# Planning Department Workflow for Typical Projects

*That Require Intake, Neighborhood Notice, Entitlements and/or California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review*

San Francisco Planning

## PROJECT INTAKE PHASE

**Project Review Meeting (optional)**

**Sponsor**

Submits Project ("PRJ") Application with materials outlined in PRJ checklist[1]

**Current Planning (CP) Intake Team**

**Determines application completeness within 30 days of submittal[2]**

- CP's clerical staff conducts application review to verify all materials were submitted
- Environmental Planning's (EP) Intake Team conducts CEQA screening

*Application deemed incomplete*

**CP's Intake Team**

**Sends Incomplete Application Notice (IAN) to sponsor[2]**

- Notice identifies missing materials

**Sponsor**

Submits additional materials to reach "Complete Application" status

*Application deemed complete*

**CP's Intake Team**

**Issues Complete Application Notice (CAN) letter to sponsor within 30 days of application submittal or re-submittal, if incomplete[2]**

- Permit and Project Tracking System (PPTS) workflow status switches from "Submitted" to "Accepted"
- Notice includes preliminary determination of level of CEQA review
- Fees requested based on CEQA document type indicated through prelimnary screening.
- CP planners are assigned
- EP planners are assigned if one or more CEQA topics require further analysis

## PLAN CHECK LETTER PHASE

**CP (and EP, if needed)**

**Draft Plan Check Letter (PCL) and start analysis within 30 days of CAN**

- CP planner conducts detailed plan check to determine code-compliance, leads PCL process
- EP planner reviews environmental documents for substantive accuracy, initiates CEQA analysis, identifies additional information needed to complete CEQA review and confirms preliminary determination of level of CEQA review within 30 days of CAN
- CP planner issues PCL within 30 days of CAN

*Project not code-compliant and/or additional EP materials required*

**CP's Intake Team (and EP, if needed)**

**CP's case planner sends PCL** to sponsor identifying requirements to get project to "code-compliant" status, enters PCL issuance date in PPTS.

**EP planner identifies additional information or technical studies** needed to complete the CEQA analysis.

**Sponsor**

Revises project to reach code-compliant status; provides additional materials to EP if needed

*Project is code-compliant and no additional EP materials required*

**CP (and EP, if needed)**

Once project is determined to be code-compliant, **CP planner adds this date as an "event" to PPTS and notifies sponsor.**

- CP planner coordinates with EP planner to confirm code compliant status
- EP planner continues CEQA analysis

## PROJECT ANALYSIS AND APPROVAL PHASE

*Planning Commission approval hearing required*

**CP (and EP, if needed)**

**Complete Analysis**

- CP drafts staff report (if needed), distributes hearing notification
- EP completes CEQA review, publishes and distributes CEQA documents (if exemption, within 30 days of complete application determination).

*CPC approval hearing not required*

**Environmental Review Officer Hearing**

**to adopt Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for CEQA documents without a hearing only (if needed)**

One week after CEQA document publication

**CP**

**Publishes staff report and hearing notices.**

**Planning Commission Hearing**

**to adopt/certify CEQA document and to approve project[3]**

**CP**

**Publishes Planning Approval Letter (PAL) within 30 days of CEQA exemption determination[3]**

**EP**

**Publishes Pre-Construction Environmental Compliance (PEC) letter** (if applicable) after project sponsor provides documentation of compliance with pre-construction environmental requirements (from MMRP or Clean Construction commitment)

## Key

- Project review meeting
- Planning document issued
- Planning analysis
- Project sponsor deliverable
- Hearing
- Project approval

## Relevant Permit Streamlining Act (PSA) and Housing Accountability Act (HAA) Timelines

1. **Comprehensive checklist of all submittal materials required is available to sponsor (Cal. Gov. Code § 65940).**
2. **Determination whether application is complete or not must occur within 30 days of application submittal (Cal. Gov. Code § 65943).**
3. **If a project is determined to be exempt from CEQA, it must be approved within 60 days (at a hearing or through a Project Approval Letter) [Cal. Gov. Code § 65950(a)(5)]; other CEQA document timelines as indicated in § 65950.**

   Despite the 60-day timeline noted above, San Francisco Planning applies a 30-day timeline for all projects subject to exemptions (from CEQA exemption completion to approval).

## PRJ Application Types

**Residential Project:** small-scale residential projects (6 Dwelling Units or less), decks, remodels, additional, facade alterations, etc.

**Commercial Project:** small-scale commercial-only projects

**Mixed-Use Project:** all other projects (more than 6 Dwelling Units, buildings over 10,000 sf, etc.)