

discrimination against multi-family housing.

California and Federal Fair Housing Laws. These laws prohibit discrimination by local government and individuals based on race, color, religion, sex, familial status, marital status, national origin, ancestry or mental or physical disability. The California Fair Employment and Housing Act (Gov. Code Sec. 12900 et seq.) expressly prohibits discrimination through public or private land use practices and decisions that make housing opportunities unavailable. Similarly, the federal Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 3601 et seq., or "Title VIII") has been held to prohibit public and private land use practices and decisions that have a disparate impact on the protected groups. The federal Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 requires local governments considering housing projects for the disabled to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies and practices if necessary to afford disabled persons equal opportunity for housing (42 U.S.C. Sec. 3604(f)(3)(B)).

Water/Sewer Service (Gov Code Sec. 65589.7). Local water and sewer districts must grant priority for service hook-ups to projects that help meet the community's fair share housing need.

Density Bonus Law (Gov Code Sec. 65915-16). Local governments must grant projects with a prescribed minimum percentage of affordable units up to a 35% increase in density and up to 3 incentives. An incentive can include a reduction in development, parking or design standards,

modification of zoning requirements or direct financial aid. See our Fact Sheet on Density Bonuses for additional detail on new laws.

Permit Streamlining Act (Gov Code Sec. 65920 et seq.) This law requires localities to publish a description of the information that project applicants must file and mandates a time-line for making a decision on the application. If the local government fails to act within the prescribed time limits, a development project is "deemed" approved. SB 948 (Alarcon) (Chapter 968, Statutes of 1999) reduced the time period for action on affordable housing applications from 180 days to 90 days.

Bonds/Attorney Fees in NIMBY Lawsuits. A court may require persons suing to halt affordable housing projects to post a bond (Code of Civil Procedure Sec. 529.2) and to pay attorney fees (Gov. Code Sec. 65914). SB 619 (Ducheny)(Chapter 793, Statutes of 2003) permits nonprofit project proponents to intervene and collect attorneys fees in such suits.

CEQA Exemption. In 2002, the Legislature replaced Pub Res Code Sec. 21080.14 (100 unit exemption for affordable housing in urbanized areas, provided the site is less than 5 acres, not a wildlife habitat and is assessed for toxic contaminants, etc) and Section 21080.10 (45 unit exemption for farmworker housing) with a new "infill" exemption that also combines the former exemptions. SB 1925 (Sher) enacted Pub Res Code Sections 21159.22-25, and provided additional quali-

cations for those exemptions in Sections 21159.20 and 21159.21. Importantly, SB 1925 eliminated the discretion of localities to deny the exemption based on "unusual circumstances".

Multi-Family Moratoria. In order to circumvent Anti-Nimby law, some communities have adopted moratoria on all multifamily housing. SB 1098 (Alarcon), (Chapter 939, Statutes of 2001) amended Gov Code Sec 65858 to prohibit the extension of a multifamily moratorium beyond 45 days unless the locality makes written findings that the development of multifamily housing would have a specific, adverse impact upon public health or safety.

Conditional Use Permits. Most commercial, industrial and single-family residential uses do not require a conditional use permit, but many communities require a conditional use permit for multifamily housing. SB 619 (Ducheny)(Chapter 793, Statutes of 2003) prohibits conditional use permits on multifamily housing developments that meet the CEQA affordable housing, farmworker or infill exemption, and on affordable multifamily housing with 100 or fewer units, a density of at least 12 units/acre, located on an infill site in an urbanized area, consistent with the zoning and general plan, and has a neg dec or mitigated neg dec. In 2005, SB 326 (Dunn) (Chapter 598, Statutes of 2005) expanded this law to apply to attached duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes as well as multifamily housing.