

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

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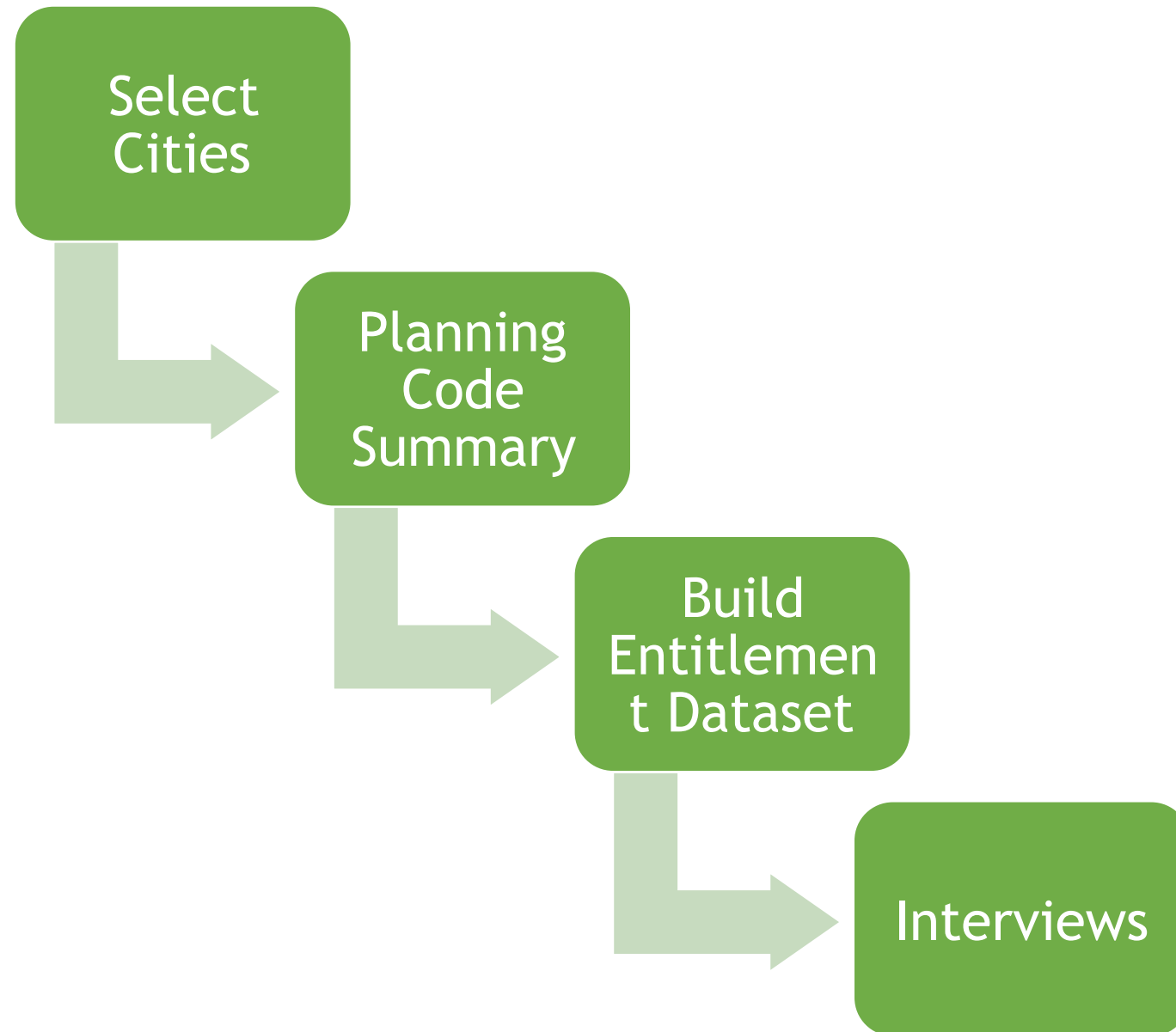
COLUMBIA
GSAPP
URBAN
PLANNING

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Eric Biber, JD
Moira O'Neill,
JD
Giulia Gualco-
Nelson, JD



Research approach



What are we learning?

