

FILE NO.

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Fire Code –Fire Apparatus Access Roads]

Ordinance amending the Chapter 5 of the San Francisco Fire Code to clarify what does not constitute an obstruction of a fire apparatus access road.

Existing Law

Under the California Fire Code, a fire apparatus access road shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles. The minimum width for a fire apparatus access road is 20 feet with an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches.

Amendments to Current Law

This legislation will clarify that an unobstructed sidewalk that does not exceed six inches in height will not constitute a per se obstruction of fire apparatus access road. This legislation does not affect the authority of the fire code official under state law. A department may not act pursuant to this ordinance in contradiction to the determination of the fire code official.

1 [Fire Code - Fire Apparatus Access Roads]

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3 **Ordinance amending Chapter 5 of the San Francisco Fire Code to clarify what does not**
4 **constitute an obstruction of a fire apparatus access road.**

5 NOTE: Additions are single-underline italics Times New Roman;
6 deletions are ~~strike-through italics Times New Roman~~.
7 Board amendment additions are double-underlined;
8 Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough-normal~~.

9 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

10 Section 1. Findings.

11 The Board of Supervisors finds pedestrian safety and reduction of pedestrian fatalities
12 at intersections and other legal crosswalks are important City policy objectives.

13 In December 2010, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Better Streets Plan. A core
14 principle underlying the Better Streets Plan is that streets that the City must design, build, and
15 operate should strike a balance among all users of streets regardless of physical abilities or
16 mode of travel, with the objective of making streets better and safer resources for all the
17 people who live or work in San Francisco. The construction, design, and operation of streets
18 must serve the paramount public interest in maintaining the livability of the City; taking into
19 account, and striking a balance among, the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists,
20 and those who travel by private automobile, as well as those who travel by bus, streetcar, or
21 other mass transit; considering also such factors as street trees, storm water management,
22 utilities, as well as vehicular circulation and parking. But in this mix of factors, pedestrian
23 safety must be given a high priority.

24 The Board of Supervisors finds that installation of pedestrian "bulb outs" at
25 intersections and crosswalks, extended from sidewalks or medians, will enhance pedestrian

1 safety. A pedestrian "bulb out" exists when the sidewalk or median at the intersection or at
2 another legal crosswalk is extended into the street, thereby reducing the distance pedestrians
3 must travel to cross the street.

4 The Board of Supervisors further finds that bulb outs will also force traffic to slow down
5 and improve the capacity of vehicle drivers to see pedestrians.

6 The Board of Supervisors further finds that increasing the number of bulb outs in the
7 City is consistent with the Better Streets Plan.

8 In adopting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors does not intend to amend the
9 California Fire Code, reduce the powers of the fire code official, or compromise fire safety.
10 This legislation intends only to interpret what constitutes an obstruction of a fire apparatus
11 access road under California Fire Code Section 503.4.

12 Section 2. The San Francisco Fire Code is hereby amended by amending Section
13 503.4, to read as follows:

14 SECTION 503 – FIRE APPARATUS ACCESS ROADS

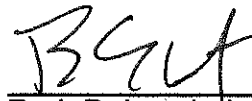
15 503.4 [For SF] Obstruction of fire apparatus access roads. Fire apparatus access roads
16 shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles. Subject to Health and
17 Safety Code Sections 13104, 13108, 13114, 18941.5, and California Fire Code Sections 104.1, 1.11.2,
18 and 503, the portion of the sidewalk or median, immediately adjoining and extending into a roadway,
19 that has no utility pole, street light, street furniture, fire hydrant, trees, shrubbery, or other structure or
20 natural growth attached thereto and that has a height that does not exceed six inches above the
21 roadway shall not constitute an obstruction of a fire apparatus access road. The minimum widths
22 and clearances established in Section 503.2.1 shall be maintained at all times.

23 Section 3. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days from the
24 date of passage.

1 Section 4. In enacting this ordinance, the Board intends to amend only those words,
2 phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles, numbers, punctuation marks, charts,
3 diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Fire Code that are explicitly shown in this
4 ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment additions, and Board amendment
5 deletions in accordance with the "Note" that appears under the official title of the ordinance.

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7 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
8 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

9 By:



10 Burk Delventhal
11 Deputy City Attorney

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