



## INFORMATION SHEET

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**NO. G-07**

**DATE** : February 15, 2024

**CATAGORY** : General

**TITLE** : Applicability of the California Historical Building Code

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**PURPOSE** : The purpose of this Information Sheet is to detail the process for requesting approval to apply the California Historical Building Code to a project.

**REFERENCES** : California Historical Building Code, Current Edition  
California Building Code, Current Edition  
San Francisco Building Code, Current Edition  
San Francisco Planning Code, Current Edition  
San Francisco Planning – Project Review Meeting  
San Francisco Planning – Historic Resource Review

**DISCUSSION** :

The California Historical Building Code (CHBC) may be used to preserve, rehabilitate, relocate, and/or reconstruct qualified historical buildings or properties while providing reasonable safety for the building occupants and access for persons with disabilities.

Applicants may request to use the CHBC in conjunction with the regular codes (as defined in CHBC Chapter 8-2) for buildings deemed historic by the SF Planning Department.

Where it is necessary to propose alternative provisions to preserve historic significance and to meet the intent of the regular code, the element(s) intended to be preserved must first be recognized as character-defining by a Preservation Planner at SF Planning. The intention to preserve and/or rehabilitate such features shall be made clear in the proposed scope of work.

**PROCEDURE** :

1. There are two ways to obtain a CHBC Memo by a Preservation Planner from SF Planning.

- a. Planning Information Counter (PIC) – For projects that don't otherwise need a Planning Approval Letter. The PIC Preservation Planner is available during most counter hours. The PIC Preservation Planner will review the project information and issue a CHBC Memo within one week. More information about the PIC can be found on the SF Planning website: <https://sfplanning.org/planning-counter>. There is no fee for this service.
  - b. Historic Resource Review (HRR) – For projects that require a Planning Approval Letter. The Preservation Planner assigned to your project will issue the CHBC Memo as part of the HRR Determination. The Application for an HRR can be found on the SF Planning website: <https://sfplanning.org/resource/hrr-application>. There is no additional fee for this service. This service will be processed as part of the HRR fee.
2. If you would like a preliminary determination of your building's eligibility for the CHBC prior to filing a Planning Application or Building Permit, you may consult a PIC Preservation Planner or request a Project Review Meeting. This will not result in the issuance of a CHBC Memo. The Application for a PRV can be found on the SF Planning website: <https://sfplanning.org/resource/prv-application>.

The Planning Department's Fee Schedule for the HRR and PRV Applications can be found on the SF Planning website: <https://sfplanning.org/resource/fee-schedule-applications>.

3. When requesting a CHBC Memo, provide the following information:
- a. Proposed scope of work.
  - b. List all elements requested to be deemed historically significant or a character-defining feature. See CHBC Chapter 8-2 for the definition of a character-defining feature.
  - c. Date of construction of the building.
  - d. Date of construction for any element requested for review, if different from the building's date of construction.
  - e. Photos, including any historical photos.
  - f. Location of any element requested for review on plans.
  - g. Construction drawings, as needed to convey the scope of work.
  - h. Other documentation requested by the Preservation Planner, including any relevant historical reports or designation nominations.
4. The CHBC Memo will list the Planning Department's determination as to the historically significant elements and/or character-defining features associated with the proposed project work scope. Only those elements requested to be deemed historically significant

or character-defining will be reviewed by the Preservation Planner as part of the preparation of the CHBC Memo.

5. The issued CHBC Memo and all supporting documentation (including everything in a-h listed above) shall be incorporated into the permit drawings submittal set for DBI review.

Important Note: The CHBC is applied in conjunction with the regular codes as defined in CHBC Chapter 8-2. Where the scope of work and preservation of historically significant elements or character-defining features adversely affects life-safety, the applicant shall propose equivalent alternatives to meet the intent of the regular codes.



March 4, 2024

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Rich Hillis  
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 SF Planning

Date



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*2.15.24*

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Patrick O'Riordan  
 Director  
 Department of Building Inspection

Date

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