

PORT CODE PROCEDURE GUIDE

NO. PCP-005

DATE	:	January 01, 2026
SUBJECT	:	Plan Review and Permit Process
TITLE	:	Port Procedures for Approval of Local Equivalencies
PURPOSE	:	The purpose of this Port Code Procedure is to detail the procedures to be used for the application and case-by-case review of requests for approval of equivalencies, when work is proposed which does not strictly comply with the provisions of the latest edition of the Port of San Francisco Building Standards Codes. Requests for approval of modifications or alternates will be considered by the Port's Engineering Division Building Permit Group (BPG) and, when applicable, the San Francisco Fire Department on a case-by-case basis when reasonable equivalency is proposed.
REFERENCE	:	Current edition of the San Francisco Port Building Code - Section 104A, Organization and Enforcement - Section 104A.2.7, Modifications - Section 104A.2.8, Alternate materials, design and methods of construction Port Code Procedure PCP-007 Pre-Application Plan Review Procedure
DISCUSSION	:	<p>Project sponsors may request the application of standard local equivalencies, as detailed in various PCPs, or approval of other alternates when it can be demonstrated on a case-by-case basis that there are practical difficulties in meeting the specific provisions of the codes, that the modification is in conformance with the intent and purpose of the codes, and that reasonable equivalency is provided in fire-protection and structural integrity.</p> <p>Proposed modifications may be administratively approved by the Port Building Permit Group if they conform to the standard provisions of Local Equivalency. Other modifications and applications for use of alternate materials, designs and methods of construction may be administratively approved or may be referred to the Chief Harbor Engineer (CHE) or other review body as appropriate.</p> <p>Based upon individual building and property conditions, the Port Building Permit Group and other City departments, such as the Fire Department, may impose requirements in addition to those proposed by the project sponsor when approving any request for use of a standard local modification, code modification or alternate material, design or method of construction. Additionally, the Port Building Permit Group or any other City agency may require that additional substantiation be provided supporting any claims made for such proposals.</p>

Procedure for Application for Local Equivalencies

Project sponsors wishing to apply for local equivalencies must fill out and submit the Request for Approval of Local Equivalency form (Attachment A). Fees are required to be paid as noted on that form.

Review Procedures for Application for Local Equivalencies

The Port Building Permit Group and the Fire Department, when applicable, will conduct review meetings as required to consider requests for the approval of Local Equivalencies, Modifications and Alternates. At such review meetings each request will be either approved, approved with conditions, disapproved, referred to another official body, or placed on "Hold" pending submittal of additional information. Upon

approval of the local equivalency, a copy of the signed form approving the equivalency and indicating any conditions of approval will be attached to the submittal documents as part of the permanent record of the project, and a copy will be sent to the project sponsor.

Appeals

Determinations of Port Staff regarding local equivalencies may be brought for further review to the Port's Chief Harbor Engineer. Determinations of the Chief Harbor Engineer may be appealed to the Port Commission as detailed in Port Code Procedure 006. *Port Building Code Appeals Process*.



Matthew Bell
Acting Chief Harbor Engineer
Port of San Francisco

1/1/2026
Date

Originally Approved by Matthew Bell, Acting Chief Harbor Engineer January 1, 2026

**ATTACHMENT “A” Request for Approval of Local Equivalency for
Modification or Alternate Materials, Design or Methods of Construction**



PORT OF SAN FRANCISCO
ENGINEERING DIVISION - BUILDING PERMIT GROUP
Pier 1, The Embarcadero
San Francisco CA 94111

Building Permit Desk: (415) 274-0554, permit-desk@sfport.com
Main Receptionist: (415) 274-0400

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF LOCAL EQUIVALENCY FOR MODIFICATION OR ALTERNATE MATERIALS, DESIGN OR METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION

PCP-005: Port Procedures for Approval of Local Equivalencies – Attachment A

Date Submitted: _____

If no permit application has been filed, a Pre-application Review Fee is required for review of a request for local equivalency or modification. Refer to Port Code Procedure 007: Pre Application Plan Review Procedure. If a permit application has been filed, no additional fees are required for this review. Additional fees may be required by Fire Department and other City review agencies.

Port Permit Application #: _____

Port Facility Identification # or Property Address: _____

Occupancy Group: _____ Type of Construction: _____ No. Stories: _____

Describe Use of Building: _____

Regular Code Requirement (Specify Code and Sections):

Proposed Modification or Alternate:

Case-by-Case Basis of Request – Describe the practical difficulties presented in meeting the specific conditions of the code and how the proposed modification or alternate meets the intent of the code. A separate form should be filled for each requested modification or alternate. Attach copies of any references, test reports, expert opinions, etc., which support this request. The Port Building Permit Group (BPG) may require that an approved consultant be hired by the applicant to perform tests or analysis and to submit an evaluation report to the BPG for consideration.

Requested By: PROJECT SPONSOR ARCHITECT / ENGINEER [PROFESSIONAL STAMP BELOW]

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

PORT BUILDING PERMIT GROUP USE ONLY

PLAN REVIEWER COMMENTS:

RECOMMENDATIONS::

[signed off/dated by:]

Approve

Approve with conditions

Disapprove

Plan Reviewer: _____

Supervisor: _____

Chief Harbor Engineer: _____

Port Fire Marshall: _____

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL or OTHER COMMENTS:
