



# PLANNING COMMISSION

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Board of Supervisors Chambers  
400 County Center, Redwood City

## ITEM #3

Owner: ..... **N/A**  
Applicant: ..... **County Planning and Building Department**  
File Number: .... **N/A**  
Location: ..... **Countywide**  
APN: ..... **N/A**

Project Description:  
**A briefing on Senate Bill 9 (SB 9), a new state law effective January 1, 2022, which imposes new requirements and limitations on the County's consideration and approval of subdivisions and residential development on parcels zoned for single-family residential use**



## **SB 9: URBAN LOT SPLITS AND TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENT**

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- Overview of SB 9
- Applicable Areas
- Two-Unit Developments
- Urban Lot Splits (subdivisions)
- Urban Lot Splits AND Two-Unit Developments
- CEQA Applicability
- Coastal Zone Applicability
- Summary
- Next Steps



## OVERVIEW

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Senate Bill 9, effective January 1, 2022

- Amends California Planning Law to require ministerial approval of two-unit developments on qualifying single-family parcels
- Amends Subdivision Map Act to require ministerial approval of certain subdivisions (“urban lot splits”) on qualifying single-family parcels
  - Also extends expiration period of tentative subdivision maps from 12 to 24 months



## APPLICABLE AREAS

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- SB 9 applies in all single-family zoning districts within a designated “urban area” or “urban cluster,” as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau
  - Includes essentially all unincorporated County east of Hwy 280, and the urban Midcoast
  - Relevant zoning districts are R-1, RH, RE, and R-1/CCP
- However, applicability in the Coastal Zone is very limited



## TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENT

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- Ministerial approval of two-unit developments on eligible single-family parcels
- Two-unit development:
  - Proposed development can result in no more than two new units
  - Development can be one additional unit on parcels with one existing unit (appears to include parcels w/ primary residence and existing ADU)



## **TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENT – ELIGIBLE PARCELS**

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- Single-family zoning, Urbanized Area or Cluster
- Project site is not a historic landmark, or in a historic district
- Project site does not contain prime agricultural land, various sensitive habitats, or be subject to a conservation easement
- Project would not alter or demolish deed-restricted affordable housing, rent controlled housing, housing withdrawn from the rental market in the last 15 years, or housing occupied by a tenant in the past 3 years



## TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENT –STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

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- Projects remain subject to zoning, subdivision, and design standards, but only if standards are objective (no subjective judgement)
- Standards may not physically preclude construction of two units of at least 800 square feet
  - However, rear and side setbacks can be required to be 4 feet, even if they preclude two 800 sq. ft. units
- No setbacks are required if existing structure is rebuilt in same location



## **TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENT –STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS**

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- Can require only one parking space per unit
- No parking required if project is within a half-mile walking distance of high-quality transit corridor or major transit stop, or one block of car share vehicle location
- Proposed units cannot be used for short-term (less than 30 day) rental
- Connected units cannot be prohibited if they comply with building code





## **TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENT – STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS**

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- No hearings; review and approval at staff level only
- Project may be denied if building official makes written finding, based on preponderance of the evidence, that it would have specific, adverse impact on public health and safety or physical environment and there is no feasible method to mitigate or avoid the impact.



## URBAN LOT SPLITS

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Ministerial approval of subdivisions of one lot into two lots, meeting certain requirements

Eligible parcels same as two-unit development:

- Single-family zoning, Urbanized Area or Cluster
- Not a historic landmark, or in historic district
- Does not contain prime ag land, sensitive habitats, or subject to conservation easement
- Would not alter or demolish deed-restricted affordable housing, rent controlled housing, housing withdrawn from the rental market in the last 15 years, or housing occupied by a tenant in the past 3 years



## URBAN LOT SPLITS – STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

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- Split must result in two roughly equal lots (60-40 maximum differential)
- Each resulting lot must be at least 1,200 square feet
- Lot to be split cannot have been created through prior SB 9 lot split (lots can only be split via SB 9 once)
- Neither the owner nor “any person acting in concert with the owner” can have previously subdivided an adjacent parcel through an SB 9 lot split
  - (intended to preclude large-scale splits by professional developers)



## URBAN LOT SPLITS – STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

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- Units created on new lots may be used for residential purposes only
- Applicant must sign affidavit stating that applicant “intends to occupy” one of the resulting housing units as principal residence for at least 3 years from date of approval of the lot split, unless applicant land trust or qualified non-profit
  - (also intended to preclude large-scale professional development)
- No other owner occupancy requirements
- Resulting units cannot be used for short-term (less than 30 day) rental



## URBAN LOT SPLITS – STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

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- Can require only one parking space per unit
- No parking required if project is within a half-mile walking distance of high-quality transit corridor or major transit stop, or one block of car share vehicle location



## URBAN LOT SPLITS – STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

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- Projects on split lots remain subject to zoning, subdivision, and design standards, but only objective standards
- No hearings; review and approval at staff level only
- Project may be denied if building official makes written finding, based on preponderance of the evidence, that it would have specific, adverse impact on public health and safety or physical environment and there is no feasible method to mitigate or avoid the impact.



## URBAN LOT SPLITS AND TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENT

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- Parcels created through SB 9 lot splits cannot be split again using SB 9
- HOWEVER, parcels created by urban lot split can subsequently be developed with two-unit development per SB 9
- Potentially, one single-family residential parcel can result in four units
  - Local jurisdiction are not required to permit more than two units max on parcels using both urban lot split and two-unit development provisions, including ADUs and JADUs



## CEQA APPLICABILITY

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- Both urban lot splits and two-unit developments are ministerial, and exempt from CEQA
- If County adopts an ordinance implementing SB 9, adoption is also exempt from CEQA





## COASTAL ZONE APPLICABILITY

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- SB 9 eliminates any requirement for County to hold public hearings for Coastal Development permits, but does not prohibit such hearings
- Apparently only change applicable in the Coastal Zone



## SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS

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- Outside Coastal Zone, Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will not review SB 9 subdivisions or developments
- Design review will be limited to a subset of existing standards, unless/until updated
- In the Coastal Zone, no current change
- Number of potential projects and impacts is unclear



## NEXT STEPS

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- SB 9 Mapping Tool
- Applicant Checklist
- Website Guidance
- County can adopt implementing ordinance, but is not required
  - Will evaluate impacts to determine need



# QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



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