for POPOS results in a lack of awareness for downtown workers, residents, and visitors regarding the existence of POPOS as well as their availability to the public. To address these concerns, this Ordinance as proposed by Supervisor Chiu, introduced some additional detailed specifications for POPOS informational plaques; size, content, and where it should be located and placed. The Department finds that including a well-designed logo in the information plaque would brand these POPOS as one type of open space. In addition, installing the plaque at every pedestrian access or entrance to the POPOS will better inform the public about the existence of these spaces. The Ordinance as proposed requires plaques to be installed within five feet of the space on the side walk or by the pedestrian entrance (in case of inside POPOS). This would ensure that when people are passing by the open space, they would notice the sign and understand where the space is located. Information about types of amenities and uses in the space also helps users to decide whether or not they would like to spend their time in this area.

**Basis for Modification I: Sign Improvements-** In order to both regulate the detailed design of POPOS informational plaque and keep the Code clean and succinct, the Department suggests creating a new Zoning Administrator bulletin that would include all the detailed design and graphics provisions. Provisions regarding fundamentals such as location and placement of plaques will remain in the Code. The Department suggests minor modifications to proposed code (See Exhibit C). These modifications would add way finding directions for POPOS located or accessed through indoor structures. Including way finding directions would ensure users can find the space and would not get lost in the building. A lack of proper way finding directions may deter users from using the space if it is not found after a few minutes of searching. Additionally, as a part of these modifications, staff proposes that if no improvements or building façade are found within five feet of the nearest sidewalk, the plaque may be installed on a free standing post.

Regarding plaques design, staff believes that the proposed size (24 x 24) for POPOS informational plaque is too large; it would both leave copious blank space in the sign and impose unnecessary high costs in building the plaque. Model signs produced by staff supported our conclusion that regulating font type and size of the text in the plaque can more efficiently control visibility of the plaque while maintaining graphically aesthetic signage. Staff found that size is only one element that contributes to the visibility of signage among others: material, location, placement, cleanness, etc.

Staff has developed a toolkit for the plaque and suggests making it available for property managers and project sponsors in the Adobe Illustrator format. Using this toolkit for all POPOS informational plaque would provide consistency and integrity to all POPOS in the city. It will also significantly reduce financial costs of graphic design work. Staff suggests that improving visibility through size will be ensured as long as the text stating “Public Open Space” is about one inch tall. Detailed required dimensions are provided in the ZA Bulletin (See Exhibit B).

**Basis for Modification II: Enforcement-** The Ordinance as proposed does not require existing POPOS to abide by the new standards regarding the informational plaque. As a result, the Department proposes to include language in the Code to apply these new standards to existing POPOS. Staff proposed allowing one year for existing POPOS to comply with the new standards. This would brand all POPOS in the city and would help the greater public to more easily identify these spaces and use them. The Department sent mailed notices regarding this legislation to more than 60 property owners of POPOS identified in the Department’s records (Exhibit D). Additionally, the Department Code Enforcement staff has committed annual inspection of these spaces to ensure compliance with the Code.

**Basis for Modification III: Consolidate Code Sections-** The Ordinance as proposed consolidates all provisions for POPOS signage in Section 135 (h) of the Code and cross-references them in Sections 138 and 135.3. However, POPOS requirements were first integrated into the Code in Section 138 subsequent to the 1985 Downtown Area Plan. Section 135 focuses on regulating private and common open spaces for dwelling units in certain districts. It only addresses POPOS in one subsection (135 (h)) when project sponsors choose to provide their required private or common open spaces as publicly accessible. Consequently, staff finds that Section 138 is the most suitable place in the Code to house all the provisions regarding POPOS. Other sections in the Code should cross-reference this Section when regulating POPOS for other uses and districts. Additionally, staff also suggested some minor changes in the language of Sections 135 and 135.3 in order to further clarify that POPOS under Sections 135 and 135.3 are only provided optionally as an alternative to private and common open space and are not required as they are under Section 138 in C-3 Districts (for details of these changes see Exhibit C).

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Both the original proposed Ordinance and the proposed modification of the Ordinance have been reviewed and found not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act guidelines sections 15060 ( c ) ( 3 ) and 15378.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Staff has received two letters from the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research including some additional detail language to be included in the Code. Exhibit F includes these letters. Staff also received two inquiries regarding the mailed notices, requesting clarifications on what spaces are designated POPOS within their properties.

