

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



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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*)
 - 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.

1 [Planning Code - Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans]

2

3 **Ordinance amending the Planning Code to exempt Post-Secondary Educational**
 4 **Institutions located outside of a residential district from the requirements for**
 5 **Institutional Master Plans; require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located**
 6 **within a residential district to file Institutional Master Plans with a development**
 7 **application; require updates to such plans only when the institution will increase by**
 8 **10,000 square feet or by 25% of its total square footage (whichever is less); exclude**
 9 **student housing from the definition of Post-Secondary Educational Institution; and**
 10 **remove the three-month hold on hearing Conditional Use applications after an**
 11 **Institutional Master Plan has been accepted; affirming the Planning Department's**
 12 **determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; making findings of**
 13 **consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code,**
 14 **Section 101.1; and making findings of public necessity, convenience, and welfare**
 15 **pursuant to Planning Code, Section 302.**

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

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

24 Section 1. Environmental and Land Use Findings.

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

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

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

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

14

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

17

18 **SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS.**

19

* * * *

20

21 ***Post-Secondary Educational Institution.*** An Institutional Education Use, public or
22 private, that ~~is certified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges,~~ provides post-secondary
23 educational services, such as a college or university, and ~~has met the applicable provisions of~~
24 Section 304.5 of this Code concerning institutional master plans is certified by the Western Association
25 of Schools and Colleges or an equivalent certification body, as determined by the Planning Director.

Such institution may include employee ~~or student, dormitories~~ and other housing operated by

1 and affiliated with the institution, but shall not include student housing. Such institution shall not
2 have industrial arts as its primary course of study.

3 * * * *

4
5 **SEC. 304.5. INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLANS.**

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

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

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

22 (b) **When Required.** Except as provided in subsection (b)(1), ~~Each~~-Hospital and each
23 Post-Secondary Educational Institution ("PSEI") in the City and County of San Francisco (for
24 the purposes of this Section 304.5 collectively referred to as "institution(s)"); ~~including Group~~
25 ~~Housing affiliated with and operated by any such institution~~ shall have on file with the Planning

1 Department a current Institutional Master Plan describing the existing and anticipated future
2 development of that institution as provided in ~~§~~ subsection (c) below. ~~Institutions of less than~~
3 ~~50,000 square feet or of less than 100,000 square feet in the C-3 district may submit an Abbreviated~~
4 ~~Institutional Master Plan as described in Subsection (d) below.~~ A PSEI proposing to develop in a
5 Residential District shall submit an Institutional Master Plan to the Planning Department, or an
6 Update as appropriate, when applying for an entitlement that requires Department or Planning
7 Commission approval.

8 (1) Exemptions.

9 (A) The requirements of this Section 304.5 shall not apply to a PSEI, or to any
10 development of a PSEI, located outside of a Residential District specified under Section 201 of this
11 Code.

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

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

18 (2) Updates. ~~The Zoning Administrator shall be notified whenever the following occur~~
19 ~~to determine whether a new Institutional Master Plan or a~~ An Update to an Institutional Master Plan
20 (or "Update") as provided in subsection (f) shall be required as follows:

21 (A) Hospitals. ~~Following acceptance of its Institutional Master Plan, a Hospital~~
22 ~~shall file an Update with the Planning Department every two years. If the Hospital proposes to~~
23 ~~undertake or has undertaken there are significant revisions~~ development to the information that is not
24 contained discussed in the existing Institutional Master Plan; or 10 years have passed since the last
25 Institutional Master Plan was submitted and heard by the Planning Commission (as described by

1 Subsection (e) below, the Zoning Administrator shall determine whether a new Institutional Master
2 Plan or an Update is required to fulfill the purpose stated in subsection (a) above. Significant
3 revisions-development may include plans to construct new facilities ~~that were not previously~~
4 ~~discussed in the Institutional Master Plan, plans to~~ or demolish existing facilities ~~that were not~~
5 ~~discussed in the Institutional Master Plan~~, closure of an existing unit, opening of a new unit,
6 ~~change in use of an existing unit or inpatient facility~~, an increase in the institution's size by 10,000
7 square feet or 25% of total square footage (whichever is less), or significant changes in use of
8 existing facilities or units that were not discussed in the Institutional Master Plan.

