

PLANNING & LAND USE MANAGEMENT  
MOTION

**Equitable Affordable Housing Preservation Overlay Zones (EPOZ)**

Today, affordable housing stock is consistently at risk across the city, in particular in gentrifying areas where long time middle and low income residents find themselves pushed out to make way for new, unaffordable housing. To preserve these communities, the City should pursue a restorative planning process and deliberately protect vulnerable neighborhoods.

The City has zoning and plan “overlays” that tailor land use regulations for specific areas to specialized categories of need. Examples of existing overlays include Historic Preservation (HPOZs), Pedestrian/Neighborhood Orientation, Streetscapes and Sign Districts. An Affordable Equitable Housing Protection Overlay Program & Zone (“AEPOZ”) is one tool which could be used in the work ahead.

Creation of AEPOZ areas could protect at-risk communities, particularly those that were actively harmed under the racist practices of “redlining.” The City, State, and Nation all participated in this practice which led to neighborhoods that were segregated and underinvested in. The City cannot turn back the clock to write this wrong; however, the City can put measures in place to prevent a cycle of displacement from harming these communities further.

The AEPOZ process should be designed to proactively return local control to disenfranchised communities and include specific and meaningful controls over development, such as expanded review of Ellis Act applications, demolition and permits at the locations of rent controlled housing sites, increased public noticing and participatory review tools. Additionally discretionary projects or ordinance changes could require specific findings ensuring that proposed regulations and projects do not further exacerbate eviction and gentrification of local businesses and housing, add to long running health impacts, create environmental injustice or further open space disparities. Mandating a truly collaborative and open public process that recognizes the community as a source of expertise in development of these tools is as crucial as the development of the tool themselves.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of City Planning prepare and present an ordinance in line with the work on updating the City’s Housing Element to establish a Affordable Equitable Housing Protection Overlay Program & Zone (“AEPOZ”), to create a toolkit for historically disinvested communities, particularly those experiencing displacement and gentrification, that will result in increased community ownership of housing and businesses, aggressive preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing, new access to open space, increased community control over space, and directly counter past injustices created by planning practices, so as to offer excluded populations their overdue share of the California Dream.

PRESENTED BY:

  
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