

File No. 260239

Committee Item No. 3

Board Item No. _____

COMMITTEE/BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

AGENDA PACKET CONTENTS LIST

Committee: Land Use and Transportation

Date: June 29, 2026

Board of Supervisors Meeting:

Date: _____

Cmte Board

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| ☐ | ☐ | Motion |
| ☐ | ☐ | Resolution |
| ☒ | ☐ | Ordinance - VERSION 2 |
| ☒ | ☐ | Legislative Digest - VERSION 2 |
| ☐ | ☐ | Budget and Legislative Analyst Report |
| ☐ | ☐ | Youth Commission Report |
| ☐ | ☐ | Introduction Form |
| ☐ | ☐ | Department/Agency Cover Letter and/or Report |
| ☐ | ☐ | MOU |
| ☐ | ☐ | Grant Information Form |
| ☐ | ☐ | Grant Budget |
| ☐ | ☐ | Subcontract Budget |
| ☐ | ☐ | Contract / DRAFT Mills Act Agreement |
| ☐ | ☐ | Form 126 – Ethics Commission |
| ☐ | ☐ | Award Letter |
| ☐ | ☐ | Application |
| ☒ | ☐ | Public Correspondence |

OTHER

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| ☒ | ☐ | <u>Planning Commission Transmittal – April 20, 2026</u> |
| ☒ | ☐ | <u>CEQA Determination – April 3, 2026</u> |
| ☒ | ☐ | <u>Referrals CEQA and PC – June 10 and March 25, 2026</u> |
| ☐ | ☐ | _____ |
| ☐ | ☐ | _____ |
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Prepared by: John Carroll

Date: June 25, 2026

Prepared by: _____

Date: _____

Prepared by: _____

Date: _____

[Planning Code - Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to exempt Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located in a C-3 (Downtown Commercial) District or the Art and Design Educational Special Use District from the requirements for Institutional Master Plans; require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located elsewhere to file Institutional Master Plans with a development application; require updates to such plans only when the institution will increase by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of its total square footage (whichever is less); exclude student housing from the definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institution; and remove the three-month hold on hearing Conditional Use applications after an Institutional Master Plan has been accepted; 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.

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

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

Section 1. Environmental and Land Use Findings.

(a) The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this ordinance comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources

Code Sections 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 260239 and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board affirms this determination.

(b) On April 16, 2026, the Planning Commission, in Resolution No. 21910, adopted findings that the actions contemplated in this ordinance are consistent, on balance, with the City's General Plan and eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1. The Board adopts these findings as its own. A copy of said Resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 260239, and is incorporated herein by reference.

(c) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board of Supervisors finds that this ordinance will serve the public necessity, convenience, and welfare for the reasons set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. 21910. A copy of said resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 260239 and is incorporated herein by reference.

Section 2. Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the Planning Code are hereby amended by revising Sections 102, 249.67, and 304.5 to read as follows:

SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS.

* * * *

Post-Secondary Educational Institution. An Institutional Education Use, public or private, that is certified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, provides post-secondary educational services, such as a college or university, and has met the applicable provisions of Section 304.5 of this Code concerning institutional master plans. Such institution may include employee ~~or student, dormitories~~ and other housing operated by and affiliated with the institution, but shall not include student housing, and ~~Such institution~~ shall not have industrial arts as its primary course of study. If an institution is not certified by the Western Association of

Schools and Colleges, the Zoning Administrator may nonetheless determine that it is a Post-Secondary Educational Institution if the institution is either (a) accredited by a body comparable to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or (b) diligently pursuing accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or a comparable body and has substantially progressed in the process with accreditation reasonably likely to be granted.

* * * *

School. An Institution Educational Use, public or private, certified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges that provides educational instruction to students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Such institution may include employee ~~or student~~ ~~dormitories~~ and other housing operated by and affiliated with the institution, but shall not include student housing. If an institution is not certified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the Zoning Administrator may nonetheless determine that it is a School if the institution is either (a) accredited by a body comparable to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or (b) diligently pursuing accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or a comparable body and has substantially progressed in the process with accreditation reasonably likely to be granted. This use is distinct and separate from a Post-Secondary Educational Institution, which is defined under this Section of the Code.

* * * *

SEC. 249.67. ART & DESIGN EDUCATIONAL SPECIAL USE DISTRICT.

* * * *

(c) **Controls.** All provisions of the Planning Code currently applicable shall continue to apply, including but not limited to the provisions of the PDR-1-D zoning district, except as otherwise provided in this Section.

(1) **Postsecondary Educational Institutional Uses.** Postsecondary

educational institutional uses are exempted from use size limitations and shall be permitted as of right. ~~Postsecondary educational institutional uses for the purposes of academic, professional, business or fine-arts education shall have an institutional master plan considered by the Planning Commission pursuant to Section 304.5 of this Code.~~

* * * *

SEC. 304.5. INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLANS.

(a) **Purposes.** The principal purposes ~~of the requirements for~~ institutional master plans ~~contained in this Section are: is to (1) To~~ provide notice and information to the Planning Commission, community and neighborhood organizations, other public and private agencies, and the general public as to ~~the an institution's development plans of each affected institution at an early stage, and to give an opportunity for early and when such information would allow for the~~ meaningful involvement of these groups in ~~such the plans prior to substantial investment in property acquisition or building design by the institution without creating undue barriers to development.~~

~~—(2) To enable the institution to make modifications to its master plan in response to comments made in public hearings prior to its more detailed planning and prior to any request for authorization by the City of new development proposed in the Master Plan; and~~

~~—(3) To provide the Planning Commission, community and neighborhood organizations, other public and private agencies, the general public, and other institutions with information that may help guide their decisions with regard to use of, and investment in, land in the vicinity of the institution, provision of public services, and particularly the planning of similar institutions in order to insure that costly duplication of facilities does not occur.~~

(b) **When Required.** ~~Except as provided in subsection (b)(1), Each~~ Hospital and each Post-Secondary Educational Institution ("PSEI") in the City and County of San Francisco (for

1 the purposes of this Section 304.5 collectively referred to as "institution(s)"; ~~including Group~~
2 ~~Housing affiliated with and operated by any such institution~~ shall have on file with the Planning
3 Department a current Institutional Master Plan describing the existing and anticipated future
4 development of that institution as provided in ~~S~~subsection (c) below. ~~Institutions of less than~~
5 ~~50,000 square feet or of less than 100,000 square feet in the C-3 district may submit an Abbreviated~~
6 ~~Institutional Master Plan as described in Subsection (d) below. A PSEI shall submit an Institutional~~
7 ~~Master Plan to the Planning Department, or an Update as appropriate, when applying for an~~
8 ~~entitlement that requires Department or Planning Commission approval.~~

9 (1) Exemptions.

