



SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

Planning Department
1650 Mission Street
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94103-9425

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CHECKLIST FOR Alterations to Commercial Storefront for Accessibility

The Alterations to Commercial Storefront for Accessibility Checklist is a tool for a property owner, tenant, or designer to seek accessibility design guidance prior to submitting a permit application to modify an existing commercial storefront. The checklist should be completed and reviewed with a planner at the Planning Information Center as soon as accessibility work is known to be a part of the project's scope.

Planning Department recommendations regarding particular scopes of work are intended to achieve accessibility as well as maintain or enhance the livability and sustainability of the subject building and its surroundings. Properties that qualify for use of the California Historical Building Code may be able to identify, or successfully demonstrate other acceptable means to meeting accessibility requirements.

HOW DOES THE ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST WORK?

1. Gather the following documentation and complete the attached form to the best of your ability. Because there may be a substantial wait at the Planning Information Center (PIC), please gather as much information as possible prior to visiting the PIC. If you have questions about filling out the form or gathering the requested documentation, you may also call the PIC at 415-558-6377.
2. Once the checklist is complete, bring your materials to the PIC and meet with a Preservation Planner or one of the PIC staff members to review your project scope. PIC location and operating hours can be found at the end of the form or at www.sfplanning.org.
3. A Preservation Planner or one of the PIC staff members will review the checklist and the documentation to help determine modifications that may be necessary for the project to comply with Planning Code and existing Design Guidelines requirements. If the building is more than 50 years old, it will require review by a Preservation Planner. Please note that all recommendations are preliminary **and should be used to inform the applicant and designer of the Planning Department review**. These recommendations are not a Planning Department approval or a review for the purpose of the California Environmental Quality Act.
4. Once you have met with a Preservation Planner or one of the PIC staff members, provide the completed and signed checklist to your design professional to inform preparation of any permit application materials. Include a copy of the completed checklist with your permit application and materials. Please note that additional review may be necessary. **The Accessibility Checklist is a voluntary tool designed to identify issues early in the design and permitting process, not a requirement.**

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST:

The purpose of the Alterations to Commercial Storefront for Accessibility Checklist is to provide information to the applicant as early as possible during the planning and design phase of the project.

This checklist includes information regarding four areas of the building: entrances, level changes, power door operators and push buttons, and storefront systems. These features are reviewed by the Planning Department through design guidelines, historic preservation standards, and storefront transparency standards.

For each project the planner should review drawings, photos, and the completed checklist. The applicant should fill out the checklist to the best of their ability in order to inform the planner of the scope of work desired to achieve accessibility. With the given information the planner will review proposed alterations (if any), and provide as much feedback as possible to inform the applicant of where the Planning Department may potentially require additional review or changes to the project scope. Make sure to sign, date, and note if any plans were brought in for this initial review. This will ensure that when the project is taken in for additional review, the next planner can reference the original plans, comments, and any changes that were made to the project.

If additional review is required by a Preservation Planner, the planner will inform the applicant in written comments and why. For example, "Retain mosaic tile entry. Tile may be historic, additional review is required if proposing to remove." Recommendations may also include information on additional documentation necessary for further review.

The Planning Department will not be reviewing your project for compliance with the accessibility standards in the California Building Code or the Americans with Disability Act, or compliance with the street and sidewalk standards. Access code compliance and review is within the purview of the Department of Building Inspection (DBI). Sidewalk safety standards are under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Public Works (SF PW). As part of your preliminary design review, we strongly recommend that you consult with a Certified Accessibility Specialist and with DBI and SF PW when necessary. See Page 7 and 8 for more detail on department roles.

DOCUMENTATION:

During this voluntary assessment, please provide the following documentation for a thorough and comprehensive review of your project at these preliminary stages.

A Certified Access Specialist Evaluation & Report.

The Certified Access Specialist (CASp) Report can help protect your business and assist in determining which architectural barriers exist and explain how the business owner can determine which barriers are readily removable. If this report has been conducted, please bring it with you for the Department to review. No written documentation of the report will be made or retained by the City.

