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## **Getting It Right: Examining Local Entitlement** in California to Inform Policy and Process



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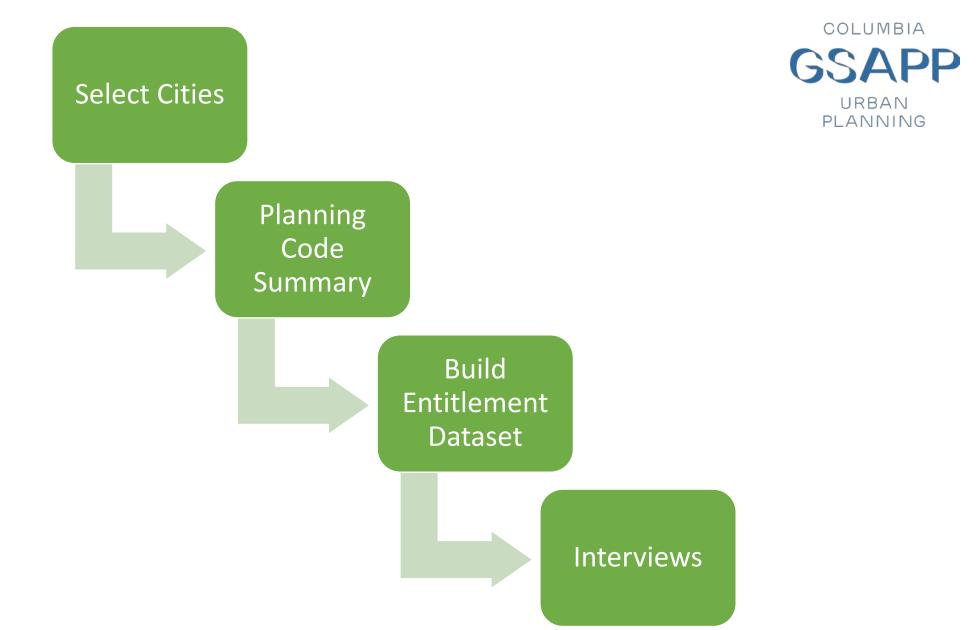
COLUMBIA GSAPP URBAN PLANNING

Research Status August 2, 2018

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## **Research approach**





## What are we learning?

## **EVERTHING VARIES**

- Local processes
- Planning practices and application of State Law
- Timelines for similar development





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## Local processes vary.



#### COLUMBIA GSAPP URBAN PLANNING

| Jurisdiction  | Primary Discretionary<br>Review Mechanism | Residential Developments<br>Exempt from Discretionary Review |  |
|---------------|---|--|--|
| San Francisco | Building Permits                          | None   |  |
| San Jose      | Site Development Permit                   | Single-family homes in limited circumstances <sup>14</sup>   |  |
| Redwood City  | Architectural Permit                      | One-story single family homes and duplexes                   |  |
| Palo Alto     | Architectural Review                      | Up to two single-family homes and two duplexes <sup>15</sup> |  |
| Oakland       | Design Review                             | Secondary units  |  |

## **Planning practice varies.**

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#### **Design/Site** Historic CUP PUD Variance **Total** Specific Rezoning General Plan Preservation Plan Plan Number of PLANNING **Review** Permit Amend. **Projects** San 27 45 2 31 1 96 1 ----Francisco San Jose 13 3 0 52 0 48 5 67 --Oakland 66 0 31 1 26 2 0 67 --Palo Alto 0 3 0 5 1 0 0 5 --Redwood 9 0 2 0 13 4 4 4 0 City

# **Planning practice varies.**

Most residential development projects are going through streamlined environmental review, but ...

|                  | Project-<br>Based and<br>Tiering<br>Exemptions | MND/ND | EIR |
|------------------|--|--------|-----|
| San<br>Francisco | 81%  | 10%    | 9%  |
| San Jose         | 44%  | 38%    | 18% |
| Oakland          | 98%  | 0%     | 2%  |
| Redwood<br>City  | 65%  | 29%    | 6%  |
| Palo Alto        | 60%  | 20%    | 20% |



COLUMBIA

GSAPE URBAN PLANNING

# **Planning practice varies.**

... local planning department's application of state law provisions meant to streamline environmental review vary.



