



GENERAL PLAN REFERRAL

INFORMATIONAL PACKET

San Francisco Charter Section 4.105 and Sections 2A.52 and 2A.53 of the San Francisco Administrative Code establish the requirement for General Plan Referrals for certain types of projects described in this application packet. The Planning Department or Planning Commission shall review the project and determine whether the project is in conformity with the General Plan, prior to Board of Supervisors' consideration of an ordinance or resolution approving the project.

Planning Department staff are available to advise you in the preparation of this application. Please email CPC.General.Plan.Referrals@sfgov.org for further information.

Español: Si desea ayuda sobre cómo llenar esta solicitud en español, por favor llame al 628.652.7550. Tenga en cuenta que el Departamento de Planificación requerirá al menos un día hábil para responder.

中文：如果您希望獲得使用中文填寫這份申請表的幫助，請致電628.652.7550。請注意，規劃部門需要至少一個工作日來回應。

Filipino: Kung gusto mo ng tulong sa pagkumpleto ng application na ito sa Filipino, paki tawagan ang 628.652.7550. Paki tandaan na mangangailangan ang Planning Department ng hindi kukulangin sa isang araw na pantrabaho para makasagot.

THE GENERAL PLAN

The City's General Plan serves to guide changes to ensure that the qualities that make San Francisco unique are preserved and enhanced. The General Plan is based on a consensus concerning social, economic, and environmental issues. Adopted by the Planning Commission and approved by the Board of Supervisors, the General Plan serves as a basis for decisions that affect many aspects of our everyday lives from where we live and work to how we move about. It is both a strategic and long term document, broad in scope and specific in nature. It is implemented by decisions that direct the allocation of public resources and that shape public and private development. In short, the General Plan is the embodiment of the community's vision for the future of San Francisco.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A GENERAL PLAN REFERRAL?

A General Plan Referral is required to evaluate whether certain types of projects would be consistent with the City's General Plan Objectives and Policies. Once an application is submitted to the Planning Department, staff evaluate the proposed project and the Department or Planning Commission provides a recommendation for consideration by the Board of Supervisors regarding whether or not the proposed project would be in conformity with the General Plan. A finding of non-conformity may be overruled by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Supervisors. Early involvement of the Planning Department in the preparation of a project proposal is advisable in order to provide opportunities for staff to review the proposal and, if necessary, recommend changes to the project, and to avoid delays in responding to General Plan Referral applications.

WHEN IS A GENERAL PLAN REFERRAL NECESSARY?

The types of projects that trigger submittal of a General Plan Referral application include:

1. Property acquisition, sale or lease by the City;
2. Ordinances concerning the extension, widening, narrowing, removal, relocation, vacation, abandonment, sale or change in the use of any public way, transportation route, ground, open space, building, or structure owned by the City and County;
3. Subdivisions of land within the City and County;
4. Projects for the construction, improvement of, or demolition of City-owned buildings or structures within the City and County;
5. Programs that link the General Plan to the allocation of local, state and federal resources, the City's annual capital expenditure plan, six-year capital improvement program, a capital improvement project or a long-term financing proposal, general obligation or revenue bonds or nonprofit corporation proposals;
6. Project plans for public housing, or publicly assisted private housing in the City and County;
7. Proposed Redevelopment project plans within the City and County;
8. Substantial change to the above.

HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?

The Project Sponsor submits a complete General Plan Referral application. An initial [fee](#) must accompany all General Plan Referral applications. Alternately, City Departments may establish another billing arrangement (work order, etc.) with the Planning Department. The application will not be processed unless it is filled out completely and the appropriate fees are paid in full.

After receiving a complete application with the required fee and materials, the Department will establish a case number and docket for the project. Staff assigned to the case will review the application material to determine whether the material submitted is complete or whether additional information is required. Staff will also determine whether the proposed project is exempt from Environmental Evaluation. If the project is not exempt from Environmental Evaluation, staff will inform the applicant that a separate Environmental Evaluation application will be required. In such cases, the applicant will be responsible for submitting a complete Environmental Evaluation application and pay the required application fee.