1. Photographs

Existing conditions of storefront

- The entire building with the existing storefront taken from across the street with adjacent buildings
- The storefront system in its entirety
- Close-up photos of storefront
- Interior photographs indicating existing space and layout
- Existing sidewalk and streetscape if undertaking a project that may require modifying the sidewalk (a minimum of 3 views; i.e. side views, (at least one from each) and a view from the front, including the existing curb)

2. Drawings & Notes

While not necessary, the following information will help the Department give additional feedback on your project scope and will allow for a more detailed preliminary review.

- Drawings (hand, sketch, or computer aided) with notes identifying existing materials, conditions, or issues
- Dimensions of storefront, including width of entry (opening and with frame), and depth of vestibule
- Elevations at top of curb, back of sidewalk, at any other grade separation fronting and immediately adjacent to the subject property (a minimum of 3 of each of the elevation points should be provided, especially if the existing street has a longitudinal grade of over 2%). It is not necessary to provide each elevation if there is no slope nor stairs.

CHECKLIST FOR Alterations to Commercial Storefront for Accessibility

While other Checklists result in project approval, the Alterations to Commercial Storefront for Accessibility Checklist is a tool for preliminary design review to provide accessibility design guidance prior to submitting a permit application to modify an existing commercial storefront. For technical questions please contact the Department of Building Inspection or SF Public Works regarding accessibility requirements. Contact information is listed at the end of this form.

Please fill out the following form to the best of your ability by checking the scopes of work that apply to your project.

General

PROJECT ADDRESS		BLOCK/LOT(S)
CASE NO./PERMIT NO.	IF NONE, CHECK HERE: <input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Have you consulted a Certified Access Specialist (CASP)? (A CASp evaluation and report can help protect your business and assist in determining which architectural barriers exist, and explain how the business owner can determine which barriers are readily removable). <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>		
<p>Please summarize the project description and check off any of the following items that will be included in the scope of work.</p> <hr/> <hr/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entrances (See section A) <hr/> <hr/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Power Door Operators and Push Buttons (See section B) <hr/> <hr/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Level Changes & Sidewalk (Section C) <hr/> <hr/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Storefront System & Other Building Features (See section D) <hr/> <hr/>		
<p>Use figure below to note any other architectural features that are being proposed for alteration.</p>		
<input type="checkbox"/> A) Belt Cornice <input type="checkbox"/> B) Transom Window <input type="checkbox"/> C) Glazing <input type="checkbox"/> D) Bulkhead <input type="checkbox"/> E) Storefront Bay <input type="checkbox"/> F) Pier <input type="checkbox"/> G) Mullion <input type="checkbox"/> H) Muntin <input type="checkbox"/> I) Vestibule/Alcove <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		

A. Entrances

1. Will the existing door and entryway opening be altered?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2. Will the storefront configuration and vestibule (alcove) shape be maintained? (See Figure A.4 on page 6 for examples)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Based on the provided information, the Planning Department staff can make a preliminary recommendation on whether the project meets Planning Department requirements. <i>Please note this recommendation is not a Planning Department approval or a review for the purpose of the California Environmental Quality Act.</i></p> <p>With the following modifications the project appears to be consistent with Planning Department requirements:</p> <hr/> <hr/>	

B. Power Door Operators and Push Buttons

1. Will a power-assist door operator be installed? (See Figure C.1 on page 6 for example)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2. Will a freestanding vertical actuation bar be installed?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
a. Will it be located in the public right-of-way? (If yes, consult DPW for technical requirements, review, and approval)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
3. Will any required or voluntary signage that is visible from the exterior be added?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Based on the provided information, the Planning Department staff can make a preliminary recommendation on whether the project meets Planning Department requirements. <i>Please note this recommendation is not a Planning Department approval or a review for the purpose of the California Environmental Quality Act.</i></p> <p>With the following modifications the project appears to be consistent with Planning Department requirements:</p> <hr/> <hr/>	