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**Community Plan Exemption (CPE) Processes** 

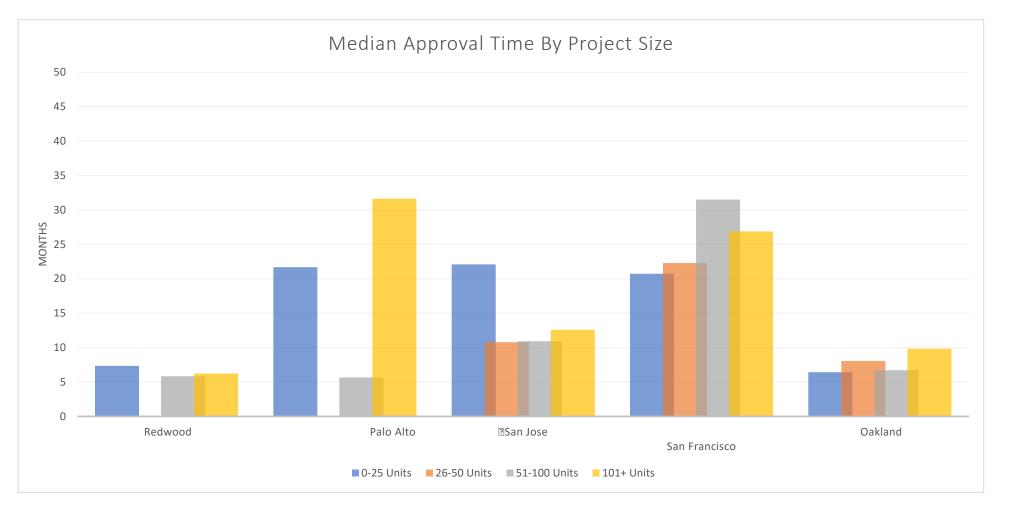
- Median CPE entitlement in Oakland is 7
   months
- Median CPE entitlement in San Francisco is 23
   months

# **Timelines vary.**



COLUMBIA GSAPP URBAN PLANNING

# Entitlement takes a long time—anywhere from 6 to 32 months—but similar development timelines vary.



# **CEQA litigation rates are low.**



COLUMBIA GSAPP URBAN PLANNING

- Of 250 projects in our dataset, six were the subject of a CEQA lawsuit.
- Around 2.5% of total projects.
- Comprising 5.3% of total units.
- There is one more non-CEQA lawsuit, which raise the percentages to around 3% of projects and 6.2% of total units.



SPUR Lunchtime Forum | August 2, 2018





### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE ON HOUSING PRODUCTION**



1. Approval Deadlines [pre-entitlement]

Months from **stable project** to entitlement :

- 6 | no CEQA project
  9 | exemptions
  12 | ND, MND, CPE
  18 | EIR
- 22 | complex EIR



2. Approval Deadlines [post-entitlement]

**ONE YEAR** from complete phase application to construction permits



#### 3. Accountability

Hearings scheduled within timeframes

/ Senior manager

#### / Quarterly reporting



December 1, 2017 Mayor Edwin M. Lee City Hall, Room 200 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Executive Directive 17-02: Keeping up the Pace of Housing Production

Your Executive Directive 17-02 charged the Planning Department with submitting a plan for your consideration by December 1, 2017 outlining process improvement measures to enhance our regulatory and development review functions in order to streamline the approval and construction of housing in San Francisco.

1050 Masian Sute 410 1050 Masian Sute 400 San Francisco Ci. 94103-240

Receptore 415.558.6371

While there is no single solution to the housing crisis in San Francisco, we agree that increasing the support obtaining at all concentre levels is critical to allevitating the pressures we currently the c.San Francisco is building more housing toor than in the past, but was at far immovecurrently cleared or table-production and keeping us with current population that and the second second second second second second second second bacasting, we do glay a considerable role in determining housing supply care from how here and well continue to be expanding housing supply care from how here and well continue to be expanding housing supply care from how here and well continue to be expanding housing support toor from has here and well continue to be expanding housing support toor from has here and well continue to be expanding housing support toor from has here and well continue to be expanding housing support toor from has here and well continue to the specific housing support toor from has here and well continue to the specific housing support toor from has here and well continue to the specific housing support toor from has here and well continue to the specific housing support toor from has here and well continue to the specific housing support toor from has here and well continue to the specific housing support toor from has here and toor from housing support toor from has here and the specific housing support toor from has here and the specific housing support toor from has here and to the specific housing support toor from has here and to have the specific housing support toor from has here and to have to have the specific housing support toor for has here and to have the specific housing support toor for has here and to house to have to have to have to have to have the specific housing support toor for has here and to have to h