<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	<b>Recommendation of Approval with Modifications</b>
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**Attachments:**

- Exhibit A: Existing POPOS informational plaques
- Exhibit B: Zoning Bulletin 8- Privately-owned Public Open Spaces Informational plaques
- Exhibit C: Staff proposed changes to the Planning Code Sections 138, 135, and 135.3
- Exhibit D: Map of POPOS indicated in the Department's records
- Exhibit E: Draft Planning Commission Resolution
- Exhibit F: Draft Board of Supervisors Ordinance [Board File No. 12-0220]
- Exhibit G: Comments from SPUR



SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING  
DEPARTMENT

## ZONING ADMINISTRATOR BULLETIN NO. 8

# Privately-Owned Public Open Spaces Informational Plaque

Section 307 of the Planning Code mandates the Zoning Administrator to issue and adopt such rules, regulations and interpretations as are in the Zoning Administrator's opinion, necessary to administer and enforce the provisions of the Planning Code. [Section 7.502 of the San Francisco Charter charges the Zoning Administrator with the responsibility of administering and enforcing the Planning Code.]

Date:  
June 2012

Relevant Code Sections:

Section 138 *Open Space Requirements In C-3 Districts*

Section 135 (h) *POPOS as Usable Open Space for Dwelling Units in DTR and EN Mixed Use Districts*

Section 135.3 *POPOS as Usable Open Space for Uses Other than Dwelling units in DTR and EN Mixed Use Districts*

### TOPIC:

The following provisions are aimed to regulate the design of Privately-owned Public Open Spaces (POPOS) Informational Plaques.

### PURPOSE:

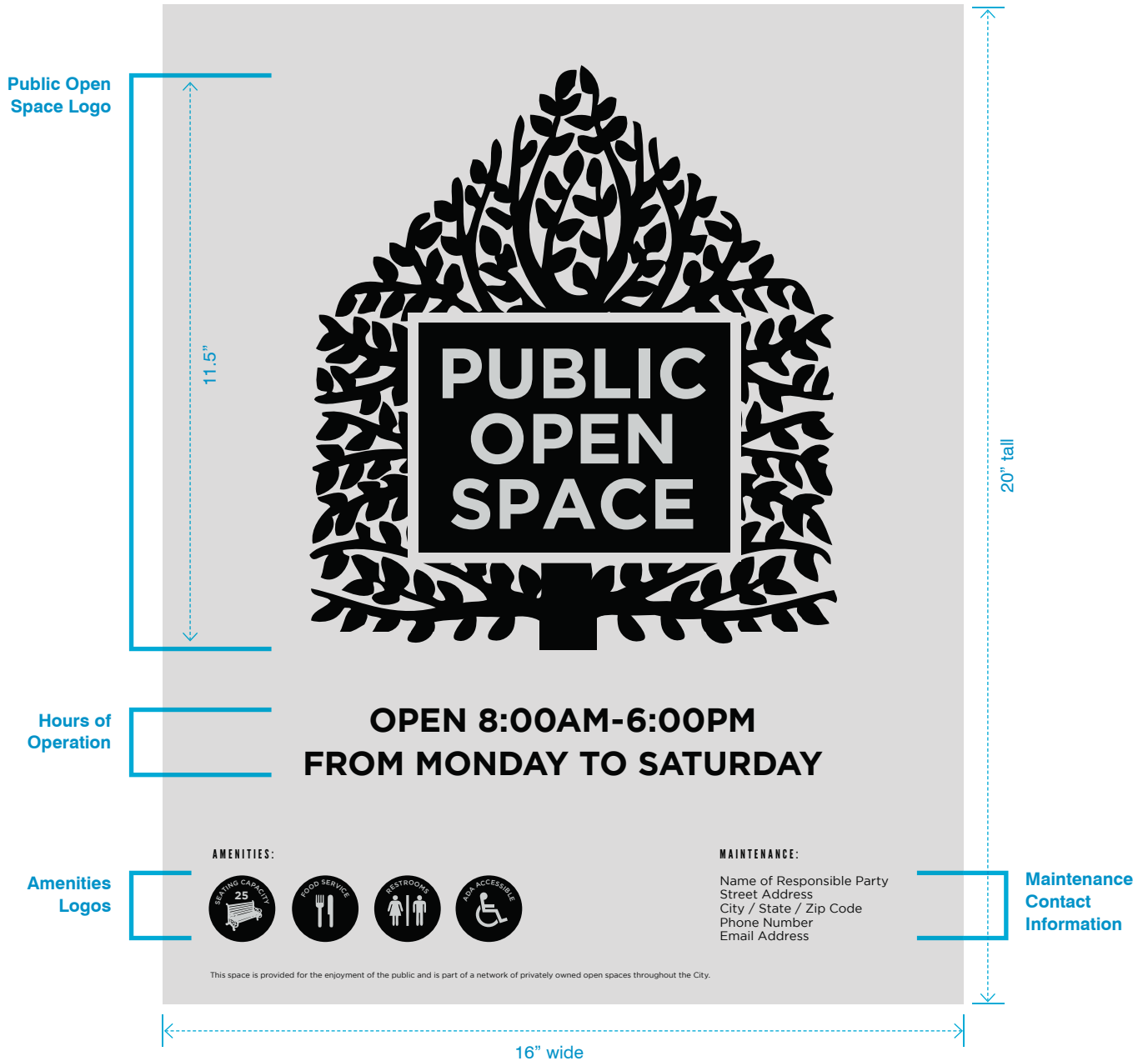
Section 138 of the Planning Code regulates the design, content and location of POPOS in C-3 Districts in the Downtown Area Plan. Sections 135(h) and 135.3 regulate POPOS when they are provided to fulfill the usable open space requirements in DTR and EN Mixed Use Districts. The standards in this bulletin provide detailed provisions on designing POPOS Informational Plaque.

