



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

New Planning Code Summary: Executive Directive Process Improvements Ordinance

Amended Sections:	206.4, 309, 315; 202.5, 302, 303, 303.1, 305.1, 306.3, 306.7, 306.8, 306.9, 311, 317, 329, 330.7, 1006.3, 1111.4; 1005, 1111.1, 1111.2
New Sections:	315.1; 333
Deleted Sections:	328; 306.10, 312
Case Number:	2018-004633PCA
Board File/Enactment #:	180423/179-18
Sponsored by:	Mayor Breed
Effective Date:	August 26, 2018

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The Ordinance amends the Planning Code to streamline review of 100% affordable housing projects, eliminate duplicative review processes for most downtown residential projects in C-3 districts, consolidate and modernize notification requirements and procedures, and provide for expedited review of minor alterations to historical landmarks and in conservation districts.

The Way It Was:

A. Review of 100% Affordable Housing Projects and Downtown Residential Projects

1. Planning Code Section 315 allowed for administrative approval of 100% affordable housing projects (not seeking a density bonus) with limited exceptions to Planning Code requirements, and subject to Discretionary Review.
2. 100% Affordable Housing Bonus Program projects per Section 206.4 were eligible for certain density bonuses and modifications from Planning Code requirements. Bonus projects required a Planning Commission design review hearing per Section 328.
3. Large residential projects located in C-3 districts and subject to Section 309 review were eligible for certain exceptions to Planning Code requirements that could be granted by the Planning Commission for large projects, or administratively for small projects. Other commonly sought exceptions could only be granted through a separate Variance application.

B. Notification Requirements and Procedures

1. Planning Code Section 311 and 312 established notification requirements for certain Building Permit Applications under Planning Department review in Residential districts, and Commercial and Mixed-Use districts, respectively, and for Cannabis Retail and Formula Retail permits in all districts.
2. Notification requirements for projects that require a hearing before the Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, or Zoning Administrator were established in over a dozen sections of the Planning Code, and varied substantially depending on the type of review.

C. Minor Alterations to Historic Structures

Permits for certain minor and routine scopes of work could be approved administratively with an Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness or Minor Permit to Alter under Sections 1005 and 1111 of the Planning Code. However, these alterations were required to be held for an appeal period by the Department prior to approval, making them ineligible for same-day approval at the Planning Information Center counter. Instead, these projects had to enter the Department's permit review queue.

The Way It Is Now:

A. Review of 100% Affordable Housing Projects and Downtown Residential Projects

1. Planning Code Section 315 allows for administrative approval of 100% affordable housing projects (not seeking a density bonus) with exceptions that could otherwise be granted to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) under Section 304 irrespective of the size or location of the project and with the findings as required by Section 303(c). These projects are not subject to Discretionary Review.
2. 100% Affordable Housing Bonus Program projects are eligible for the same specific density bonuses and modifications from Planning Code requirements allowed under Section 206.4. Bonus projects can now be approved administratively with no Planning Commission hearing, and are not subject to Discretionary Review.
3. Large residential projects located in C-3 districts and subject to Section 309 review remain eligible for certain exceptions to Planning Code requirements, with additional exceptions permitted to the useable open space requirements of Section 135, and dwelling unit exposure requirements of Section 140. These exceptions may be granted by the Planning Commission for large projects, or administratively for small projects, without the need for a separate Variance application.

B. Notification Requirements and Procedures

Note: The amendments contained in Section 4 of the Ordinance, regarding notification requirements and procedures as summarized below, have an operative date of **January 1, 2019**.

1. Planning Code Section 312 is deleted, and Section 311 is amended to establish consistent notification requirements for certain Building Permit Applications under Planning Department review in all districts where notification is required. The notification period for mailed and posted notice remains 30 days, the mailing radius for owners and occupants remains 150 feet (except for Sutro Tower, which remains at 1,000 feet), and required mailing materials are generally unchanged, with additional requirements for multilingual content.
2. A new Planning Code Section 333 establishes consistent notification requirements for most hearings that require notification, with limited exceptions. For most hearings, newspaper notice is no longer required and is replaced by an online notice, the notification period for mailed, posted, and online notice is 20 days, the mailing radius is 150 feet for owners and occupants, and the required notification materials are at the discretion of the Department and Planning Commission, with certain minimum requirements.

C. Minor Alterations to Historic Structures

Section 1005 of the Planning Code is amended to exempt the following minor scopes of work from the requirement to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness, provided that the alterations conform to the standards and guidelines as provided for in Section 1006.6: (1) alterations to landings or installation of power-assist operators for accessible entrances, (2) to install business signs or awnings, (3) to install non-visible rooftop appurtenances, (4) to install non-visible, low-profile skylights, (5) to install a City-sponsored Landmark plaque.

Section 1111.1 of the Planning Code is be amended to exempt the following scopes from the requirement to obtain a Minor Permit to Alter, provided that the alterations conform to the standards and guidelines as provided for in Section 1111.6: (1) alterations to landings or installation of power-assist operators for accessible entrances, (2) to install business signs or awnings, (3) to install non-visible rooftop appurtenances.

Permits for these scopes of work are eligible for same-day administrative approval by Preservation staff without requiring Historic Preservation Commission approval.

Link to Signed Legislation:

<https://sfgov.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6401419&GUID=7493EB23-B5CE-44EE-ACAC-3461C96504F0>