



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 15, 2017

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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

DBI ISSUES TALL BUILDINGS REPORT

**FIRST COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND SAFETY REGULATIONS
FOR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW TALL BUILDINGS**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – Today, the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) released a new report—the first of its kind—detailing the agency’s policies, procedures and safety regulations that monitor the construction of new tall buildings in San Francisco.

Titled “The Department of Building Inspection’s Tall Building Review Process,” the report was prepared in response to specific questions received by DBI Director Tom Hui, in a letter from Building Inspection Commission (BIC) President Angus McCarthy on December 6, 2016. A summary of the 75-page report was presented today by DBI Assistant Director Ronald Tom during the BIC’s regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

“It’s clear from this detailed and comprehensive report that even though tall buildings represent barely a sliver of total new buildings in San Francisco, we do have a scientifically sound and reasonable approach in place at DBI to ensure they are thoroughly reviewed at each stage of construction,” said Hui.

“DBI was one of the first building departments in the nation to codify its tall building detailed technical and approval process,” said McCarthy. “We continue to review and constantly take steps—as detailed in this report—to strengthen our requirements to ensure that tall buildings are as safely built as contemporary engineering permits.”

“This report makes clear that DBI has an excellent review process in place with respect to building safety issues in tall buildings,” said Hui, “a process we will continue to review, refine and improve on a regular basis.”

In addition to outlining the regulatory practices and review policies in place for the plan review, construction and inspection of new tall buildings, the report also describes the roles and responsibilities of DBI relative to the project sponsor and the sponsor’s chosen team of design professionals and hired special inspectors. As a regulatory agency, DBI does not propose building plans, make repairs or design buildings. Its staff of engineers, inspectors and permitting technicians works closely with the project sponsor and chosen design and engineering team to ensure that submitted plans and subsequent construction meet or exceed the minimum standards of the San Francisco Building Code, thus protecting life safety, health, property and welfare of the general public.

Though tall buildings remain rare in San Francisco—currently representing less than 1 percent of the more than 200,000 buildings in the City—advancements in construction materials and structural engineering, beginning in the early 2000s, have led to an increase in the number of proposed tall building projects reviewed by DBI. Between 2000 and 2016, DBI issued a total of 3,866 permits for new buildings; 15 of those total permits (0.4 percent) were for tall buildings.

A full copy of the report is available upon request.

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About the Department of Building Inspection

The Department of Building Inspection (DBI) oversees the effective, efficient, fair and safe enforcement of the City and County of San Francisco's building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, housing and disability access codes for San Francisco's more than 200,000 buildings. Please visit sfdbi.org for more information.