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EVERYTHING VARIES

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



Local processes vary.

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

Planning practice varies.

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

Planning practice varies.

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

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

Planning practice varies.

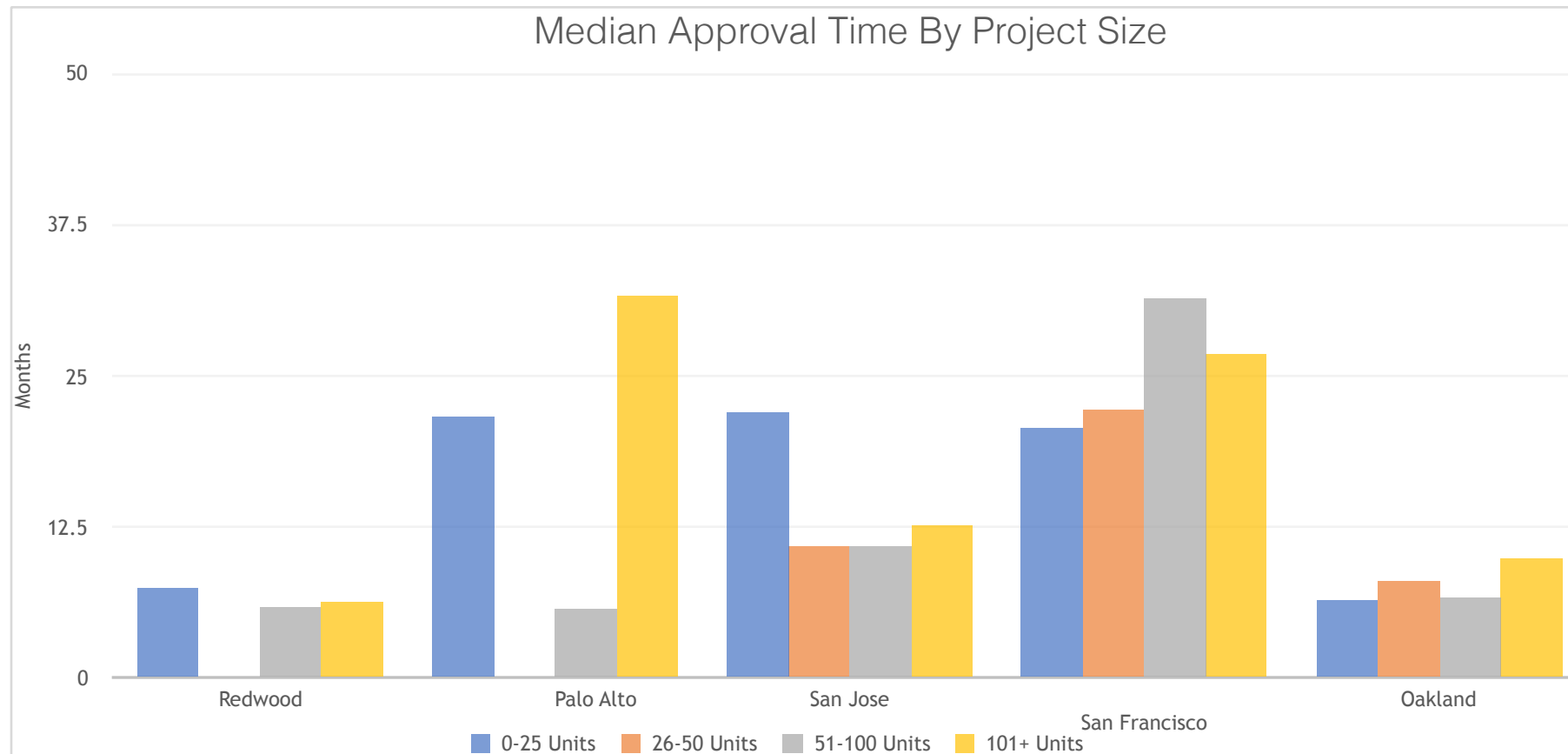
... local planning department's application of state law provisions meant to streamline environmental review vary.

