NOTE:

[Building Code - Slope Protection, Commercial Lighting Standards, Rooftop Penthouses, and Driveway and Sidewalk Load Limits]

Ordinance amending the Building Code to remove local requirements regarding commercial lighting, rooftop mechanical penthouses, driveway and sidewalk load limits, and the Slope Protection Act; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

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, Building, and General 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. 250805 and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board affirms this determination.
- (b) On August 20, 2025, at a duly noticed public hearing, the Building Inspection Commission considered this ordinance in accordance with Charter Section 4.121 and Building Code Section 104A.2.11.1.1. A copy of a letter from the Secretary of the Building Inspection Commission regarding the Commission's recommendation is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 250805.

- (c) No local findings are required under California Health and Safety Code Section 17958.7 because:
- (1) The deletion of local provisions for commercial lighting, rooftop mechanical penthouses, and load limits for sidewalks and driveways removes local requirements, and thus reverts the Building Code to the relevant standards in the California Building Standards Code or other regulations adopted pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 17922; and
- (2) The Slope Protection Act does not regulate materials or manner of construction or repair, and is not a "building standard" as defined by California Health and Safety Code Section 18909(a). If the Slope Protection Act were a "building standard", deletion of the Slope Protection Act would remove a local requirement and revert the Building Code to the relevant standards in the California Building Standards Code or other regulations adopted pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 17922.
- (d) This ordinance aligns with the goals of "PermitSF," the City's effort to reform permitting by improving the customer experience through clear standards, streamlined approval processes, centralized technology and data, and increased government accountability. Through PermitSF, the City enables greater ease and certainty in the delivery of government services to customers seeking to improve their property or do business in San Francisco. The ordinance promotes fast, predictable and transparent permitting processes to create new jobs, business, and homes, and to facilitate the City's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 2. Chapter 1A of the Building Code is hereby amended by revising Sections 105A.6.2 and 106A.3.2, and deleting Sections 106A.4.1.4 through 106A.4.1.4.6 to read as follows:

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105A.6.2 Members. For consideration of each building with such special features, the Structural Advisory Committee shall consist of members who are knowledgeable in the structural engineering and construction issues presented by those special features. Members shall be selected from a list of qualified engineers submitted by the Structural Engineers Association of Northern California and approved by the Building Official. One member shall be selected by the Building Official, one member shall be selected by the owner, and the third member shall be selected jointly. Compensation of the Structural Advisory Committee members shall be by the owner. However, when the project for which Committee review is required is located in the Edgehill Mountain Slope Protection Area, as defined by Building Code Section 106A.4.1.2 or the Northwest Mt. Sutro Slope Protection Area as defined by Building Code Section 106A.4.1.3 or is subject to Committee review pursuant to the Slope Protection Act, Building Code Section 106A.4.1.4.5, (a) the Committee shall consist of a structural engineer, a geologist and a geotechnical engineer; (b) the Committee shall consult with an architect, who shall be a voting member of the Committee; (c) the selection of the Committee members shall be as follows: one member shall be selected jointly by the Building Official and the Director of Public Works, one member shall be selected solely by the Building Official and one member shall be selected by the Building Official and the owner from recommendations made by interested persons, including but not limited to residents of the neighborhood surrounding the project location; and (d) to the extent feasible, the Committee members should be selected from a list submitted by the Structural Engineers Association of Northern California.

106A.3.2 Submittal documents. Plans, specifications, engineering calculations,

diagrams, soil investigation reports, special inspection and structural observation programs

and other data shall constitute the submittal documents for a permit. When such plans are not prepared by an architect, land surveyor, or an engineer, the Building Official may require the applicant submitting such plans or other data to demonstrate that state law does not require that the plans be prepared by a licensed architect, land surveyor, or engineer. The Building Official may require plans, computations and specifications to be prepared and designed by an engineer or architect licensed by the state to practice as such even if not required by State law. Materials submitted by a licensed architect, land surveyor, or engineer must be signed and sealed on all plan sheets.

Two complete sets of plans which may include specifications and three copies of the soil investigation report (when required) shall be submitted. Additional complete sets of plans and specifications may be required for special permit processing services that may be offered by the City and County of San Francisco.

EXCEPTIONS:

- The requirements for plans or specifications may be waived by the Building
 Official, provided that the nature and extent of the proposed construction can be clearly
 described in writing, and such a description is filed with the application.
- 2. In addition to all other requirements of Section 106A.3.2, the following requirements shall apply to: (a) applications for construction of new buildings or structures, and to alterations that involve a substantial increase in the building envelope of an existing building or structure, within the Edgehill Mountain Slope Protection Area, created by Building Code Section 106A.4.1.2, and within the Northwest Mt. Sutro Slope Protection Area, created by Section 106A.4.1.3 and (b) application for construction on property subject to the Slope Protection Act created by Building Code Section 106A.4.1.4:

The Building Official may not waive the requirements for submittal documents set forth in Section 106A.3.2.

Submittal documents shall substantiate that the building or structure will comply with applicable codes and regulations.

Submittal documents shall include (1) plans prepared by a State-licensed architect, land surveyor, or engineer and (2) a construction/staging plan establishing that the proposed construction will not compromise the health, safety or welfare of neighboring property owners. Submittal documents shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Building Official, based on consultation with and written communications from appropriate City officials, including the Director of the Department of Public Works, that there is sufficient infrastructure (including utilities and streets) to support the proposed residential development and that the proposed emergency vehicle access routes comply with the standards in use by the Fire Department or similar agency in effect at the time the application is submitted.

* * * *

106A.4.1.4 The Slope and Seismic Hazard Zone Protection Act. This Section of the San Francisco Building Code shall be known as the Slope and Seismic Hazard Zone Protection Act.

106A.4.1.4.1 Creation. The Slope and Seismic Hazard Zone Protection Act shall apply to all property within San Francisco that exceeds an average slope of 4 horizontal to 1 vertical grade or falls within certain mapped areas of the City, except those properties already subject to the Edgehill Mountain Slope Protection Area or the Northwest Mt. Sutro Slope Protection Area. For purposes of this Section "property" shall mean a legal lot of record. Heightened review of certain permit applications, as provided in this section, shall be given to all property subject to this Act.

106A.4.1.4.2 Purpose. Because landslides, earth movement, ground shaking, drainage issues, and subsidence are likely to occur on or near steeply sloped properties and within other defined areas causing severe damage and destruction to public and private improvements, the Board of Supervisors finds that the public health, safety, and welfare is best protected if the Building Official causes permit applications for the construction of new buildings or structures and certain other construction work on

property subject to the Slope and Seismic Hazard Zone Protection Act to undergo additional review for structural integrity and effect on hillside or slope stability. The requirements for projects subject to the Slope and Seismic Hazard Zone Protection Act are in addition to all other applicable laws and regulations, including any and all requirements for environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act; compliance with the requirements contained herein does not excuse a project sponsor from compliance with any other applicable laws and regulations.

106A.4.1.4.3 Scope.

— (a) Properties are subject to these requirements where: (1) any portion of the property lies within the areas of "Earthquake-Induced Landslide" in the Seismic Hazard Zone Map, released by the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology, dated November 17, 2000, or amendments thereto or (2) the property exceeds an average slope of 4 horizontal to 1 vertical slope.

(b) Proposed construction work that is subject to these requirements includes the construction of new buildings or structures having over 1,000 square feet of new projected roof area and horizontal or vertical additions having over 500 square feet of new projected roof area. In addition, these requirements shall apply to the following activity or activities: shoring, underpinning, excavation, or retaining wall work; grading, including excavation or fill, of over 50 cubic yards of earth materials; or any other construction activity that, in the opinion of the Building Official, may have a substantial impact on the slope stability of any property.

106A.4.1.4.4 Mandatory submittal and review of reports.

(a) All permit applications submitted to the Central Permit Bureau for construction work on properties subject to the Slope and Seismic Hazard Zone Protection Act shall include report(s) prepared and signed by both a licensed geologist and a licensed geotechnical engineer identifying areas of potential slope instability, defining potential risks of development due to geological and geotechnical factors, including information required by this section 106A.4.1.4.4 and Departmental guidelines and regulations, and making recommendations regarding the proposed development. These

reports shall undergo review as deemed appropriate by the Building Official or by their designated staff. Such review shall involve an internal review by Departmental staff. The Building Official, in their discretion, may require third party peer review from a licensed geotechnical engineer. After third party peer review, the Building Official, in their discretion, may establish a Structural Advisory Committee, as defined by Building Code section 105A.6, to review the project. If there is a history of landslides in the vicinity of the project, the Building Official shall require third party peer review and establish a Structural Advisory Committee to review the project. For purposes of the preceding sentence, "vicinity" shall mean any property tangent to the subject project site that also appears on the current version of the California Department of Conservation's Seismic Hazard Zone Map identified in section 106A.4.1.4.3. The Building Official's or the Building Official's designee's decision(s) concerning the level of review for a particular project or activity shall: (1) be in writing, (2) identify Departmental staff involved in the decision, (3) be consistent with the criteria set forth in the Slope and Seismic Hazard Zone Protection Act and any Departmental guidance adopted under section 106A.4.1.6, and (4) describe the basis for the decision.

-(b) All such project reviews required under section 106A.4.1.4.4(a) shall verify that appropriate geological and geotechnical issues have been considered and that appropriate slope instability mitigation strategies, including drainage plans if required, have been proposed. Review also shall consider any other factors relevant to mitigation slope instability, including, but not limited to, the ground slope, soil type at the project site, the geologic conditions, the history of landslides in the vicinity, the nature of the planned excavation and construction, the proximity and type of adjacent construction, and the effect that construction activity related to the proposed project will have on the safety and stability of the subject property and properties within the vicinity of such property.

-(c) No permits as specified above for properties subject to the Slope and Seismic Hazard

Zone Protection Act that involve review by the Structural Advisory Committee shall be issued unless

and until the Building Official has consulted with and received a written communication from

representatives of the Departments of Planning and Public Works, and the Fire Department, each of whom has made a visit to the site for which the project is proposed, and the Building Official has received a written report from the Structural Advisory Committee concerning the safety and integrity of the proposed design and construction. As part of its review, the Structural Advisory Committee shall make findings concerning the review criteria and analysis set forth in this section 106A.4.1.4.4 and Departmental guidelines and regulations regarding slope and seismic hazards.

106A.4.1.4.5 Mandatory denial by the Building Official. In the event that the Building Official establishes a Structural Advisory Committee and such Committee determines that there is a reasonable likelihood that the proposed design and construction would result in unsafe conditions or would increase the likelihood of hillside or slope instability, and such unsafe conditions or instability cannot be mitigated to the satisfaction of the Committee, the Building Official shall deny the permit. The Building Official's decision to deny the permit is appealable only to the Board of Appeals.

106A.4.1.4.6 Regulations to implement the Slope and Seismic Hazard Zone Protection Act.

The Building Official is hereby authorized to adopt rules, regulations, administrative bulletins, or other written guidelines to assist the Department in implementing this Section 106A.4.1.4, provided that any such guidance shall be in addition to the criteria set forth in section 106A.4.1.4.4 or elsewhere in this Act and shall not conflict with or diminish any of the permit review criteria in this Building Code. Such guidance may provide objective criteria to exempt certain projects and activities from discretionary third party peer or Structural Advisory Committee review where the soil at the project site is dune sand or Colma Formation and the project or activity presents circumstances that would not necessitate more extensive review.

Section 3. Chapter 13 of the Building Code is hereby amended by deleting Chapter 13D, consisting of Sections 1301D through 1311D, to read as follows:

Chapter 13D

to refrigeration equipment, fully enclosed retail display cases, vending machines, printing equipment or

1	-3. The luminaire is fitted with a lighting efficiency measure approved by the Director as equivalent
2	to the measures in subsection (1) or (2).
3	- 4. The Director finds, based on the facts of the particular building and luminaire, that the energy
4	savings from installing lighting efficiency measures meeting the requirements of this Section will be so
5	insignificant over the life of the luminaire that the measure is not cost efficient.
6	-5. If the owner of a Commercial Building elects to meet the requirements of this Section 1306D.2
7	with measures that require permits, such permits shall comply with all other applicable requirements of
8	this Code and all-other applicable state and local laws.
9	SECTION 1307D—ENFORCEMENT
10	- Any building maintained in violation of this Chapter shall constitute a public nuisance under the
11	terms of Section 102A of this Code and such nuisance may be abated pursuant to the procedures set
12	forth in Section 102A of this code for unsafe buildings.
13	SECTION 1308D—RULES
14	-The director, after consulting with the Department of the Environment, and in accordance with Section
15	104A.2.1 of this Code, shall adopt, and may amend, reasonable rules, guidelines and forms for
16	implementing the provisions and intent of this Chapter.
17	SECTION 1309D UNDERTAKING FOR THE GENERAL WELFARE
18	In undertaking the enforcement of this Chapter, the City and County of San Francisco is assuming an
19	undertaking only to promote the general welfare. It is not assuming, nor is it imposing on its officers
20	and employees, an obligation for breach of which it is liable in money damages to any person who
21	elaims that such breach proximately caused injury.
22	SECTION 1310D PREEMPTION
23	Nothing in this Chapter shall be interpreted or applied so as to create any power or duty in conflict
24	with any federal or state law or regulation.

