

***Regular Meeting of the Building
Inspection Commission***

July 15, 2026

BIC Agenda Item 6



July 9, 2026

Building Inspection Commission
49 South Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: Housing Code – Ceiling Height (File No. 260623)

Honorable Members of the Commission:

On July 8, 2026, the Code Advisory Committee reviewed File No. 260623. The committee proposed the following amendment and unanimously issued a positive recommendation for its adoption, including an added exception to Section 503(a) as shown in the double underlined text below.

Proposed re-write:

Section 2. Chapter 5 of the Housing Code is hereby amended by revising Section 503, to read as follows:

SEC. 503. ROOM DIMENSIONS.

(a) Ceiling Heights. Unless legally constructed as such, no habitable room shall have a ceiling height less than seven feet ~~six inches~~. Any room, other than a habitable room, shall have a ceiling height of not less than six feet eight inches ~~seven feet~~.

EXCEPTION:

1. **Existing non-habitable rooms built before the effective date of this ordinance may be converted to habitable space, provided the ceiling height is at no less than seven feet.**

Respectfully submitted,

Vivian Huang, PE
Manager, DBI Technical Services Division

cc. David Kane, S.E. Interim Director
Jimmy Cheung, Acting Deputy Director
Christine Gasparac, Assistant Director
Tate Hanna, Legislative Affairs Manager
J. Edgar Fennie, Chair, Code Advisory Committee
Thomas Fessler, Secretary to the Code Advisory Committee

File No. 260623 (Housing Code – Ceiling Heights)

Code Advisory Committee

On July 8, 2026, the Code Advisory Committee reviewed File No. 260623. The committee provided the following amendment, and unanimously provided a positive recommendation with their recommended change and a request for an information sheet included.

Proposed re-write:

Section 2. Chapter 5 of the Housing Code is hereby amended by revising Section 503, to read as follows:

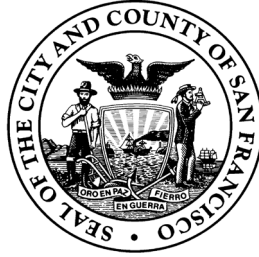
SEC. 503. ROOM DIMENSIONS.

(a) Ceiling Heights. Unless legally constructed as such, no habitable room shall have a ceiling height less than seven feet. Any room, other than a habitable room, shall have a ceiling height of not less than **six feet eight inches** ~~seven feet~~.

EXCEPTION:

- 1. Existing non-habitable rooms built before the effective date of this ordinance may be converted to habitable space, provided the ceiling height is at no less than seven feet.**

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689
Tel. No. (415) 554-5184
Fax No. (415) 554-5163
TDD/TTY No. (415) 554-5227

MEMORANDUM

TO: David Kane, Interim Director, Department of Building Inspection
Sonya Harris, Secretary, Building Inspection Commission

FROM: John Carroll, Assistant Clerk
Land Use and Transportation Committee

DATE: June 11, 2026

SUBJECT: LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

The Board of Supervisors' Land Use and Transportation Committee has received the following legislation, introduced by Supervisor Wong on June 2, 2026:

File No. 260623

Ordinance amending the Housing Code to reduce the minimum ceiling height for habitable rooms to seven feet and other rooms to six feet eight inches; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

The proposed ordinance is being transmitted pursuant to Charter, Section D3.750-5, for public hearing and recommendation. It is pending before the Land Use and Transportation Committee and will be scheduled for hearing upon receipt of your response.

Please forward me the Commission's recommendation and reports at the Board of Supervisors, City Hall, Room 244, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102 or by email at: john.carroll@sfgov.org.

c:
Offices of Chair Melgar and Supervisor Wong
Tate Hanna, Department of Building Inspection
Patty Lee, Department of Building Inspection

[Housing Code - Ceiling Heights]

Ordinance amending the Housing Code to reduce the minimum ceiling height for habitable rooms to seven feet and other rooms to six feet eight inches; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

NOTE: **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. 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. ____ and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board affirms this determination.