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

14 * * * *

15 **(e) Hearing and Acceptance of the Plan.** In a case in which a full Institutional
16 Master Plan, or revision to such a plan, has been filed and the submission has been
17 determined by the Planning Department to contain all information in accordance with
18 ~~S~~subsection (c) above, the Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on such plan or
19 revisions. The Zoning Administrator shall set the time and place for the hearing within a
20 reasonable period, but in no event shall the hearing date be less than 30 days nor more than
21 180 days after the plan, or revisions, have been accepted for filing. An Institutional Master
22 Plan shall be considered accepted when the Planning Commission hearing has closed.

23 In a case in which an abbreviated institutional master plan has been filed in accordance
24 with ~~S~~subsection ~~(e)~~ (d) above, the Zoning Administrator shall report the filing to the Planning
25 Commission, and the Commission may, at its option, either hold or not hold a public hearing

1 on such plan, as the Commission may deem the public interest to require. In the event a
2 public hearing is to be held on ~~such~~ an abbreviated institutional master plan, the Planning
3 Department or the Commission may require submission of additional information by the
4 institution as deemed necessary for such hearing. An abbreviated Institutional Master Plan
5 shall be considered accepted after the Zoning Administrator reports the filing to the Planning
6 Commission, unless the Planning Commission requests a public hearing, ~~at~~in which case
7 acceptance shall occur when the Planning Commission hearing has closed.

8 * * * *

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

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

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

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

6 * * * *

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

19 * * * *

20 (i) **Permit Applications.** The Planning Department shall not approve any Development
21 Application or building permit application for any construction pertaining to any development of
22 any institution subject to this Section 304.5, with the exception of interior alterations which do
23 not significantly intensify, change, or expand the use, occupancy, or inpatient services or
24 facilities of the institution as determined by the Zoning Administrator, and are necessary to
25 correct immediate hazards to health or safety, unless that institution has complied with all the

1 applicable requirements of ~~S~~subsections (b), (c), and (f) above with regard to its filing of an
2 Institutional Master Plan or revisions thereto.

3
4 Section 3. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors
5 intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles,
6 numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal
7 Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment
8 additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the “Note” that appears under
9 the official title of the ordinance.

10
11 Section 4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective at 12:00 a.m. on the
12 31st day after enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor
13 returns the ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it,
14 or the Board of Supervisors overrides the Mayor’s veto of the ordinance.

15
16 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
17 DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

18 By: /s/ Kathy J. Shin
19 KATHY J. SHIN
20 Deputy City Attorney

21
22
23
24
25
4913-3750-8246, v. 1

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Planning Code - Updating Requirements for Institutional Master Plans]

Ordinance amending 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.

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 an institution may be certified by the Western Association of Schools or an equivalent certification body, as determined by the Planning Director.

The ordinance would also amend Planning Code Section 304.5 to (1) exempt Post-Secondary Educational Institutions located outside of a residential district from the requirements for Institutional Master Plans, (2) require Post-Secondary Educational Institutions proposing to develop in a residential district to file an IMP when filing a development application, (3) 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), (4) remove the three-month hold on hearing Conditional Use applications after an IMP has been accepted, and (5) remove all requirements for print copies of plans and updates.

Background Information

The ordinance is intended to remove undue barriers to the development of Post-Secondary Educational Institutions in San Francisco, while providing public notice and information about their development in residential districts, when such information would allow for meaningful public engagement.

Introduction Form

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



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

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

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

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

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

- Yes No

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

Sponsor(s):

Subject:

Long Title or text listed:

Signature of Sponsoring Supervisor: