

REVISED LEGISLATIVE DIGEST
(Amended in Committee, 9/19/2022)

[Planning Code; Zoning Map - Rezoning Residential Districts]

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to rezone all Residential, One Family (RH-1) zoning districts, except for Residential, One Family, Detached (RH-1(D)) districts, to Residential, Two Family (RH-2) zoning districts; to rezone the RH-1(D) districts to a new class of residential district called Residential, Two Family, Detached (RH-2(D)) districts; affirming the Planning Department’s determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and making findings of consistency with the General Plan and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1, and findings of public necessity, convenience, and welfare under Planning Code, Section 302.

Existing Law

The Planning Code sets forth different zoning districts throughout the City, where different uses are permitted, conditionally permitted, or prohibited, and where various controls (such as height, bulk, setbacks, etc.) apply. Residential, House (RH) districts are “intended to recognize, protect, conserve and enhance areas characterized by dwellings in the form of houses, usually with one, two or three units with separate entrances, and limited scale in terms of building width and height. Such areas tend to have similarity of building styles and predominantly contain large units suitable for family occupancy, considerable open space, and limited nonresidential uses.” (Planning Code Section 209.1.) The RH districts consist of five separate classes of districts, depending on the number of units permitted in each:

- RH-1(D) Districts: One-Family (Detached Dwellings); RH-1 Districts: One-Family; and RH-1(S) Districts: One-Family with Minor Second Unit, which are generally characterized by single-family houses;
- RH-2 Districts: Two-Family, which generally consist of one-family and two-family houses;
- RH-3 Districts: Three-Family, in which structures with three units are common in addition to one-family and two-family houses.

Amendments to Current Law

This ordinance amends the Planning Code and the Zoning Map to rezone all RH-1 districts to RH-2, and all RH-1(D) districts to RH-2(D).

The ordinance contains an operative date provision that states that the ordinance shall become operative on the later of (1) its effective date or (2) the effective date of the ordinance in Board of Supervisors File No. 210866.

Background Information

The ordinance contains ample findings setting forth the need to promote housing development in San Francisco. It states that the City faces a severe crisis of housing affordability and availability, characterized by dramatic increases in rent and home sale prices over recent years and historic underproduction of new housing units across income levels, particularly in the City's western neighborhoods and RH zoning districts. It further explains that adopting policies that promote construction of small multifamily buildings in low density areas to support "missing middle" housing opportunities was one of the recommendations of the City's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force.

This ordinance is the result of amendments made at the Land Use and Transportation Committee to the ordinance in Board File No. 210866, version 5. At that hearing, that ordinance was duplicated and amended. This ordinance is the duplicated ordinance, and is now in Board File No. 220997. The 9/12/22 amendments included:

- Removal of all amendments in Board File 210866 related to the density exception for RH lots, except for the amendments to rezone RH-1 lots to RH-2, and RH-1(D) lots to RH-2(D).

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