(b) On _____, the Building Inspection Commission considered this ordinance at a duly noticed public hearing pursuant to Charter Section 4.121 and Building Code Section 104A.2.11.2. 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. _____.

(c) Section R313.1 of the 2025 California Residential Code requires a minimum ceiling

1 height of seven feet for habitable rooms and six feet eight inches for other rooms including
2 restrooms and laundry rooms. The Board finds this Ordinance harmonizes the San Francisco
3 Housing Code with Section R313.1, thereby eliminating an inconsistency between local and
4 state provisions.

5
6 Section 2. Chapter 5 of the Housing Code is hereby amended by revising Section 503,
7 to read as follows:

8 **SEC. 503. ROOM DIMENSIONS.**

9 (a) **Ceiling Heights.** Unless legally constructed as such, no habitable room shall
10 have a ceiling height less than seven feet ~~six inches~~. Any room, other than a habitable room,
11 shall have a ceiling height of not less than six feet eight inches ~~seven feet~~.

12 * * * *

13
14 Section 3. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors
15 intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles,
16 numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal
17 Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment
18 additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the “Note” that appears under
19 the official title of the ordinance.

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21 //

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23 //

1 Section 4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective on the 31st day after
2 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the
3 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board
4 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

5
6 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
7 DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

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

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11 4912-2710-7504, v. 1
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LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Housing Code - Ceiling Heights]

Ordinance amending the Housing Code to reduce the minimum ceiling height for habitable rooms to seven feet and other rooms to six feet eight inches; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Existing Law

The San Francisco Housing Code requires minimum ceiling height of 7 feet 6 inches for habitable rooms and 7 feet for all other rooms within a residential structure.

Amendments to Current Law

The Proposed Legislation would lower the minimum ceiling heights to 7 feet for habitable rooms and 6 feet 8 inches for all other rooms.

Background Information

The Proposed Legislation would align the Housing Code with Section R313.1 of the California Residential Code.

Introduction Form

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

RECEIVED
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SAN FRANCISCO
2026 JUN 02 PM02:53

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):

Wong; Dorsey, Sherrill, Sauter, Melgar

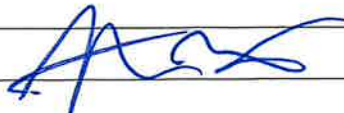
Subject:

Housing Code - Ceiling Heights

Long Title or text listed:

Ordinance amending the Housing Code to reduce the minimum ceiling height for habitable rooms to seven feet and other rooms to six feet eight inches; and affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Signature of Sponsoring Supervisor:



File No. 260623 – Habitable Ceiling Heights

Department of Building Inspection

July 15, 2026

Existing Law

Currently, San Francisco requires habitable rooms to have a minimum ceiling height of seven feet six inches.

The CA Residential Code (not adopted in San Francisco) has reduced ceiling height requirements in habitable spaces to seven feet. Existing buildings with an attic or basement converted to habitable space are allowed ceiling heights of six feet eight inches in the Residential Code.

The CA Building Code maintains a seven-foot six-inch ceiling height requirement for new construction and dwellings not covered by the Residential Code.

File No. 260623

To assist with the conversion of existing spaces into habitable dwellings, and to further align San Francisco with state code, File No. 260623 seeks to amend the Housing Code to **reduce the minimum requirement for ceiling height in habitable spaces from seven feet six inches to seven feet.**

In addition, non-habitable rooms will have a reduced minimum ceiling height of six feet eight inches, down from seven feet.

CAC Recommendation

The Code Advisory Committee met on July 8 and unanimously recommended approval of the ordinance with the following proposed amendment and a request for an information sheet:

SEC. 503. ROOM DIMENSIONS

(a) **Ceiling Heights.** Unless legally constructed as such, no habitable room shall have a ceiling height less than seven feet. Any room, other than a habitable room, shall have a ceiling height of not less than **six feet eight inches** ~~seven feet~~.

EXCEPTION:

1. **Existing non-habitable rooms built before the effective date of this ordinance may be converted to habitable space, provided the ceiling height is at no less than seven feet.**



THANK YOU