Community Plan Exemption (CPE) Processes

- **Median CPE entitlement in Oakland is 7 months**
- **Median CPE entitlement in San Francisco is 23 months**
- **Similar tiering process in San Jose is 9 months**

Timelines vary.

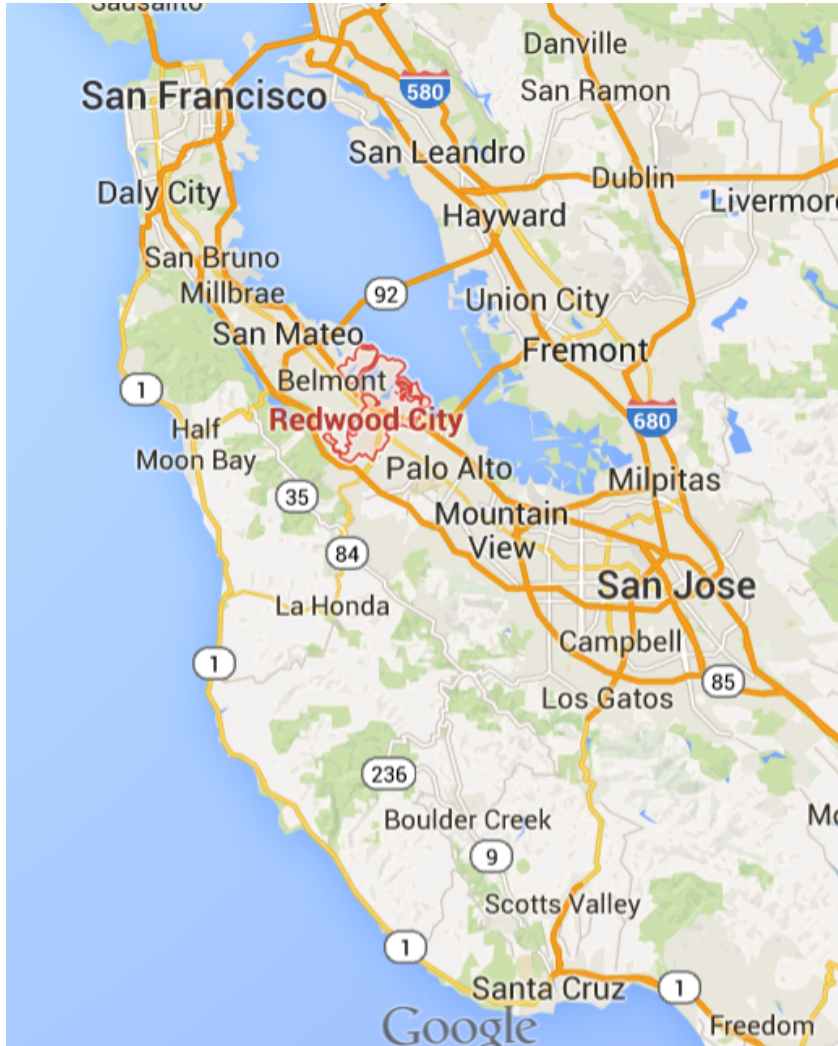
Entitlement takes a long time—anywhere from 6 to 32 months—but similar development timelines vary.



CEQA litigation rates are low.

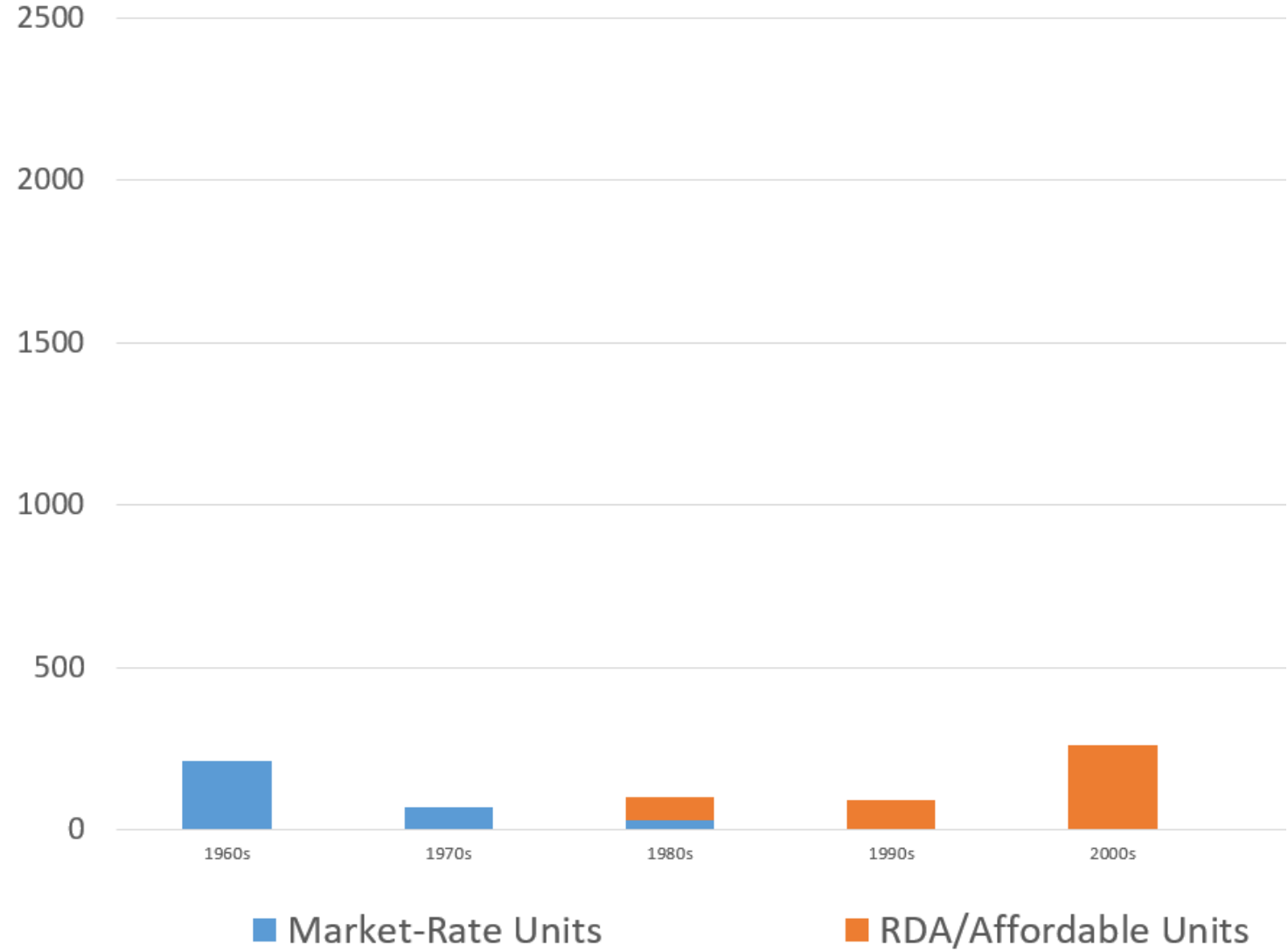
- Of **250** projects in our dataset, **six** were the subject of a CEQA lawsuit.
- Around **2.5%** of total projects.
- Comprising **5.3%** of total units.
- There is one more non-CEQA lawsuit, which raise the percentages to around 3% of projects and 6.2% of total units.

Redwood City Basics



- SF/SJ Midpoint
- San Mateo County Seat
- Population: Approximately 85K
- “Climate Best By Government Test”
- Celebrated 150 years in 2017

Downtown Redwood City Housing Unit Production



What were the keys steps?

Step 1: Consensus that change was necessary

Step 2: Community-Driven Process (1998-2010)

Step 3: Public Investment

Step 4: Structure for Private Investment (DTPP)

Step 5: Good Market Timing (or patience)

Step 6: Implement, Listen, Improve & Tweak (while sticking to the vision)

Balanced Building Caps in Plan/EIR

2,500 Residential
Units (15%
affordable)

500,000 sq. ft.
Office Space

200 Hotel Rooms

100,000 sq. ft.
Retail Space

Downtown Redwood City Housing Unit Production (Post DTPP)