10 (A) The requirements of this Section 304.5 shall not apply to a PSEI, or to any
11 development of a PSEI, located in a C-3 District specified under Section 210.2 of this Code or in the
12 Art & Design Educational Special Use District specified under Section 249.67, provided that the
13 institution submits the declaration specified in subsection (b)(1)(B).

14 (B) A PSEI shall not qualify for the exemption in this subsection (b)(1), unless it
15 declares under penalty of perjury, on a form prescribed by the Department, that the institution will not
16 demolish or convert any structure in San Francisco that is used or occupied as housing as of the
17 effective date of the ordinance in Board File No. 260239, or for which the last legal use was
18 residential. The institution must also declare under penalty of perjury that its development will not
19 result in the elimination of any rent-controlled housing unit.

20 (C) Institutions that occupy less than 50,000 square feet, or less than 100,000
21 square feet in the C-3 district, may submit an Abbreviated Institutional Master Plan under subsection
22 (d) in lieu of the full plan described in subsection (c).

23 ~~Thereafter, at intervals of two years, each such institution shall file an Update with the~~
24 ~~Planning Department describing the current status of its Institutional Master Plan. The requirements~~
25 ~~for an Update are provided in Subsection (f) below.~~

1 (2) Updates. The Zoning Administrator shall be notified whenever the following occur
2 to determine whether a new Institutional Master Plan or a An Update to an Institutional Master Plan
3 (or “Update”) as provided in subsection (f) shall be required as follows:

4 (A) Hospitals. Following acceptance of its Institutional Master Plan, a Hospital
5 shall file an Update with the Planning Department every two years. If the Hospital proposes to
6 undertake or has undertaken ~~there are significant revisions~~ development to the information that is not
7 ~~contained~~ discussed in the existing Institutional Master Plan; or 10 years have passed since the last
8 ~~Institutional Master Plan was submitted and heard by the Planning Commission (as described by~~
9 ~~Subsection (e) below), the Zoning Administrator shall determine whether a new Institutional Master~~
10 Plan or an Update is required to fulfill the purpose stated in subsection (a) above. Significant
11 ~~revisions~~ development may include plans to construct new facilities ~~that were not previously~~
12 ~~discussed in the Institutional Master Plan, plans to~~ or ~~demolish existing facilities that were not~~
13 ~~discussed in the Institutional Master Plan,~~ closure of an existing unit, opening of a new unit,
14 ~~change in use of an existing unit or inpatient facility,~~ an increase in the institution's size by 10,000
15 square feet or 25% of total square footage (whichever is less), or significant changes in use of
16 existing facilities or units that were not discussed in the Institutional Master Plan.

17 (B) PSEIs. If a PSEI already has an accepted Institutional Master Plan on file
18 with the Department, the institution shall submit an Update with any subsequent application for an
19 entitlement that requires Department or Planning Commission approval if the application proposes to
20 increase the institution’s presence in a Residential District by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of the
21 institution’s total square footage (whichever is less).

22 * * * *

23 **(e) Hearing and Acceptance of the Plan.** In a case in which a full Institutional
24 Master Plan, or revision to such a plan, has been filed and the submission has been
25 determined by the Planning Department to contain all information in accordance with

1 ~~S~~ubsection (c) above, the Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on such plan or
2 revisions. The Zoning Administrator shall set the time and place for the hearing within a
3 reasonable period, but in no event shall the hearing date be less than 30 days nor more than
4 180 days after the plan, or revisions, have been accepted for filing. An Institutional Master
5 Plan shall be considered accepted when the Planning Commission hearing has closed.

6 In a case in which an abbreviated institutional master plan has been filed in accordance
7 with ~~S~~ubsection ~~(c)~~ (d) above, the Zoning Administrator shall report the filing to the Planning
8 Commission, and the Commission may, at its option, either hold or not hold a public hearing
9 on such plan, as the Commission may deem the public interest to require. In the event a
10 public hearing is to be held on ~~such~~ an abbreviated institutional master plan, the Planning
11 Department or the Commission may require submission of additional information by the
12 institution as deemed necessary for such hearing. An abbreviated Institutional Master Plan
13 shall be considered accepted after the Zoning Administrator reports the filing to the Planning
14 Commission, unless the Planning Commission requests a public hearing, ~~at~~ in which case
15 acceptance shall occur when the Planning Commission hearing has closed.

16 * * * *

17 ~~To facilitate accessibility of the Master Plan to the public, once an institutional master plan~~
18 ~~or abbreviated institutional master plan is determined by the Planning Department to contain all~~
19 ~~information in accordance with Subsection (c) above, the institution shall provide the Planning~~
20 ~~Department with ten (10) print versions of the document in addition to any other format deemed useful~~
21 ~~and appropriate for easy public accessibility.~~

22 Public testimony, as represented in the official minutes of the Planning Commission
23 and written correspondence to the Commission, concerning the content of an Institutional
24 Master Plan and revisions thereto, shall become a part of the Institutional Master Plan file at
25 the Planning Department and shall be available for public review.

1 (f) **Update to the Plan.** ~~Every two years or sooner from the date of the most recent~~
2 ~~approval, the institution must submit an Update to the Planning Department. This~~ An Update shall
3 ~~provide a description of~~ describe all projects that: (1) an institution ~~has been~~ completed since ~~the~~
4 ~~most recent filing its Institutional Master Plan or last Update submission~~; (2) are ongoing, including
5 a description of the status and estimated timetables for completion of such projects; (3) are
6 scheduled to begin in the upcoming 24 months, including estimated timetables for the
7 commencement, progress, and completion of such projects; and, (4) are no longer being
8 considered by the institution.

