BOARD of SUPERVISORS



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Carla Short, Director, Public Works

Ralph Remington, Director of Cultural Affairs, Arts Commission

FROM: John Carroll, Assistant Clerk, Land Use and Transportation Committee

DATE: September 15, 2025

SUBJECT: LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

The Board of Supervisors' Land Use and Transportation Committee has received the following proposed legislation, introduced by Mayor Lurie on September 2, 2025.

File No. 250894

Ordinance amending the Public Works Code to streamline the requirements and approval processes for the commemorative designation of public right-of-way and public places and the installation of commemorative street plaques to honor sites, events, and persons of historical interest or significance to San Francisco; eliminating the requirement that Public Works hold a hearing on applications for a commemorative street plaque; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

If you have comments or reports to be included with the file, please forward them to me at the Board of Supervisors, City Hall, Room 244, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102 or by email at: john.carroll@sfgov.org.

cc:

Offices of Chair Melgar and Mayor Lurie David Steinberg, Public Works Ian Schneider, Public Works Jason Wong, Public Works Alyssa Ventre, Arts Commission Mary Chou, Arts Commission

1	[Public Works Code - Streamlining Approvals of Commemorative Public Right-of-Way and Public Place Designations and Installation of Commemorative Street Plaques]	
2	Public Place Designations and installation of Commemorative Street Plaques	
3	Ordinance amending the Public Works Code to streamline the requirements and	
4	approval processes for the commemorative designation of public right-of-way and	
5	public places and the installation of commemorative street plaques to honor sites,	
6	events, and persons of historical interest or significance to San Francisco; eliminating	
7	the requirement that Public Works hold a hearing on applications for a commemorative	
8	street plaque; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the	
9	California Environmental Quality Act.	
10	NOTE: Unchanged Code text and uncodified text are in plain Arial font.	
11	Additions to Codes are in <u>single-underline italics Times New Roman font</u> . Deletions to Codes are in <u>strikethrough italics Times New Roman font</u> .	
12	Board amendment additions are in double-underlined Arial font. Board amendment deletions are in strikethrough Arial font.	
13	Asterisks (* * * *) indicate the omission of unchanged Code 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 Findings.	
18	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 of	
22	Supervisors affirms this determination.	
23	111	
24	111	
25	Section 2. General Findings.	

(a) San Francisco's fragmented and protracted permitting processes hinder small
businesses and impede housing development. A fast, predictable, and transparent permitting
process will create new jobs, businesses, and homes, as well as facilitate the City's economic
recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Commonly referred to as "PermitSF," the City's effort
to reform permitting and other City authorizations consists of improving the customer
experience by streamlining approval processes; promoting government accountability to
provide certainty about the delivery of government services; and centralizing technology to
create a single point of permitting access.

(b) This ordinance streamlines and clarifies the processes by which an applicant may seek and obtain the City's approval to commemorate a site, event, or person of historical interest or significance to San Francisco on a public right-of-way or a public place under the Department of Public Works' jurisdiction whether by way of commemorative designation or the installation of a commemorative street plaque.

Section 3. Article 15 of the Public Works Code is hereby amended by revising Sections 789.1, 789.2, and 789.4, and repealing Section 789.3, to read as follows:

SEC. 789.1. PURPOSE AND INTENT.

The Board of Supervisors hereby finds and declares that:

- (a) The City and County of San Francisco has a unique and important history that should be preserved and commemorated for residents and visitors. The contributions of certain sites, events, and people to the history of the City should be recognized.
- (b) One method of preserving and <u>honoring</u> such historical sites, events, and people shall be <u>commemoration by official designation by the Board of Supervisors. Another</u> <u>method shall be</u> the <u>installationplacement</u> of commemorative plaques, <u>also known as</u>

1	<u>commemorative street plaques,</u> upon public <u>right-of-waystreets</u> and <u>public</u> places <u>following all</u>
2	necessary review and approvals including approval by the Board of Supervisors, the Department of
3	Public Works (the "Department"), and the Arts Commission. Such plaques shall play an important
4	role in identifying locations of historical interest to residents and visitors.

SEC. 789.2. <u>REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMEMORATION BY DESIGNATION OR</u> COMMEMORATIVE STREET PLAQUE <u>APPLICATION, DESIGN, PLACEMENT, AND</u> INSTALLATION <u>PROCEDURES</u>.

This Section 789.2 <u>describes shall govern</u> the <u>requirements procedures</u> for commemoration of historical sites, events, and persons in locations upon a public <u>right-of-way, as defined in Section 2.4.4 of this Code, street or public places</u>, as defined in Section 244 of this Code. <u>The Board of Supervisors may commemorate historical sites, events, and persons by designating portions of public right-of-way or public places and/or by authorizing the installation of commemorative plaques on a public right-of-way or a public place.</u>

- (a) <u>Commemoration By Designation</u>. The Board of Supervisors may, by resolution, designate a <u>portion of a public right-of-way or a public place</u> to commemorate a site, event, or person of historical interest <u>or significance</u> to San Francisco, <u>subject to the requirements of subsection (b) below</u>.
- (b) <u>Commemoration By Plaque Installation</u>. Any <u>applicantperson</u> seeking to commemorate a site, event, or person of historical interest <u>or significance</u> to San Francisco by placement and installation of a commemorative plaque <u>on a specific location</u> on a public <u>right-of-waysidewalk</u> or <u>a public</u> place shall <u>obtain all necessary approvals from the Board of Supervisors and the Arts Commission, and the applicant shall satisfy all applicable accessibility requirements. In <u>addition, the applicant shall</u> file an application with the Department <u>of Public Works</u>, <u>and</u> shall obtain all necessary permits and approvals <u>from the Department</u> for the commemorative</u>

1	plaque, including any applicable major or minor sidewalk encroachment permits. The
2	applicant, and shall submit all required fees and shall provide the Department with all required
3	information including but not limited to the applicant's preferred locations for plaque installation,
4	alternative locations for plaque installation, and any security and/or evidence of insurance, as
5	may be required by the Department following the Department's review of the application. Such
6	application shall be filed upon forms prescribed by the Department, include all information required by
7	the Department including, but not limited to, the applicant's preferred locations for plaque installation
8	and alternative locations for plaque installation, and be accompanied by all required fees set by the
9	Department.
10	
11	SEC. 789.3. [Reserved.] PUBLIC SCHEDULE, NOTICE AND CONDUCT OF HEARING.
12	(a) The Department shall set a time and place for a hearing thereon for a date not to exceed 90
13	days from the date on which the complete application was received by the Department.
14	(b) Notice of time, place and purpose of the hearing on the application for a commemorative
15	plaque on a public street or place shall be as follows:
16	(1) By mail, not less than 10 days prior to the date of the hearing, to the applicant(s).
17	(2) By mail, not less than 10 days prior to the date of the hearing, to the owners of all
18	real property fronting the specific location and the owners of all real property on either side of the
19	specific location requested for commemoration. The Department shall use the names and addresses of
20	the owners as shown on the latest city-wide assessment roll in the office of the Tax Collector.
21	(3) By posting, not less than 10 days prior to the date of the hearing, in a public place
22	near the specific location requested for commemoration.
23	(4) Such other notice as the Department shall deem appropriate.
24	(c) A record shall be kept of pertinent information presented at the hearing and such record
25	shall be maintained as part of the permanent records of the Department. The Director of Public Works

shall determine the instances in which applications scheduled for hearing may be continued. In such cases, new notice need not be given provided the date of any further hearing is announced at the previously scheduled hearing.

SEC. 789.4. <u>APPROVAL OF COMMEMORATIVE STREET PLAQUE INSTALLATION</u> DESIGNATION BY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.

(a) <u>Approval Following Public Works' Review of a Complete Application</u>. Within 30 days after close of the Department's hearing, Following the Department's review of any complete commemorative street plaque application, the Department shall forward the application, and the <u>Department's its own report and</u> recommendation on the application, including any recommended conditions of approval, to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors. The record of the hearing thereon and a list of all parties notified of the hearing shall be attached to the Department's recommendation.

(b)—The Board of Supervisors shall hold a public hearing on any proposal so transmitted. By resolution, the Board may approve, disapprove, or modify and approve with modifications and conditions, the installation of commemorative street plaques at designation of a specific locations on a public right-of-waystreet or a public place to commemorate a site, event or person of historical interest to San Francisco.

(be) <u>Approval Prior To Submittal of Complete Application</u>. <u>Alternatively, In the alternative, notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b)</u>, the Board of Supervisors may elect to hold a hearing on a proposal to commemorate a site, event, or person of historical interest to San Francisco prior to the <u>applicant's</u> submittal of a complete application to the Department. <u>T</u>the <u>Board of Supervisors and may, by elect to pass a</u> resolution, <u>approving the commemoration of a site, event, or person, and authorizeing</u> the Director, <u>or the Director's designee, to approve the installation of one or more commemorative street plaques as specified in the resolution</u>, following the Arts

Commission's approval of the plaque design and the Director's review of all permit application

1	materials. <u>to The Department shall only approve</u> the installation of commemorative <u>street</u>
2	plaques at precise locations that comply with the applicable engineering, installation, safety,
3	and siting criteria. <i>The Department shall only approve the installation of commemorative street</i>
4	plaques at specific locations that comply with the applicable engineering, installation, safety, and siting
5	criteria, and to designate these precise locations for commemoration of a site, event, or
6	person .

(c) Ownership, Maintenance, and Repair of Commemorative Plaques. Any resolution approving the installation of a commemorative street plaque on a public right-of-way or a public place shall identify the person or entity that owns the commemorative street plaque and the person or entity that is responsible for maintaining and repairing the commemorative street plaque. If the owner of the commemorative street plaque wishes to offer the commemorative street plaque, the maintenance and repair of the commemorative street plaque, and/or funds for the maintenance and repair of the commemorative street plaque as gifts to the City, the Board of Supervisors may accept such offers in the resolution that approves the commemorative street plaque installation.

Section 4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

Section 5. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles, numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the "Note" that appears under

1	the official title of the ordinance.
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3	APPROVED AS TO FORM:
4	DAVID CHIU, City Attorney
5	By: /s/ Christopher T. Tom CHRISTOPHER T. TOM
6	Deputy City Attorney
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LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Public Works Code - Streamlining Approvals of Commemorative Public Right-of-Way and Public Place Designations and Installation of Commemorative Street Plaques]

Ordinance amending the Public Works Code to streamline the requirements and approval processes for the commemorative designation of public right-of-way and public places and the installation of commemorative street plaques to honor sites, events, and persons of historical interest or significance to San Francisco; eliminating the requirement that Public Works hold a hearing on applications for a commemorative street plaque; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Existing Law

Currently, the Commemorative Street Plaque Ordinance (Article 15, Sections 789 et seq. of the Public Works Code) can be difficult to navigate; the ordinance does not distinguish clearly between the process of seeking approval of the commemorative designation of public right-of-way and public places in honor of sites, events, and persons of historical interest to San Francisco and seeking approval of the installation of commemorative street plaques on public right-of-way and public places. In addition, the commemorative street plaque application requires the Department of Public Works to hold a public hearing prior to approving a commemorative street plaque application.

Amendments to Current Law

This ordinance would amend the Public Works Code to clarify and streamline the requirements and approval processes for the commemorative designation of public right-of-way and public places and the installation of commemorative street plaques to honor sites, events, and persons of historical interest or significance to San Francisco. In addition, the ordinance would eliminate the requirement that Public Works hold a hearing on applications for a commemorative street plaque.

Background Information

This ordinance furthers the City's efforts under "PermitSF" to reform permitting and improve the customer experience by streamlining approval processes, promoting government accountability to provide certainty about the delivery of government services, and centralizing technology to create a single point of permitting access.

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