The Planning Department has 45 days to complete a General Plan Referral. This timeline may be extended if additional information is required from the Project Sponsor or other factors require extending the review time.

WHO MAY APPLY FOR A GENERAL PLAN REFERRAL?

In most cases, General Plan Referral Applications are submitted by a City Department proposing approval of a project. In some cases, the applicant is a private property owner, seeking approval to utilize a resource that is under the jurisdiction of the City. In such cases, the applicant should submit the General Plan Referral application through the Department which has jurisdiction over the property or project. That Department will forward the completed General Plan Referral application, along with the fee submitted by the applicant, to the Planning Department. If the applicant is acting as the authorized agent of a project sponsor, the agent shall provide a letter signed by the applicant, acknowledging that association, as part of the General Plan Referral application.

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

To submit a General Plan Referral Application, please provide the following materials with the application:

1. Please submit a [General Plan Referral Application](#), and complete all requested information as applicable. Provide a complete description of the proposed project and its location. In addition, please provide the street address and Assessor's Block and Lot numbers. If the project is in a public right-of-way, provide the Assessor's Block/Lot numbers of properties fronting on the adjacent public right-of-way.
2. In most cases, General Plan Referral applications are submitted by the City Department proposing approval of a project; in some cases, the applicant is a private property owner seeking approval to utilize a City resource or otherwise require City authorization. As stated above, in these cases, the applicant should submit the application to the City Department with jurisdiction. If the applicant is acting as the authorized agent of a private property owner, the applicant shall provide a letter authorizing the agent to act in his/her behalf, as part of the General Plan Referral application.
3. In all cases the application must be accompanied by one of 11 x 17 inch plans sufficient for proper General Plan Referral review, as well as an electronic copy of the completed application and plans. A site plan is required, showing accurately the subject lot and adjacent lots, and existing and proposed structures on both the subject property and on immediately adjoining properties, open spaces, driveways, parking areas, trees, and land contours where relevant. Drawings of building elevations must be provided, even if they lack facade details. Landscaping should be clearly shown on the plans. Certain types of General Plan Referral cases have additional special requirements and may require additional information to be submitted with the application; the Department staff will assist in determining whether additional materials are required.
4. A digital copy of all documents submitted (CD or USB drive), containing the application, project drawings (this is required if you are not submitting electronically via email or through the Department's Citizen Portal).
5. A check made payable to the "San Francisco Planning Department" for the required intake fee amount. (See [Fee Schedule and/or Calculator](#)).
6. Optional design review materials:
Any photographs that would be helpful in understanding the site context or reviewing the General Plan Referral application.

FEES

Please refer to the [Planning Department Fee Schedule](#) available at www.sfplanning.org. For questions related to the Fee Schedule, you can call the Planning counter at 628.652.7300 or email pic@sfgov.org where planners are able to assist you.

An additional fee for time and materials in excess of the initial fee may be billed upon completion of the case. Fees are payable by check to the San Francisco Planning Department. City agencies may submit payment through an interdepartmental fund transfer. If you are unsure which fee to submit with your application, please contact the General Plan Referral Team at CPC.General.Plan.Referrals@sfgov.org conditions of approval.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code implementing CEQA may require an Environmental Evaluation before a decision on a General Plan Referral application may be considered.

In some cases, a General Plan Referral project may be exempt from Environmental Review. Please consult Planning Department staff to determine whether an Environmental Evaluation application must be submitted with the General Plan Referral application. A separate fee is required for environmental review if the project is not exempt from Environmental Review.

To file your completed General Plan Referral application, you can:

file the application and all required materials online through San Francisco Planning's Public Portal; or

**email all the required materials to
CPC.General.Plan.Referrals@sfgov.org.**



San Francisco Planning

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact San Francisco Planning

San Francisco Planning Reception
49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400
San Francisco CA 94103

TEL: 628.652.7600
WEB: www.sfplanning.org

Planning counter at Permit Center
49 South Van Ness Avenue, 2nd Floor
San Francisco CA 94103

EMAIL: pic@sfgov.org
TEL: 628.652.7300