9 The Update will not require a hearing, although the document will be made publicly
10 accessible. Per ~~S~~subsection (i) below, the Planning Department will not grant any permits or
11 other entitlements to the Institution until the Update is considered complete. ~~The institution shall~~
12 ~~provide the Planning Department with ten (10) print versions of the Update in addition to any other~~
13 ~~format that is deemed useful and appropriate for easy public accessibility.~~

14 * * * *

15 (h) **Conditional Use Authorizations.** In the case of any institution subject to the
16 institutional master plan requirements of this Section 304.5, ~~the Planning Commission shall not~~
17 ~~authorize a~~ no conditional use or any other entitlement requiring Planning Commission action
18 ~~required~~ for development by the institution ~~under Articles 2, 7 or 8 of this Code shall be authorized~~
19 ~~by the Planning Commission~~ unless such development shall be as described in the Institutional
20 Master Plan or ~~u~~Update, filed with the Planning Department, ~~and heard by the Planning~~
21 ~~Commission as provided in this Section. Additionally, no hearing shall be held or consent calendar~~
22 ~~item approved by the Commission on any such application for a new conditional use until three months~~
23 ~~shall have elapsed after the date on which the public hearing is closed and the Institutional Master~~
24 ~~Plan, is accepted.~~ The procedures for conditional use applications and other entitlements
25 requiring Planning Commission action shall be those set forth in Section 303 and elsewhere in

1 this Code.

2 * * * *

3 (i) **Permit Applications.** The Planning Department shall not approve any Development
4 Application or building permit application for any construction pertaining to any development of
5 any institution subject to this Section 304.5, with the exception of interior alterations which do
6 not significantly intensify, change, or expand the use, occupancy, or inpatient services or
7 facilities of the institution as determined by the Zoning Administrator, and are necessary to
8 correct immediate hazards to health or safety, unless that institution has complied with all the
9 applicable requirements of ~~S~~subsections (b), (c), and (f) above with regard to its filing of an
10 Institutional Master Plan or revisions thereto.

11
12 Section 3. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors
13 intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles,
14 numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal
15 Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment
16 additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the "Note" that appears under
17 the official title of the ordinance.

18
19 Section 4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective on the 31st day after
20 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the
21 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board
22 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

23
24 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
25 DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

1 By: /s/ Kathy J. Shin
2 KATHY J. SHIN
Deputy City Attorney

3 4899-7281-7329, v. 1

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REVISED LEGISLATIVE DIGEST
(Substituted – June 2, 2026)

[Planning Code - Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to exempt Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located in a C-3 (Downtown Commercial) District or the Art and Design Educational Special Use District from the requirements for Institutional Master Plans; require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located elsewhere to file Institutional Master Plans with a development application; require updates to such plans only when the institution will increase by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of its total square footage (whichever is less); exclude student housing from the definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institution; and remove the three-month hold on hearing Conditional Use applications after an Institutional Master Plan has been accepted; 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

Section 102 of the Planning Code defines a Post-Secondary Educational Institution as an Institutional Education Use that is certified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, including student dormitories and other housing operated by and affiliated with the institution.

Section 304.5 of the Planning Code generally requires every Hospital and Post-Secondary Educational Institution (collectively, "institutions") to file an Institutional Master Plan ("IMP") with the Planning Department, subject to requirements for Updates every two years. The Zoning Administrator shall determine whether an institution must submit a new IMP or an Update in the event of "significant revisions" to an IMP, such as plans to construct new facilities that were not previously discussed in the Plan, or if 10 years have passed since the last IMP was submitted and heard by the Planning Commission. Section 304.5 further provides that the Planning Commission may not hear or otherwise approve an institution's Conditional Use application for three months after an IMP is accepted. Institutions are also required to provide the Planning Department with ten (10) print copies of its IMP and any Update.

Amendments to Current Law

The ordinance would amend the definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institution in Planning Code Section 102 to exclude student housing from the definition and to provide that if an institution is not certified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the Zoning Administrator may nonetheless determine that it is a Post-Secondary Educational Institution if

the institution is either (a) accredited by a body comparable to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or (b) diligently pursuing accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or a comparable body and has substantially progressed in the process with accreditation reasonably likely to be granted.

The ordinance would amend the definition of School in Planning Code Section 102 to exclude student housing from the definition and to provide that if an institution is not certified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the Zoning Administrator may nonetheless determine that it is a School if the institution is either (a) accredited by a body comparable to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, or (b) diligently pursuing accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or a comparable body and has substantially progressed in the process with accreditation reasonably likely to be granted

The ordinance would also amend Planning Code Section 249.67 to strike the requirement for institutional master plans in the Art & Design Educational Special Use District.

The ordinance would also amend Planning Code Section 304.5 to exempt Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located in a C-3 District or in the Art & Design Educational Special Use District from the requirements for Institutional Master Plans. To qualify for this exemption an institution must submit a declaration under penalty of perjury, on a form prescribed by the Planning Department, that the institution will not demolish or convert any structure in San Francisco that is used or occupied as housing as of the effective date of the ordinance in Board File No._____, or for which the last legal use was residential. The institution must also declare under penalty of perjury that its development will not result in the elimination of any rent-controlled housing unit.

The ordinance would further amend Planning Code Section 304.5 to (1) require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions to file an or an Update as appropriate, when applying for an entitlement that requires Department or Planning Commission approval, (2) require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions to file Updates to accepted IMPs only when proposing to increase the institution's presence in a Residential District by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of the institution's total square footage (whichever is less), (3) remove the three-month hold on hearing Conditional Use applications after an IMP has been accepted, and (4) remove all requirements for print copies of plans and updates.