C. Level Changes & Sidewalk

1. Will a step/steps need to be removed? (See Figure B.1 on page 6 for example)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2. Will the vestibule (alcove) require a new slope or re-grading to provide a new level landing? (See Figure B.2 on page 6 for example)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
a. If yes: Would this require removal of historic vestibule (alcove) tile or paving material?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
3. Will the sidewalk be modified to provide an accessible entrance or level landing? (If yes, consult DPW for technical requirements, review, and approval)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
4. Will new railings, guards, or handrails be installed?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
a. If yes: Will the new railing extend into the sidewalk/public right-of-way? (If yes, consult DPW for technical requirements, review, and approval)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Based on the provided information, the Planning Department staff can make a preliminary recommendation on whether the project meets Planning Department requirements. *Please note this recommendation is not a Planning Department approval or a review for the purpose of the California Environmental Quality Act.*

With the following modifications the project appears to be consistent with Planning Department requirements:

D. Storefront System & Other Building Features

1. Will alterations be made to the existing storefront system to allow for accessibility? <i>(See Figure D.2 on page 6 for example)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2. Will the transom configuration or glazing be modified as a result of other modifications?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
3. Will the bulkhead be retained or repaired to match the existing or historic fabric? <i>(See Figure D.1 on page 6 for example)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
4. Will any other building features be modified? <i>(If yes, please explain below)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Based on the provided information, the Planning Department staff can make a preliminary recommendation on whether the project meets Planning Department requirements. *Please note this recommendation is not a Planning Department approval or a review for the purpose of the California Environmental Quality Act.*

With the following modifications the project appears to be consistent with Planning Department requirements:

Were plans reviewed as a part of this submission? YES NO

Plans Dated:

Date:

Planner Signature:

Storefront Photo & Illustration Examples

Entrances

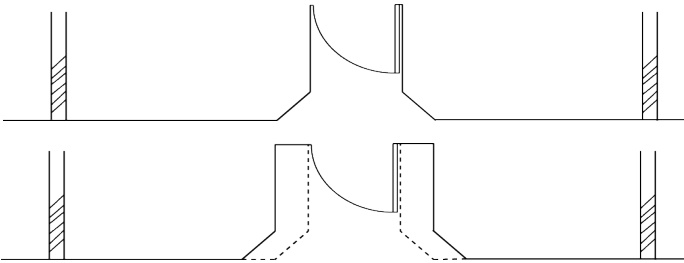


Figure A.4

Figure A.4 Drawings to the left show an altered primary entryway. On the top is the original, narrow entryway, on the bottom is the widened entryway by moving the recessed entry (alcove) width but retaining the storefront configuration.

Level Changes



Figure B.1



Figure B.2

Figure B.1 shows historic mosaic tiles and terrazzo nosing at step transition which should be retained and reinstalled when providing a level landing. (See also Figure D.1 for another example). If tile is beyond repair, use material that matches the historic.

Figure B.2 shows new marble tile flooring and transition strip to sidewalk used for the new level landing and accessible entryway.

Power Door Operators and Push Buttons



Figure C.1

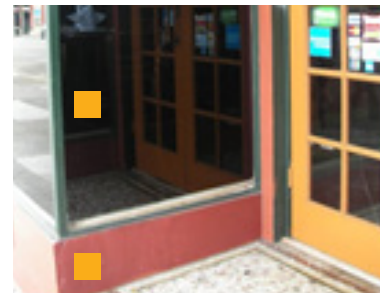


Figure C.2

Figure C.1 shows an example location for power door operator that does not obscure historic elements, such as the transom above. A vertical actuation bar is another method used to provide accessibility.

Figure C.2 shows proposed locations of power door operator push buttons at the recessed entryway (alcove). In many cases a power door operator will be required per Department of Building Inspection.