### RULING:

The San Francisco Planning Department has adopted and shall implement the following standards for POPOS informational plaques, through the review and approval of proposals. All plaques shall include:

- The logo developed by the Planning Department which includes "Public Open Space" as shown in *Figure 1*.
- Days and hours of operation.
- Contact information (phone number, email and postal address) for the entity responsible for maintaining the space.
- Features offered in the space, including: number of seats, food services, restrooms, and ADA accessibility.

Figure 1  
Sign Template and Dimensions



**NOTE:**

All signs are required to be 16" wide x 20" high, as set forth in the artwork template, and may not be modified.

The Public Open Space logo may not be modified.

This template is available on-line at: <http://popos.sfplanning.org>



## SIGNAGE TEMPLATE & USAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES:

The San Francisco Planning Department has developed a template for these plaques in conjunction with the guidelines in this bulletin. Project sponsors can obtain a design toolkit which can be downloaded from the Planning Department web site at: <http://popos.sfplanning.org>. The toolkit contains the sign template artwork in vectorized formats (Illustrator and EPS files), along with the design and usage guidelines set forth in this bulletin. All POPOS Informational Plaques should use the template and may not modify the detailed dimensions or graphics set forth in this template (see *Figure 1*) and described below:



### Public Open Space Logo:

- The logo art and placement may not be modified, and must remain 11.5" high and 10.5" wide, and occupy 1/3 of the total signage area.
- The "Public Open Space" text framed within the logo may not be modified. The text is set in the template and the letters must remain 1" high in Gotham Bold font. The template provides this logo with such provisions as default.

OPEN 8:00AM-6:00PM  
FROM MONDAY TO SATURDAY

### Hours of Operation:

- Recommended font usage: Gotham Bold; Sans serif font, bold
- The days and hours of operation should be set on two lines centered below the logo, and the letters in bold 48 point font (or letter height equivalent of 0.5").
- Line one should state *Open* followed by the hours of operation. Line two should state days of operation.



### Amenities:

- Logos for features in the space (**use only if applicable**), as exactly provided in the template
  - Seating logo (it is recommended that the number of seating spaces/capacity should be stated within the logo)
  - Food service logo (availability of cafes, food carts or other types of food vendors within the space)
  - Restroom logo
  - Universal accessibility logo
- These amenities logos provided in the artwork template may not be modified and or scaled smaller than at 1.25" diameter in height.

### MAINTENANCE:

Name of Responsible Party  
Street Address  
City / State / Zip Code  
Phone Number  
Email Address

### Maintenance Contact Information:

- Recommended font usage: Gotham Medium or Book; Sans serif font regular
- Contact information shall be provided in five lines of text as displayed in the template with 18 point font size (or letter height equivalent of 0.175" high).

- Please provide full information for: the name/entity of the party responsible for maintenance of the space; mailing address; phone number; and e-mail.

This policy shall be implemented through the Design Review Process. If the Planning Department finds the proposed informational plaque does not comply with this Bulletin, the respective Building Permit Application shall be disapproved.



**SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING  
DEPARTMENT**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
Call or visit the San Francisco Planning Department**

**Central Reception**

1650 Mission Street, Suite 400  
San Francisco CA 94103-2479

TEL: **415.558.6378**  
FAX: **415.558.6409**  
WEB: **<http://www.sfplanning.org>**

**Planning Information Center (PIC)**

1660 Mission Street, First Floor  
San Francisco CA 94103-2479

TEL: **415.558.6377**

*Planning staff are available by phone and at the PIC counter.  
No appointment is necessary.*