Background Information

This is a substitute ordinance reflecting amendments adopted by the Planning Commission and further amendments by Supervisor Dorsey to narrow the scope of the exemption from the requirements for Institutional Master Plans originally introduced. The exemption only applies to Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located in a C-3 District or in the Art & Design Educational Special Use District that submits a declaration under penalty of perjury, that the institution will not demolish or convert any housing or rent-controlled housing unit.

FILE NO. 260239

4936-8020-1138, v. 1



April 20, 2026

Ms. Angela Calvillo, Clerk
Honorable Supervisor Dorsey
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 Department Case Number 2026-000957PCA:**
Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans
Board File No. 260239

Planning Commission Action: Adopted a Recommendation for Approval with Anticipated Amendments

Dear Ms. Calvillo and Supervisor Dosey,

On April 16, 2026, the Planning Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the proposed Ordinance, introduced by Supervisor Dorsey. The proposed Ordinance would amend the Planning Code to exempt Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located outside of a residential district from the requirements for Institutional Master Plans; require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located within a residential district to file Institutional Master Plans with a development application; require updates to such plans only when the institution will increase by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of its total square footage (whichever is less); exclude student housing from the definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institution; and remove the three-month hold on hearing Conditional Use applications after an Institutional Master Plan has been accepted. At the hearing the Planning Commission adopted a recommendation for approval with anticipated amendments.

The anticipated amendments were as follows:

1. Amend the definition of "School" with the proposed PSEI amendments related to WASC-equivalent accreditation, including institutions that are in the process of applying for such accreditation. This last aspect regarding those institutions applying for accreditation will also be incorporated into the definition of PSEI for consistency.
2. Update the Art & Design Educational Special Use District (Section 249.67) to reflect this proposed Ordinance.

The proposed amendments are not defined as a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(2) and 15378 because they do not result in a physical change in the environment.

Supervisor, please advise the City Attorney at your earliest convenience if you wish to incorporate the changes recommended by the Commission.

Please find attached documents relating to the actions of the Commission. If you have any questions or require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Veronica Flores
Acting Manager of Legislative Affairs

cc: Kathy Shin, Deputy City Attorney
Madison Tam, Aide to Supervisor Dorsey
John Carroll, Office of the Clerk of the Board

ATTACHMENTS :

Planning Commission Resolution
Planning Department Executive Summary



PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 21910

HEARING DATE: April 16, 2026

Project Name: Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans
Case Number: 2026-000957PCA [Board File No. 260239]
Initiated by: Supervisor Dorsey / Introduced March 10, 2026
Staff Contact: Veronica Flores Legislative Affairs
veronica.flores@sfgov.org, 628-652-7525
Reviewed by: Audrey Merlone, Acting Manager of Legislative Affairs
audrey.merlone@sfgov.org, 628-652-7534

RESOLUTION ADOPTING A RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL WITH ANTICIPATED AMENDMENTS OF A PROPOSED ORDINANCE THAT WOULD AMEND THE PLANNING CODE TO EXEMPT POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS LOCATED OUTSIDE OF A RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT FROM THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLANS; REQUIRE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS LOCATED WITHIN A RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT TO FILE INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLANS WITH A DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION; REQUIRE UPDATES TO SUCH PLANS ONLY WHEN THE INSTITUTION WILL INCREASE BY 10,000 SQUARE FEET OR BY 25% OF ITS TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE (WHICHEVER IS LESS); EXCLUDE STUDENT HOUSING FROM THE DEFINITION OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION; AND REMOVE THE THREE-MONTH HOLD ON HEARING CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATIONS AFTER AN INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN HAS BEEN ACCEPTED; 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.

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2026 Supervisor Dorsey introduced a proposed Ordinance under Board of Supervisors (hereinafter "Board") File Number 260239, which would amend the Planning Code to exempt Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located outside of a residential district from the requirements for Institutional Master Plans; require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located within a residential district to file Institutional Master Plans with a development application; require updates to such plans only when the institution will increase by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of its total square footage (whichever is less); exclude student housing from the definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institution; and remove the three-month hold on hearing Conditional Use applications after an Institutional Master Plan has been accepted;

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the proposed Ordinance on April 16, 2026; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed Ordinance has been determined to be categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act Section 15378 and 15060(c)(2); and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has heard and considered the testimony presented to it at the public hearing and has further considered written materials and oral testimony presented on behalf of Department staff and other interested parties; and

WHEREAS, all pertinent documents may be found in the files of the Department, as the Custodian of Records, at 49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400, San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed the proposed Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds from the facts presented that the public necessity, convenience, and general welfare require the proposed amendment; and

MOVED, that the Planning Commission hereby adopts a **recommendation for approval with anticipated amendments** of the proposed ordinance. The anticipated amendments are as follows:

1. Amend the definition of “School” with the proposed PSEI amendments related to WASC-equivalent accreditation, including institutions that are in the process of applying for such accreditation. This last aspect regarding those institutions applying for accreditation will also be incorporated into the definition of PSEI for consistency.
2. Update the Art & Design Educational Special Use District (Section 249.67) to reflect this proposed Ordinance.

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:

The proposed Ordinance will update the Institutional Master Plan Program requirements to better support Post-Secondary Educational Institutions. The proposed Ordinance would also facilitate underutilized sites in the greater Downtown

General Plan Compliance

The proposed Ordinance and the anticipated amendments are consistent with the following Objectives and Policies of the General Plan:

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 8

ASSURE THAT PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES ARE DISTRIBUTED AND LOCATED IN A MANNER THAT WILL ENHANCE THEIR EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE USE.

OBJECTIVE 9

ASSURE THAT INSTITUTIONAL USES ARE LOCATED IN A MANNER THAT WILL ENHANCE THEIR EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE USE.

The proposed Ordinance advances the Community Facilities Element of the General Plan, which promotes equitable access to essential public services. Specifically, while Objective 8 is directed toward the distribution and effective use of public K–12 school facilities, the Ordinance supports the broader intent of this objective by improving how post-secondary facilities can locate and operate within the city. By reducing unnecessary Institutional Master Plan requirements for Post-Secondary Educational Institutions outside of Residential Districts, the Ordinance allows these institutions to make more efficient use of existing buildings and better align their facilities with areas that can support them. This improves overall distribution and supports the effective functioning of educational uses at the citywide scale.