Storefront System and Other Building Features



Figure D.1



Figure D.2

Figure D.1 shows a step removed to provide a level landing while retaining the historic tile bulkhead, mosaic tile flooring, and new bulkhead tile installed to match the existing.

Figure D.2 shows a step removed and sidewalk build up (warped) to provide an accessible entrance without obscuring the storefront system, display glazing, and mosaic tile.

Department Roles & Contact Information

Planning Department

The Planning Department is the first stop for permit review when alterations are proposed to the exterior of a building and the Department will assess a project and how the scope of work will impact the historic fabric of a building, the exterior façade, and/or the public right-of-way. Further consultation with a Preservation Planner may also be necessary. Please note a “Protection of Historic Elements” specification should also be completed before approval. The checklist will guide Preservation Planners on the work’s compliance with the Department’s historic preservation standards. First consult a Certified Access Specialist (CAsp) to get a full evaluation of your property, including the adjacent sidewalk, to determine what architectural barriers can be readily removed to meet accessibility.

Planning Information Center (PIC)

1660 Mission Street, First Floor
San Francisco CA 94103-2479
TEL: 415.558.6377
EMAIL: pic@sfgov.org

Department of Building Inspection

The Department of Building Inspection will review the project to confirm that the proposed work meets the disabled access requirements in the CBC and/or the CHBC, where applicable. As a general rule, all new work must be fully accessible; however there are circumstances where the project may be eligible for a finding of technical infeasibility because existing structural or legal constraints prevent full compliance with the current building code. The CHBC is an example of a legal constraint because it requires the local building department to allow alternatives to specific disabled access regulations within the code on a case by case basis, if it is documented that the alteration would damage or destroy a historic feature.

In order to be approved for a finding of technical infeasibility, the barrier to full compliance needs to be clearly documented and justified and an equivalent facilitation solution included as part of the project proposal. One example of an equivalent facilitation solution is that the San Francisco Building Code has Administrative Bulletins that allow the use of a power door operator to mitigate common problems such as non-level landings or alcoves that lack strike side clearances. For more information about DBI’s Administrative Bulletins and Information Sheets go to <http://sfdbi.org/plan-review-services>.

The Department of Building Inspection has a Disabled Access Upgrade Compliance Checklist Package “Information Sheet DA-02” (for existing buildings only) that should be filled out and included with the building permit application for all projects regulated under section 1.9 of the California Building Code (CBC). This information is not required for the purposes of this checklist.

According to DBI Accessibility Requirements, in choosing which accessible elements to provide, priority should be given in the following order:

- An accessible entrance¹ (including the sidewalk, see SF PW);
- An accessible route to the altered area;
- At least one accessible toilet for each gender;
- Accessible drinking fountains; and
- Additional features such as parking, storage, and alarms.

¹An accessible entrance is one that fully complies with the CBC and the ADA that will have at least one door that is 32” wide. Both the exterior and interior landings at the door should be level with no changes in elevation (or minimal ½” max) between them. When the door swings out towards the street, the entry landing or alcove must also provide 24” additional strike side clearances for a total landing that is 60” wide by 60” deep. When the door swings inward toward the interior then the exterior landing needs to be 36” wide by 48” deep minimum, and 48” wide by 48” deep if the door has both a latch and a closer.

Department of Building Inspection

1660 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
TEL: 415.558.6088
EMAIL: dbicustomerservice@sfgov.org

San Francisco Public Works

San Francisco Public Works will be consulted with projects regarding sidewalk modifications and encroachments in the public right-of-way. In most cases, special sidewalk surfaces may be allowed adjacent to the subject property and within the curb furnishing zone; provided that a minimum of 6-foot accessible path of travel is maintained using standard concrete.

San Francisco Public Works, Bureau of Street Use and Mapping (PW BSM) is the agency that issues permits to repair, alter, and/or reconstruct the sidewalk. The Public Works Code, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and various Director's Orders contain the minimum standards for code compliance in order to provide accessibility within the public right-of-way. Under the State Highway Code and Section 706 of the Public Works Code, the fronting property owner is responsible for maintaining the sidewalk in front of their property. When defects such as excessive cross slope or damaged pavement are found by BSM Inspection Staff, the owner may receive a Notice to Repair (NTR) to correct or mitigate the damaged and/or non-standard condition.