SECTION 1311D SEVERABILITY

1	If any provision or clause of this Chapter or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is
2	held to be unconstitutional or to be otherwise invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such
3	invalidity shall not affect other provisions, and clauses of this Chapter are declared to be severable.
4	
5	Section 4. Chapter 15 of the Building Code is hereby amended by revising Section
6	1511.2.2, to read as follows:
7	Chapter 15
8	ROOF ASSEMBLIES AND ROOFTOP STRUCTURES
9	* * * *
10	SECTION 1511 – ROOF TOP STRUCTURES
11	* * * *
12	1511.2.2 Use limitations.
13	Penthouses shall not be used for purposes other than the shelter of mechanical or electrical
14	equipment, tanks, elevators and related machinery, stairways or vertical shaft openings in the
15	roof assembly, including ancillary spaces used to access elevators and stairways.
16	Penthouses shall be of a size no larger than the minimum clearances required for the mechanical
17	equipment to be installed or no larger than the vertical shaft opening in the roof.
18	
19	Section 5. Chapter 16 of the Building Code is hereby amended by deleting Section
20	1607.20.3, to read as follows:
21	Chapter 16
22	STRUCTURAL DESIGN
23	* * * *
24	SECTION 1607 – LIVE LOADS
5	* * * *

1607.20.3 Driveways and sidewalks subject to vehicle loading. Driveways subject to vehicle loading shall be designed in accordance with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) HS-20 Standard Specification for Highways and Bridges. Sidewalks subject to vehicle loading shall be designed for a concentrated load of 10,000 pounds placed upon any space 2½ feet (762 mm) square, wherever this load upon an otherwise unloaded sidewalk would produce stresses greater than those caused by the uniform load of 250 psf required therefor.

Section 6. Chapter 17 of the Building Code is hereby amended by revising Section 1705.22, to read as follows:

Chapter 17

SPECIAL INSPECTIONS AND TESTS

SECTION 1705 – REQUIRED SPECIAL INSPECTIONS AND TESTS

1705.22 Construction subject to the Slope Protection Act, created by Section 106A.4.1.4; or construction of a new building or structure, or alterations that involve a substantial increase in the envelope of an existing building or structure within the Edgehill Mountain Slope Protection Area, created by Building Code Section 106A.4.1.2, or the Northwest Mt. Sutro Slope Protection Area, created by Building Code Section 106A.4.1.3; provided, however, that, until the special inspection reports required by Building Code Section 1704.2.4 are submitted to and approved by the Department, the phase of construction subsequent to the phase or element for which the report was completed cannot commence.

Section 7. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the

ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

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

APPROVED AS TO FORM: DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

By: /s/ Robb Kapla
ROBB KAPLA
Deputy City Attorney

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City and County of San Francisco Tails

City Hall 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Ordinance

File Number:

250805

Date Passed: September 30, 2025

Ordinance amending the Building Code to remove local requirements regarding commercial lighting, rooftop mechanical penthouses, driveway and sidewalk load limits, and the Slope Protection Act; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

September 08, 2025 Land Use and Transportation Committee - RECOMMENDED

September 16, 2025 Board of Supervisors - PASSED ON FIRST READING

Ayes: 10 - Chan, Chen, Engardio, Fielder, Mahmood, Mandelman, Melgar, Sauter,

Sherrill and Walton Excused: 1 - Dorsey

September 30, 2025 Board of Supervisors - FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 11 - Chan, Chen, Dorsey, Engardio, Fielder, Mahmood, Mandelman, Melgar,

Sauter, Sherrill and Walton

File No. 250805

I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was FINALLY PASSED on 9/30/2025 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

> Angela Calvillo Clerk of the Board

Daniel Lurie Mayor

Date Approved