Additionally, the Ordinance supports Objective 9, which ensures that institutional uses are located in ways that maximize efficiency and effectiveness. By reviewing comprehensive plans for relevant projects, the City can strategically assess the distribution, accessibility, and long-term viability of these resources, ensuring they meet community needs and operate sustainably.

Planning Code Section 101 Findings

The proposed amendments to the Planning Code are consistent with the eight Priority Policies set forth in Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code in that:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced;

The proposed Ordinance would not have a negative effect on neighborhood serving retail uses and will not have a negative effect on opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of neighborhood-serving retail.

2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods;

The proposed Ordinance would not have a negative effect on housing or neighborhood character.

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced;

The proposed Ordinance would not have an adverse effect on the City's supply of affordable housing.

4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking;

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

5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced;

The proposed Ordinance would not cause displacement of the industrial or service sectors due to office development, and future opportunities for resident employment or ownership in these sectors would not be impaired.

6. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake;

The proposed Ordinance would not have an adverse effect on City's preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

7. That the landmarks and historic buildings be preserved;

The proposed Ordinance would not have an adverse effect on the City's Landmarks and historic buildings.

8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development;

The proposed Ordinance would not have an adverse effect on the City's parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas.

Planning Code Section 302 Findings.

The Planning Commission finds from the facts presented that the public necessity, convenience and general welfare require the proposed amendments to the Planning Code as set forth in Section 302.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission hereby ADOPTS A RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL WITH ANTICIPATED AMENDMENTS of the proposed Ordinance as described in this Resolution.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Commission at its meeting on April 16, 2026.



Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

Jonas P Ionin

Digitally signed by Jonas P Ionin
Date: 2026.04.17 11:28:10 -07'00'

AYES:	McGarry, So, Braun, Campbell
NOES:	Williams, Imperial, Moore
ABSENT:	None
ADOPTED:	April 16, 2026



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLANNING CODE TEXT & AMENDMENT

HEARING DATE: April 16, 2026

90-Day Deadline: June 23, 2026

Project Name: Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans
Case Number: 2026-000957PCA [Board File No. 260239]
Initiated by: Supervisor Dorsey / Introduced March 10, 2026
Staff Contact: Veronica Flores, Legislative Affairs
veronica.flores@sfgov.org, 628-652-7525
Reviewed by: Audrey Merlone, Legislative Affairs
audrey.merlone@sfgov.org, 628-652-7534
Environmental Review: Not a Project Under CEQA

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a Recommendation for Approval with Anticipated Amendments

Planning Code Amendment

The proposed Ordinance would amend the Planning Code to exempt Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located outside of a residential district from the requirements for Institutional Master Plans; require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located within a residential district to file Institutional Master Plans with a development application; require updates to such plans only when the institution will increase by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of its total square footage (whichever is less); exclude student housing from the definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institution; and remove the three-month hold on hearing Conditional Use applications after an Institutional Master Plan has been accepted.

The Way It Is Now	The Way It Would Be
The definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institutions (PSEIs) requires that these institutions be certified by the Western Association of Schools	This definition of PSEIs would be expanded to include a WASC equivalent certification body as determined by the Planning Director. Student

and Colleges (WASC). Additionally, the definition captures student housing.	housing would be exempt from the definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institution.
What is Required:	
Hospitals and PSEIs must maintain a current Institutional Master Plan (IMP) on file with the Department. A new IMP must be submitted every 10 years, or sooner if the Zoning Administrator determines that significant changes to the existing IMP require an update. Institutions that occupy less than 50,000 square feet, or less than 100,000 square feet in the C-3 district, may submit an Abbreviated IMP.	Hospitals would only need to file a new IMP if there are significant developments as described in Section 304.5. PSEIs, including any developments/expansions of a PSEI located outside of a Residential District per Section 201 would be exempt from the IMP requirement.
How IMPs are Submitted:	
Full IMPs, or revisions to IMPs when required, are presented to the Planning Commission for acceptance. The Commission may not approve any CUs or other entitlements until three months after the IMP has been accepted.	The three-month hold for CU applications would be eliminated. Hospitals would continue to submit IMP applications to be presented at Planning Commission for acceptance. PSEIs proposed outside of Residential Districts would be exempt from the IMP requirements. PSEIs proposed within Residential Districts would be required to submit an IMP, or Update as appropriate, as part of any application for an entitlement that requires Department or Commission approval.
When Updates are Required:	
All institutions must submit updates to the IMP every two years, or sooner in cases of significant development changes as described in Section 304.5.	Hospitals would continue to submit IMP Updates every two years. Additionally, upon review of any significant development changes, the Zoning Administrator may determine if a new IMP or an Update would be required. If a PSEI already has an accepted IMP on file with the Department, the institution shall submit an Update with any subsequent application for an entitlement that requires Department or Planning Commission approval if the application proposes to increase the institution's presence in a Residential District by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of the institution's total square footage (whichever is less).

Anticipated Amendments

Supervisor Dorsey also intends to align the definition of ‘School’ with the proposed PSEI amendments related to WASC-equivalent accreditation, including institutions that are in the process of applying for such accreditation. In addition, the Supervisor plans to include a technical modification to update the Art & Design Educational Special Use District (Section 249.67) so that it is consistent with this proposed Ordinance.

Background

The Institutional Master Plan (IMP) Program was established in response to significant institutional expansion occurring in San Francisco during the 1960s and 1970s. At that time, many Hospitals and other large institutions were located in primarily residential areas, and neighbors expressed concerns about the scale of growth, associated impacts, and the lack of meaningful outreach from institutions. The IMP Program was created to provide a more transparent and predictable process for long-range institutional planning and community engagement.

The Program was last updated in 2007, and the proposed Ordinance represents an additional update to ensure the IMP framework remains practical, focused, and aligned with current land-use conditions. Supervisor Dorsey introduced the proposed Ordinance to support broader efforts around downtown revitalization and to provide clearer, more appropriate requirements for Post-Secondary Educational Institutions.