As a general rule, any transitions between an exterior (sidewalk) and interior (floor) elevation should be made within the building envelope or property line. BSM will review very carefully any permit application and proposed plan to construct a ramp or a ramped landing within the sidewalk area. Under some circumstances, and for certain designs, PW BSM may issue what is known as a Minor Sidewalk Encroachment permit (MSE) where the sidewalk is ramped or warped up in order to raise the sidewalk elevation at the entry to eliminate a step or make the landing have a more shallow slope. A MSE permit typically requires a survey and the services of a Civil Engineer or Architect to establish spot elevations and design transitions that meet all Public Works criteria.

Sidewalk modification may be necessary to provide an accessible entrance. This modification may include sidewalk warping to achieve a code-complying slope that is not more than 2% in all directions and a level sidewalk landing. While not required to complete his checklist, an applicant should consult with Public Works staff and provide the following information:

- The width of the sidewalk
- Heights at each side of the entrance or the slope between the two
- The slope from the entrance across the sidewalk to the curb
- The curb height opposite the entrance

Note that Public Works' Bureau of Street Use and Mapping (BSM) has Grade Maps available which indicate the official grade or longitudinal slope of most City streets.

San Francisco Public Works + Bureau of Street-Use & Mapping Permit Section

1155 Market Street, 3rd Floor

San Francisco, CA 94103

Operating Hours: 8:00am-5:00pm

Permit Processing Hours: 7:30am-4:00pm

TEL: 415.554.5810

WEB: <http://sfdpw.org/index.aspx?page=1597>

Office of Small Business

The Office of Small Business has resources to assist small businesses with disability access compliance requirements for public accommodation. These resources include:

- Tax credits and deductions
- Certified Access Specialist (CASp) Small Business Assessment Program
- Guide on how to hire a Certified Access Specialist (CASp)
- A list of Certified Access Specialist (CASp)

Office of Small Business

City Hall, Room 110
1 Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
TEL: 415.554.6134
EMAIL: sbac@sfgov.org
WEB: www.sfgov.org/osb

The Access Appeals Commission

The Access Appeals Commission (AAC) is a five-member government commission that provides ratification for unreasonable hardship requests approved by the Department of Building Inspection. The Commission hears written appeals brought by any person regarding actions taken by the Department of Building Inspection in the enforcement of the requirements for Access to Public Accommodations by persons with a disability (Health and Safety Code Section 19955 including section 19957 exceptions), as well as action taken by the Department in the enforcement of the disabled access and adaptability provisions of the San Francisco Building Code. The Commission may also hear written appeals regarding actions taken by the Department in the enforcement of the disabled access and adaptability provisions of the San Francisco Building Code. The AAC ratifies or disapproves of Unreasonable Hardship Request (UHR).

Access Appeals Commission

Department of Building Inspection
1660 Mission Street, 1st Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103-2414
TEL: 415.575.6923
EMAIL: Thomas.Fessler@sfgov.org

Additional Resources

ADA Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal
<http://www.ada.gov/checkweb.htm>

ADA Guide for Small Businesses
<http://www.ada.gov/smbusgd.pdf>

Voluntary Certified Access Specialist Program (CASp)
<http://www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/Programs/programCert/casp.aspx>

Tax Incentives for Improving Accessibility
<http://www.ada.gov/archive/taxpack.pdf>

Small Business Loans for ADA Compliance
<http://www.sfgsa.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=7507>

California Historical Building Code (2013)
<http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1074/files/2013%20CHBC.pdf>

This Checklist was developed with the assistance of the following San Francisco City Departments:



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

Central Reception
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TEL: **415.558.6377**
*Planning staff are available by phone and at the PIC counter.
No appointment is necessary.*