

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 9, 2020
To: Steve Hansen, Councilmember, District 4
From: Tom Pace, Planning Director

SUBJECT: Sacramento, A Pro-Housing Community

As we discussed, I am writing to you to describe the ways the City of Sacramento is a Pro-Housing Community. Over the last ten years, the City has made numerous regulatory improvements to facilitate housing production. First, and foremost, Sacramento allows housing as a permitted use by right in all our residential and commercial zones. We also allow housing in certain industrial areas near transit stations. Below, I describe additional measures we have taken and are planning to take that will further streamline the planning process for housing development. Links to staff reports have been included for many of the housing streamlining actions to provide further detail.

De-parking our Housing Crisis

- Eliminated or reduced minimum parking requirements for housing based on general plan land use designation. Allowed remaining parking requirements to be reduced administratively with additional bike parking, carshare, transportation demand management, etc. ([2012](#)).
 - Eliminated parking for mixed-use projects on small sites of 6,400 square feet or less
 - Eliminated parking for residential adaptive re-use of historic commercial structures
- Eliminated minimum parking requirements within ¼ mile of a light rail station and reduced minimum parking requirements by 50% within ½ mile of a light rail station ([2018](#))

Simplified, Reduced, or Deferred fees

- Allowed city impact fees to be deferred until final inspection ([2017](#))
- Consolidated most city impact fees under one ordinance in order to consistently and predictably administer impact fees. Fees were reduced in the urban core, near transit stations and in areas with weaker housing markets ([2017](#)).
- Eliminated city impact fees for regulated affordable housing ([2018](#))

CEQA and Permit Streamlining

- Implemented SB 375 via the 2009 General Plan Update that allows streamlined CEQA review for projects in Transit Priority Areas that are consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2009)
- Created staff-level site plan and design review procedure so that most housing projects can be approved without requiring Commission-level review or a public hearing ([2013](#))
- Assigned project managers as a single point of contact for projects with a construction valuation of over \$1 million to help guide developers through the building permit process (2015)
- Adopted the Central City Specific Plan, which has an EIR that allows housing to utilize various

statutory exemptions from CEQA. The plan also has an infrastructure finance plan to help ensure adequate infrastructure for future housing development ([2018](#)).

Housing By-Right

- Permitted multi-unit housing without a conditional use permit in commercial zones ([2013](#))
- Increased the maximum allowable size of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) from 850 square feet to 1200 square feet (2013). Reduced rear yard and side yard setbacks for accessory dwelling units to five feet and removed requirement that the design of the accessory dwelling unit reflect the primary home ([2018](#)).

Current and Upcoming Streamlining Actions

- Substantial ADU streamlining and incentives starting in 2019 including:
 - Allowing an additional ADU to a site with an existing home and secondary dwelling unit (or duplex) for a total of three units
 - Allowing tiny homes on wheels as an ADU
 - Developing a bridge loan opportunity for homes that are unable to utilize equity to finance the construction of an ADU
 - Incentivizing ADUs as options for Housing Choice Voucher holders
 - Developing pre-approved ADU plans
 - Developing and implement an AUD outreach and education plan
- Allowing triplexes/fourplexes in single-family zones, effectively eliminating single family zoning as a barrier to lower-density multifamily development, as a part of the General Plan Update (2021 adoption)
- Catalytic Housing Bond framework approved by City Council in June 2019, is anticipated to generate \$100 for affordable housing gap financing (2019-2021)
- Housing Streamlining Menu of Options ([see pages 9-17](#)): Additional neighborhood planning for housing, permit process streamlining, zoning improvements, TOD planning, public-private partnerships, funding/financing measures, infrastructure planning, and CEQA streamlining (2019-2020)