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December 1, 2017

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

Dear Mayor Lee:

Pursuant to Executive Directive 17-02, please find the attached joint Planning Department and Department of Building Inspection plan to allow and encourage parallel processing of housing development applications.

Once finalized, our respective departmental staffs will make this plan easily available on our web sites, and will take all necessary steps to encourage proposed housing development project sponsors to take full advantage of the more rapid review and approval process available through this voluntary parallel processing plan option.

Please contact us directly with any questions.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

John Rahaim, Director
San Francisco Planning Department

Tom Hui, S.E., C.B.O., and Director
Department of Building Inspection

Attachment

cc: Jason Elliott, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
        Ken Rich, Director of Development, Mayor's Office
        Jeff Buckley, Senior Advisor, Mayor's Office
        Sarah Dennis-Phillips, Office of Economic & Workforce Development

City & County of San Francisco Parallel Processing Program

A Joint Initiative of the Planning Department and the Department of Building Inspection

In response to Mayor Edwin M. Lee's Executive Directive 17-02, the Planning Department and the Department of Building Inspection ("DBI") a voluntary Parallel Processing Program focused on those Housing Projects defined in Executive Directive 17-02. This program expands on current parallel processing options, is offered at no additional cost, and is intended to accelerate housing production in San Francisco.

What is Parallel Processing?

Parallel Processing is the simultaneous review of a development project by staff at both DBI and the Planning Department. This approach typically involves DBI's review of a site or building permit application for a given project at the same time that the Planning Department reviews the project's entitlement application(s), analyzes potential environmental impacts pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), or completes required neighborhood notification.

Why use Parallel Processing?

Through Parallel Processing, Project Sponsors can potentially save months of review time compared to conventional serial processing, provided that the project does not substantially change once Parallel Processing has begun. Essentially, this process enables both the Planning Department and DBI to identify project deficiencies simultaneously. While Planning Department approval will continue to be required prior to permit issuance, through Parallel Processing, in some cases permit issuance by DBI may be possible soon after Planning Department approval.

Are there risks associated with Parallel Processing?

While the provisions of this Program are intended to mitigate risks to the maximum extent possible, project sponsors who choose to enroll projects in the Parallel Processing Program are advised that potential downsides exist. Specifically, revisions to an element of the project required by one agency (e.g. the Planning Department) may need to be re-reviewed by the other (e.g. DBI), despite that element having been previously reviewed. This not only consumes additional time, but creates a risk of a circular review process when dealing with conflicting Building and Planning Code provisions.

Are the standards of review used in Parallel Processing any different?

No. The standard of review (e.g. Planning Code provisions, Planning Commission policies, CEQA) is unchanged. Similarly, Building Code requirements are unchanged. This program changes only process, streamlining the permitting process where possible in order it to increase its efficiency and to reduce the time required to permit issuance.

This joint DBI-Planning Parallel Processing Program plan is divided into two sections. Section 1 outlines the criteria for enrollment in the program, while Section 2 details applicable procedures. The overall

Program along with the specific provision contained therein will be evaluated and amended as appropriate by DBI, the Planning Department, and the Office of Economic and Workforce Development on a quarterly basis.

SECTION 1: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for parallel processing, a project must meet the following criteria:

- ☐ **Number of units.** The development must include either (1) 50 or more net new dwelling units with no non-residential uses excepting ancillary ground floor uses, or (2) 250 or more new units along with other, non-residential uses.

- ☐ **Height.** The development must be less than 240 feet in height. Projects over 240 feet in height require third-party peer review, which adds complexity that is not conducive to Parallel Processing.

- ☐ **New construction.** The development must be new construction and not an alteration.

- ☐ **Access to public right of way.** The development must not be landlocked and have legal access to existing public rights-of-way.

- ☐ **Subdivisions & Mergers.** The development may include a lot merger or a new construction condominium application; however, it may not include any land subdivision application.

SECTION 2: PROCEDURES

Affidavit and Statement of Eligibility

As a voluntary program, Project Sponsors will be assuming some risk if plans need to be modified during the review process. Sponsors are required to complete an affidavit declaring they have chosen to enter into the Parallel Processing Program and are aware that revisions required by one agency may precipitate revisions from the other agency and that he or she is responsible for any associated fees that may be required due to DBI back-check reviews or additional Planning Department review costs.

Parallel Processing Commencement and Re-Routing Checklist

The benefits of Parallel Processing are realized most fully when those building features most critical to each DBI and the Planning Department have been fully vetted and are no longer subject to change. Bearing this in mind, the Planning Department has developed a list of project features that, if changed during the parallel review process, may result in additional review by Planning staff and potentially lead to increased timelines, and costs, for review. Similarly, the Planning Department will not commence Parallel Processing for any application until it is satisfied that they are likely to remain unchanged for the remainder of the review process. These features include but are not limited to the number of dwelling units, the building's exterior dimensions, ground floor use types, and the area of commercial square footage. Similarly, DBI has created a checklist of project features that if changed during the Planning Department review stage would require re-review by DBI.

Application Submittal

Typically, Planning Department review begins prior to DBI review. If Planning Department staff receives a permit application or Development Application and the Project Sponsor elects to proceed with parallel processing, the following will occur:

1. The Project Sponsor completes the Affidavit and Statement of Eligibility stating he or she is aware of the potential risks of the Program.

2. The Project Sponsor submits a building or site permit (if not already submitted) along with three sets of plans (two for DBI and one for Planning), including the Affidavit and Statement of Eligibility printed on the cover sheet.

3. Both Planning Department staff and DBI staff commence review.

4. Any revisions submitted will have a revision scope printed on the cover sheet of the submittal. Revisions required by one agency will be distributed to the other through the conventional routing process.

Parallel Processing Coordinator

If a Project Sponsor elects to enter into the Parallel Processing Program, he or she will provide to both agencies the name of a Parallel Processing Coordinator who will serve as the primary point of contact for the project. This contact information for the coordinator will be included in the Affidavit and Statement of Eligibility and is essential to ensure effective communications and responsiveness.

Materials, Windows and Addenda. While both agencies encourage early selection of materials, window treatment, and landscaping, they may nonetheless be selected later in the review process. In addition, the Parallel Processing Program does not affect the typical addenda process and these exterior materials are stipulated in the architectural addenda.

If you have questions about this new joint Planning-DBI Parallel Processing Plan, please contact James Zahn at DBI, Tel. 415/558-6152, and/or Kate Conner at Planning, Tel. 415/575-6914.