Issues and Considerations

Institutional Master Plan Background

Planning Code Section 304.5 requires all Post-Secondary Educational Institutions and Hospitals in San Francisco to maintain an Institutional Master Plan (IMP) on file with the Planning Department. The IMP is a long-range planning document that describes the institution’s existing facilities and anticipated development, including:

- Physical footprint and infrastructure locations, including traffic circulation and parking in and around the institution
- Employment characteristics and service population
- Services provided
- Properties owned or leased citywide
- Parking availability and traffic circulation
- Development plans for the next 10 years and their relationship to the General Plan and any neighborhood plans

The purpose of the IMP is to provide this information to the Planning Commission and the public, enabling early and meaningful involvement before an institution invests in detailed planning or seeks entitlements. The Commission holds a public hearing on the IMP, allowing institutions to respond to comments and adjust their plans. While the IMP itself does not grant development approvals, no building permit or Conditional

Use authorization may be approved for an institution that does not have a current IMP on file. IMPs are posted on the Department's website for public review.

Institutions must keep their IMP current. Following Commission acceptance, updates are required every two years or whenever plans significantly diverge from the approved IMP. A new Full IMP is typically required every ten years. Institutions may submit either a full IMP or an abbreviated IMP, depending on size:

- Abbreviated IMP: Institutions occupying less than 50,000 sq ft outside C-3 or less than 100,000 sq ft within C-3
- Full IMP: All others

Full IMPs are reviewed at a public hearing, while abbreviated IMPs are reported to the Commission, which may choose to hold a hearing. The proposed Ordinance would eliminate the three-month hold between an IMP's acceptance and the processing of any associated CU or entitlement applications. The proposed Ordinance would exempt also Post-Secondary Educational Institutions from the IMP requirements if they are located outside of R-districts.

Proposition Q

Proposition Q, approved by voters in November 1988, requires private hospitals to provide public notice before closing a facility, reducing or eliminating services, or leasing, selling, or transferring management of hospital operations. Upon receiving such notice, Proposition Q requires the Health Commission to hold a public hearing where the hospital may present information regarding its proposed action and respond to public comments. After the hearing, the Commission must issue findings on whether the proposal would have a detrimental impact on health-care services in San Francisco. Proposition Q does not give the Health Commission authority to approve or deny the proposed action.

Institutional Master Plan Program Amendments

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors adopted [Ordinance No. 279-07](#)¹, which made several clarifications and updates to Planning Code Section 304.5. These changes included requiring certain institutions to submit IMP materials to the Department of Public Health for review of long-term health care needs, clarifying the distinctions and submission requirements for Full and Abbreviated IMPs, and shifting the threshold for a Full IMP from land area to building area. The update also authorized the Zoning Administrator to require a new, Full IMP prior to the standard 10-year cycle if an institution's plans changed substantially, shortened the validity period for Planning Commission-approved IMPs, and introduced digital submission requirements to improve public access.

In 2015, Planning Code Section 304.5 was further updated through [Ordinance No. 22-15](#)² as part of the broader Article 2 reorganization. These changes modernized terminology by replacing the term "medical institution" with "Hospital" and included additional cleanup amendments adopted under [Ordinance No. 188-15](#)³, which refined definitions and clarified application procedures.

¹ <https://sfgov.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=2592782&GUID=2AC49608-61EB-4113-893D-35623F063DCC>

² Ordinance No. 279-07: sfbos.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/bdsupvrs/ordinances15/o0022-15.pdf

³ Ordinance No. 22-15: sfbos.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/bdsupvrs/ordinances15/o0188-15.pdf

Institutional Master Plan Updates

In between the 10-year Full or Abbreviated IMPs, IMP updates are required every two years or if there are significant revisions from the last IMP. This occurs through an institution submitting its proposed revisions to the Department, after which the Zoning Administrator determines whether the changes are substantially different from the prior IMP on file. If there are no updates, the institution is required to submit a letter stating as such.

The proposed Ordinance would modify the two-year update requirement so that PSEIs within a Residential District would only need to submit an update if they expand their presence within a Residential District by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of the institution's total square footage, whichever is less. This creates a more objective threshold when requiring PSEIs to submit comprehensive updates.

Current Status

All current IMPs are available on the Department's website: [Institutional Master Plans | SF Planning](#)⁴. To date, 42 IMPs have been filed with Department (see Exhibit C for full list). In addition, six institutions are exempt because they are either State or Federal entities. Of these six, one institution (UC Law San Francisco, formerly UC Hastings) has voluntarily filed an IMP.

Post-Secondary Educational Institutions Versus Hospitals

IMPs are required for both Hospitals and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions.

Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Post-secondary institutions are typically more integrated into neighborhoods and often contribute to street-level activity through student housing, cultural programming, and retail synergy. The proposed Ordinance would exempt Post-Secondary Educational Institutions outside of Residential (R) districts from the IMP requirement, recognizing that the greater Downtown area is more developed and does not experience the same localized impacts as smaller neighborhoods.

A Post-Secondary Educational Institution is defined as:

An Institutional Education Use, public or private, that is certified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), provides educational services such as a college or university, and has met the applicable provisions of Section 304.5 of this Code concerning institutional master plans. Such institution may include employee or student dormitories and other housing operated by and affiliated with the institution. Such institution shall not have industrial arts as its primary course of study.

The proposed Ordinance would expand the definition to include institutions with WASC-equivalent certification, rather than limiting to WASC and the Western region. It would also remove Student Housing from this definition to better support the development of student-serving residential uses. This change

⁴ Ordinance No. 188-15: <https://sfplanning.org/resource/institutional-master-plans>

would make it easier to build or expand Student Housing without triggering the IMP requirements or associated review processes.

Hospitals

Hospitals typically have more intense operational impacts than Post-Secondary Educational Institutions. They operate continuously, generate emergency and urgent-care traffic patterns, and require specialized infrastructure. Ancillary medical uses also tend to have limited public-realm activation compared to a university or college campus. For these reasons, Hospitals would continue to be subject to IMP requirements under the proposed Ordinance. The Planning Department also continues to forward IMP updates submitted by hospitals to the Department of Public Health for review and comment.

Reactivating Downtown

The Controller's Office of Economic Analysis released a report⁵ in November of 2024 on the status of the City's economy. Among the key findings was the fact that new business formation (tracked by business registration certificates filed) remained far below pre-pandemic rates, especially in the retail trades and restaurant/bar categories. The report also found that although tourism and office vacancies are slowly improving, they are still below pre-pandemic levels. Many businesses continue to recover from the pandemic amid a period of slow economic growth both locally and nationally.

The proposed Ordinance supports ongoing efforts to stabilize and reactivate Downtown by making it easier for Post-Secondary Educational Institutions to occupy space in the area. By reducing barriers to establishing or expanding these uses, the City can help facilitate the reuse of long-vacant buildings and bring a consistent population of students, faculty, and staff. These institutions contribute to daytime activity, support nearby services, and help diversify the mix of uses in the urban core. Increasing flexibility for educational uses aligns with broader goals to restore regular foot traffic and community-serving activity in Downtown.

Impacted Projects

Vanderbilt University (hereinafter "Vanderbilt") recently announced plans to acquire the former California College of the Arts (CCA) campus in the San Francisco's Design District in the South of Market (SoMa) neighborhood.⁶ They chose this campus for its existing student housing and proximity to Mission Bay. Under today's Planning Code, Vanderbilt would be required to submit a Full IMP even if there are no planned changes to the CCA campus. The proposed Ordinance would exempt Vanderbilt from the IMP requirements since the campus is located outside of the Residential Districts and it is not expanding the institution's footprint.

⁵ Status of the San Francisco Economy: www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2024-12/Status%20of%20the%20San%20Francisco%20Economy%20November%202024.pdf

⁶ KQED, California College of the Arts Will Close in 2027: <https://www.kqed.org/arts/13985359/california-college-of-the-arts-closing-vanderbilt-university>

General Plan Compliance

The proposed Ordinance advances the Community Facilities Element of the General Plan, which promotes equitable access to essential public services. Specifically, while Objective 8 is directed toward the distribution and effective use of public K–12 school facilities, the Ordinance supports the broader intent of this objective by improving how post-secondary facilities can locate and operate within the city. By reducing unnecessary Institutional Master Plan requirements for Post-Secondary Educational Institutions outside of Residential Districts, the Ordinance allows these institutions to make more efficient use of existing buildings and better align their facilities with areas that can support them. This improves overall distribution and supports the effective functioning of educational uses at the citywide scale.

Additionally, the Ordinance supports Objective 9, which ensures that institutional uses are located in ways that maximize efficiency and effectiveness. By reviewing comprehensive plans for relevant projects, the City can strategically assess the distribution, accessibility, and long-term viability of these resources, ensuring they meet community needs and operate sustainably.

Racial and Social Equity Analysis

Removing barriers for Post-Secondary Educational Institutions will increase opportunities for colleges and training programs to operate effectively in San Francisco. Streamlining zoning requirements, clarifying approvals, and reducing procedural hurdles allows institutions to move more quickly when identifying sites, adapting existing buildings, or expanding programs. These kinds of adjustments will make it easier for institutions to respond to changing workforce needs or student demand, rather than being slowed down by lengthy or uncertain processes. Making the approval path clearer and more predictable also encourages institutions to consider locations they may have previously overlooked, including neighborhoods that currently have fewer educational resources nearby.

Implementation

The Department has determined that this Ordinance will impact our current implementation procedures; however, the proposed changes can be implemented without increasing permit costs or review time. The Department would need to update the IMP application materials and informational packets to reflect the revised thresholds and procedures for Post-Secondary Educational Institutions. These updates are expected to be minor, as they primarily involve aligning existing documents with the amended triggers and review process.

The proposed Ordinance is also anticipated to reduce the number of IMP hearings required. This would streamline the review process for Post-Secondary Educational Institutions, resulting in time savings for applicants while also reducing administrative workload for the Department.

Recommendation

The Department recommends that the Commission **adopt a recommendation for approval with anticipated amendments** of the proposed Ordinance and adopt the attached Draft Resolution to that effect. The anticipated amendments are as follows:

1. Amend the definition of “School” with the proposed PSEI amendments related to WASC-equivalent accreditation, including institutions that are in the process of applying for such accreditation.
2. Update the Art & Design Educational Special Use District (Section 249.67) to reflect this proposed Ordinance.

Basis for Recommendation

The Department recommends approval of the proposed Ordinance because it provides a targeted update to the Institutional Master Plan framework that improves clarity and alignment with current land-use conditions. The amendments retain IMP requirements on Hospitals, which continue to have the most significant operational impacts, while removing unnecessary process for Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located outside of Residential Districts. These changes streamline permitting and support the reuse of underutilized sites including in the greater Downtown area. Overall, the proposed Ordinance strengthens the practicality of the IMP Program. Additionally, the Department supports the following anticipated amendments:

Anticipated Amendment 1: Amend the definition of “School” with the proposed PSEI amendments related to WASC-equivalent accreditation, including institutions that are in the process of applying for such accreditation. This provides more flexibility for Schools to include institutions with WASC-equivalent certification, rather than limiting to WASC and the Western region. This would also resolve issues for proposed Schools that are still going through the WASC certification.

Anticipated Amendment 2: Update the Art & Design Educational Special Use District (SUD) (Section 249.67) to reflect this proposed Ordinance. Based on this proposed Ordinance, a new PSEI taking over a campus within the Arts & Design Educational SUD would not trigger an IMP requirement. The anticipated amendment would update this SUD to reflect and remain consistent with the proposed Ordinance.

Required Commission Action

The proposed Ordinance is before the Commission so that it may adopt a recommendation of approval, disapproval, or approval with modifications.

Environmental Review

The proposed amendments are not defined as a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(2) and 15378 because they do not result in a physical change in the environment.