I can say without reservation that the Planning Dipartment is statisfied by a highly takened, knowledgehb, and deficient logrand property who, despite innounce that dataleges notation of their cortext and growing workshouts, are committed to insuryoung this extraordinary eity we all howe. They take their responsibilities eventually, rate juri negative housing, but to environmental network, historic presentation, design resident, and mach more. Nonetheless, pinnens, including margin compared that tunnessuity compared presentation housing but to in opportunity to result, rought on that uses works.

To this end, we have conducted a comprehensive Department-wide review of our processes to only those directly reliade to housing but the full large of our procedures. We believe that such a helistic review, coupled with responsive policy and administrative and technology-based impounders. We all low more time and attention to be spect on the critical planning issues that are most in need of attention - housing production, their among them. Since shortly after based on the spectra of the critical planning insumed visual models and the spectra of the critical planning insum shart are most in need of attention - housing production, their among them. Since shortly after based on the spectra of the spectra of the critical on internal process involving many staff members, and we are excelled to share with you the recommendations in this plan that will be montingered to and staffy to approve new housing future.

- 4. Process Improvement Plans
- Dec 1 | Planning + DBl pre-entitlement

Apr 1 | Consolidated Plan post-entitlement

[PW, MTA, PUC, SFFD, RPD, MOD, DBI]

## **PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS PLAN**

#### **APPLICATION INTAKE AND REVIEW**



The application process should be the foundation of sponsor, staff, and public understanding of project details and review timeframes.



#### **ROUTINE PROJECT AND PERMITS**

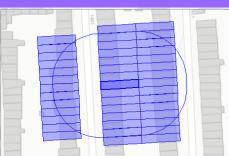
Over-the-counter and administrative approvals reduce backlog and leave more time for good planning.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND DESIGN REVIEW**



When successful mitigations and design treatments are wellestablished, we can focus analysis where it's needed most.

#### **ADMINISTRATION AND TECHNOLOGY**



By continually updating our systems and tools, we can serve the public better and keep growing our capacity.

#### PLANNING CODE AND COMMISSION POLICIES



A clear Planning Code reduces room for delay. Focusing the projects that require a hearing maximizes the value of public discussion.

#### APPLICATION INTAKE AND REVIEW

- Streamlined Preliminary Project Assessment (PPA)
  - No Environmental Evaluation prior to PPA
  - Focused response, provide a roadmap
  - Consolidated Project Application and Review
  - Environmental and Planning Code review in tandem
  - Notice of Incomplete Application within 30 days
  - Plan Check Letter within 90 days
- Target Approval Dates for Housing Projects
  - Assigned in advance when the project description is "stable"

## **ROUTINE PERMITS AND APPROVALS**

- "Advanced over the counter" review [August]
  - Online appointments and submittals
  - Piloting with ADUs and Unauthorized Unit legalization
- Streamlined approvals for Accessory Dwelling Units:
- No neighborhood notice for ADUs in the existing envelope
- Greater ability to expand/fill-in existing structures for ADUs
- Waivers/alternatives for street trees, bike parking, exposure
- Minor alterations to Historic structures
  - Same-day administrative approval for routine work

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND DESIGN REVIEW**

- Historic Resources
  - Pilot: Preliminary Historic Resource Assessment
- Mitigation Measures
  - Codify standard mitigations for Archeology, Transportation, Noise, Air Quality
  - **Technical Studies and Consultants** 
    - Integrate technical studies into administrative record
    - Revise standards for consultant deliverables
- Environmental Documents
  - Concurrent drafting, review of Initial Studies and limited topic EIRs
  - Discontinue "certificate" documents for Infill and other exemptions

## PLANNING CODE AND COMMISSION POLICIES

- 100% Affordable Housing
  - Administrative approval, including for bonus projects
  - Broader exceptions for non-bonus projects
  - No Discretionary Review
- Large Downtown Residential projects
  - Expanded exceptions, to reduce need for Variances
- Reduce the number of Conditional Use Authorizations
- Article 4 (Inclusionary, Impact Fees) clean-up and definitions
- Article 8 (Mixed-Use Districts) Reorganization





Plan Francisco Planning

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