



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHARED SPACES ORDINANCE

**HEARING DATE:** April 22, 2021

**Project Name:** Shared Spaces  
**Case Number:** 2021-003010PRJ [Board File No. 210284]

**Initiated by:** Mayor London Breed / Introduced March 16, 2021  
**Staff Contact:** Robin Abad Ocubillo, Citywide Planning  
Robin.Abad@sfgov.org, 628-652-7456

**Reviewed by:** Aaron Starr, Manager of Legislative Affairs  
Aaron.Starr@sfgov.org, 628-652-7456

**Recommendation:** None proposed – Informational Hearing Only

## Background

The Shared Spaces Program has been a critical part of the City's crisis response strategy to sustain the locally-owned small business sector in San Francisco. In addition to stabilizing neighborhood commercial corridors, merchants, and jobs, the Program has contributed positively to walkability, social and psychological wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to widespread success throughout the City's neighborhoods, on Friday, March 12, Mayor Breed announced legislation to transition Shared Spaces from an emergency response into a permanent program through and after the pandemic. The legislation was officially introduced on Tuesday, March 16.

The permanent version of the program will carry forward the streamlined permit process; encourage arts & culture; and better balance commercial activities with public space and transportation demands of the recovering economy. Revised design and operating regulations won't go into effect for pre-existing operators until January 1, 2022; giving pre-existing operators time to apply for the new permit and make any essential changes. Once the legislation goes into effect, any new operators will need to apply under the new program. Fees for all operators, both pre-existing and new, will be deferred until June 2022.

This legislation was developed in coordination with multiple City agencies and stakeholders, including Planning, SFMTA, Public Works, the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Entertainment Commission, the Mayor's

Office on Disability, the Economic Recovery Task Force, the Board of Supervisors, Commercial Business Districts, Merchant Associations, Small Business Commission, the Planning Commission, and public space and mobility advocates.

## Policy Goals and Outcomes

1. Simplify the City's toolbox by consolidating the permit process, streamlining it for permittees and creating a single, one-stop permit portal.
2. Prioritize equity and inclusion by prioritizing City resources for communities most impacted by historical disparities with funding, materials and grants. Ensure that [the needs of the disabled community](#) are accommodated.
3. Phase the implementation of the program with economic conditions so that businesses have time to adapt to the new permit process.
4. Encourage arts, culture and entertainment activities by carrying forward the Just Add Music (JAM) permit and allow for arts and culture activities to be the primary use of the space, not just secondary.
5. Balance the needs of the curb by ensuring our Transit First and Vision Zero policies remain priorities, balance Shared Spaces occupancies with loading, short-term parking, micromobility needs, and other curbside functions; and encourage sharing of Shared Spaces amongst merchants on the same block.
6. Maintain public access by ensuring every Shared Space provides public access when not in commercial use and providing a seating opportunity during daytime hours, including business, operating hours.
7. Efficient Permit Review and Approvals with a clearly defined 30-day approvals timetable, aligning with Prop H requirements. This also allows for better design quality and therefore safety.
8. Clear Public Input Procedures will encourage collaboration between neighbors and merchants.
9. Coordinated Enforcement by a single agency with a 'Single Bill of Health,' which is easy for operators to understand and comply with.

## Commission Action

No City Planning Commission action is triggered as the Shared Ordinance does not propose amendments to the Planning Code.

### Attachments:

- Exhibit A: Presentation Slides  
Exhibit B: Board of Supervisors File No. 210284