Public Comment

As of the date of this report, the Planning Department has not received any public comment regarding the proposed Ordinance.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Exhibit A: Draft Planning Commission Resolution
- Exhibit B: Board of Supervisors File No. 260239
- Exhibit C: List of Institutional Master Plans on file with the Planning Department

Portions of this report were drafted and/or edited with the assistance of Microsoft Copilot, in accordance with the City and County of San Francisco's policy on the use of generative AI tools.

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689
Tel. No. (415) 554-5184
Fax No. (415) 554-5163
TDD/TTY No. (415) 554-5227

MEMORANDUM

Date: June 10, 2026
To: Planning Department/Planning Commission
From: John Carroll, Assistant Clerk, Land Use and Transportation Committee
Subject: Board of Supervisors Legislation Referral - File No. 260239 Substitute Version 2
Planning Code - Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans

- ☒ 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.

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



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1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689
Tel. No. (415) 554-5184
Fax No. (415) 554-5163
TDD/TTY No. (415) 554-5227

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 25, 2026
To: Planning Department/Planning Commission
From: John Carroll, Assistant Clerk, Land Use and Transportation Committee
Subject: Board of Supervisors Legislation Referral - File No. 260239
Planning Code - Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans

- ☒ 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*)
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- ☐ Historic Preservation Commission
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 - ☐ 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.

From: [David Woo](#)
To: [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Chen, Chyanne \(BOS\)](#); [Mahmood, Bilal \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [Tam, Madison \(BOS\)](#); [Low, Jen \(BOS\)](#); [Sciammas, Charlie \(BOS\)](#); [Cooper, Raynell \(BOS\)](#); [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#); [Raquel Redondiez](#); [DPH-acabande](#); [Zachary Frial](#); [Steve Leeds](#); [anastasia Yovanopoulos](#); [Peter Stevens](#)
Subject: Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans (Board File No. 260239)
Date: Monday, June 15, 2026 8:05:57 AM
Attachments: [Letter Re Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans \(Board File No. 260239\).pdf](#)

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Hello Chair Melgar and Members of the Land Use Committee, please see attached a letter from five organizations regarding the legislation before you today "Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans" (Board File No. 260239).

June 15, 2026

Board of Supervisors Land Use and Transportation Committee
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, City Hall
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Exempting C-3 Districts in Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans

Chair Melgar and Members of the Land Use and Transportation Committee,

The below signed organizations are opposed to the exemption for C-3 districts in the legislation "Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans" (Board File No. 260239). The legislation is not simply updating requirements for Institutional Master Plans (IMP), but removing them completely in C-3 districts, heavily impacting the South of Market.

The legislation includes a carve out for Vanderbilt University, presumably to help attract the university to San Francisco. The legislation should be reduced to only exempt an IMP at the former site of California College of the Arts (the future Vanderbilt site) to narrow the target and scope. In general, the decision of Vanderbilt University or any other post-secondary institution to locate in San Francisco does not hinge in any way on the requirement of an IMP. If an IMP is the reason a university does not want to locate in San Francisco, then they would likely be bad additions to the city and bad neighbors. There are several post-secondary institutions in the South of Market, and our neighborhood deserves comprehensive planning.

Institutional Master Plans are a way for the city, its residents, and its institutions to have a clear and reasonable working relationship that improves transparency, respect, and planning. IMPs also work to protect the city against bad actors as is abundantly clear with the case of the Academy of Art University who illegally converted housing in San Francisco and repeatedly ignored city laws. The IMP helped San Francisco to win a lawsuit against the Academy of Art and stop the illegal conversions. Incredibly, this new legislation would directly reduce oversight of this same institution, which has several locations (including its main office) in a C-3 district.

We support the requirement in the legislation that any post-secondary educational institution

that receives an exemption should declare that it will not demolish or convert any housing. This should go further, with any institution receiving an exemption also declaring that it will not convert or demolish any neighborhood serving retail uses or legacy businesses. We ask that you remove the C-3 district exemption, continuing to require IMPs in C-3 districts, and narrow the exemption to only the future Vanderbilt University site.

Thank you,

South of Market Community Action Network
SOMA Pilipinas Filipino Cultural Heritage District
Build Affordable Faster California
San Francisco Tenants Union
West Side Tenants Association

--

David Woo
Community Development and Policy Coordinator
SOMA Pilipinas Cultural Heritage District



BUILD AFFORDABLE FASTER

June 15, 2026

Board of Supervisors Land Use and Transportation Committee
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, City Hall
San Francisco, CA 94102

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Institutional Master Plans are a way for the city, its residents, and its institutions to have a clear and reasonable working relationship that improves transparency, respect, and planning. IMPs also work to protect the city against bad actors as is abundantly clear with the case of the Academy of Art University who illegally converted housing in San Francisco and repeatedly ignored city laws. The IMP helped San Francisco to win a lawsuit against the Academy of Art and stop the illegal conversions. Incredibly, this new legislation would directly reduce oversight of this same institution, which has several locations (including its main office) in a C-3 district.

We support the requirement in the legislation that any post-secondary educational institution that receives an exemption should declare that it will not demolish or convert any housing. This should go further, with any institution receiving an exemption also declaring that it will not convert or demolish any neighborhood serving retail uses or legacy businesses. We ask that you remove the C-3 district exemption, continuing to require IMPs in C-3 districts, and narrow the exemption to only the future Vanderbilt University site.

Thank you,

South of Market Community Action Network
SOMA Pilipinas Filipino Cultural Heritage District
Build Affordable Faster California
San Francisco Tenants Union
West Side Tenants Association

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):

Dorsey

Subject:

Planning Code - Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans

Long Title or text listed:

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to exempt Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located in a C-3 (Downtown Commercial) District or the Art & Design Educational Special Use District from the requirements for Institutional Master Plans; require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located elsewhere to file Institutional Master Plans with a development application; require updates to such plans only when the institution will increase by 10,000 square feet or by 25% of its total square footage (whichever is less); exclude student housing from the definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institution; and remove the three-month hold on hearing Conditional Use applications after an Institutional Master Plan has been accepted; 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.

Signature of Sponsoring Supervisor: