



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

DRAFT ACTION PLAN 2008-2010

JULY 17, 2008

SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT





Mission Statement

Collaboratively seek Department improvements that enhance the experience of working with the Department for the public, applicants and stakeholders, and for the Department staff through professional standards and staff development.



Process Improvements

- In February, the Commission was briefed on the Matrix consultant study
- The study focused on the following major issues:
 - Consistent interpretation and implementation of regulations
 - Clear communication of regulations, requirements, and process
 - Predictability of the process and results
 - Accountability for the quality, timeliness, and consistency of decision making
 - Responsive staff and service for customers



Process Improvements

- Staff working group established to identify recommendations most critical to address in the near term
- The working group considered:
 - The Matrix Report
 - The SPUR/AIA “Planning the City’s Future” Report
 - DBI’s Business Process Re-engineering Report
 - Staff input
- Held Stakeholder Meeting for initial feedback of areas of priority
- Held General Staff Meeting for broader staff input on priority areas



Process Improvements: Objectives

1. Improve staff effectiveness and morale by providing needed tools, systems, and structures
2. Provide more comprehensive, consistent, and timely review of projects
3. Recognize and support preservation of significant resources while improving the efficiency and predictability of the preservation program
4. Enable the Planning Commission to focus on higher-level policy issues
5. Improve the public experience of the Planning process through improved communication
6. Improve Department effectiveness by providing appropriate management structures and oversight



I

Improve staff effectiveness and morale by providing needed tools, systems, and structures

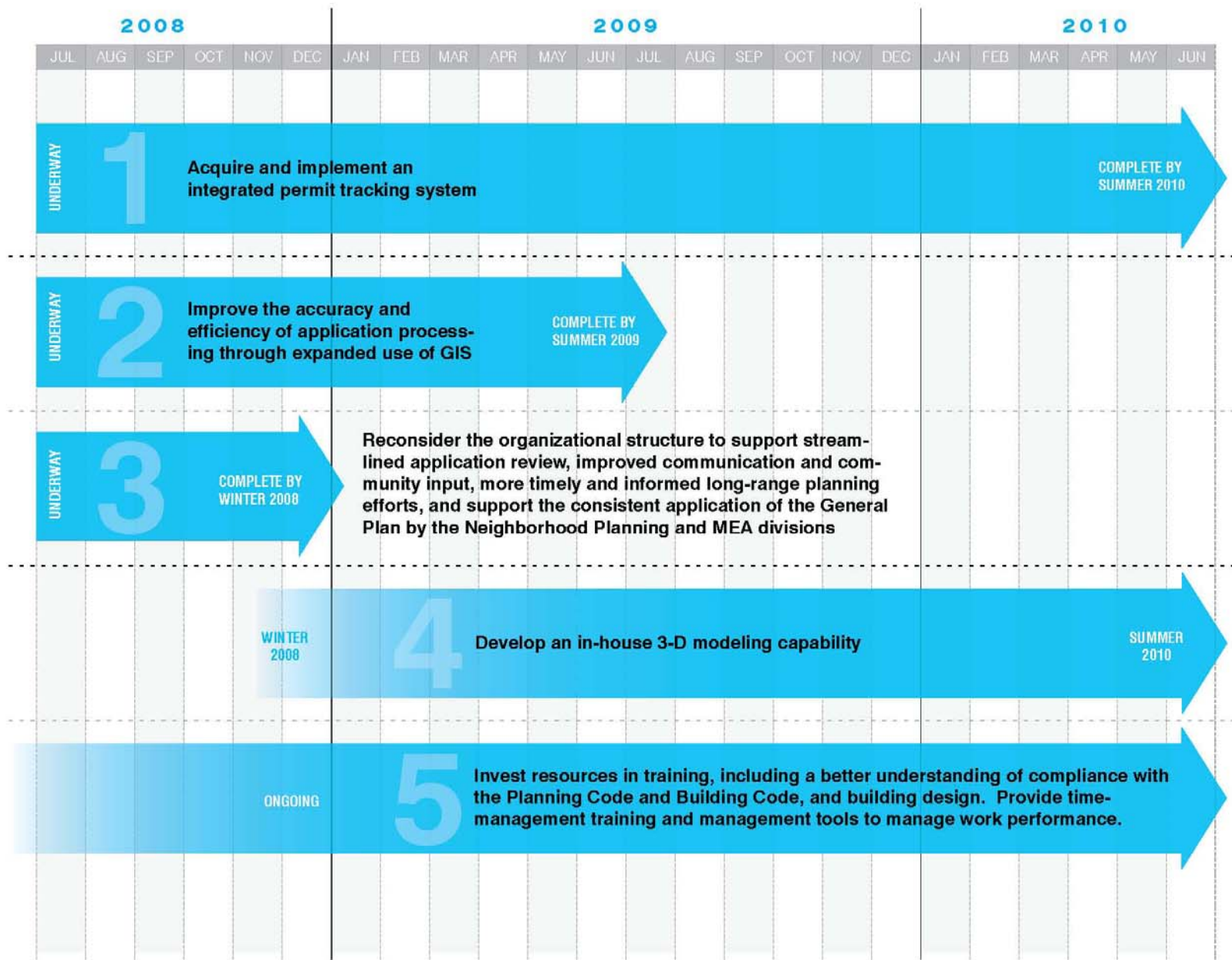
- Acquire and implement an **integrated permit tracking system**
Underway, to be completed Summer 2010
- Improve the accuracy and efficiency of application processing through expanded use of **GIS**
Underway, to be completed Summer 2009
- Reconsider the **organizational structure** to support streamlined application review, improved communication and community input, and more timely and informed long-range planning efforts, and support the consistent application of the General Plan by the Neighborhood Planning and Major Environmental Analysis divisions
Underway, to be completed Winter 2008



I

Improve staff effectiveness and morale by providing needed tools, systems, and structures

- Develop an in-house **3-D modeling** capability
To be completed by Summer 2010
- Invest resources in **training**, including a better understanding of compliance with the Planning Code and Building Code, and building design. Provide time-management training and management tools to manage work performance
Ongoing



I. STAFF SUPPORT

Improve staff effectiveness and morale by providing needed tools, systems, and structures



II

Provide more comprehensive, consistent, and timely review of projects

- Streamline the environmental review process
 - Implement a procedure for streamlining environmental review in neighborhood **plan areas**
Underway, to be completed Summer 2008
 - Codify common **mitigation measures** to ensure compliance and streamline review
Underway, to be completed Summer 2009
 - Review applications for environmental analysis upon **intake** and identify necessary special studies and level of review
Underway, to be completed Fall 2008



II

Provide more comprehensive, consistent, and timely review of projects

- Streamline the environmental review process
 - Transition to the use of an established **pool for consultant selection** for project applicants
Underway, to be completed Summer 2008
 - Modify procedures for simple categorical exemptions involving **historic resource review**
Underway, to be completed Summer 2008
 - Add planning staff to increase in-house resources for **transportation planning**
Underway, to be completed Fall 2008



II

Provide more comprehensive, consistent, and timely review of projects

- Establish a **single intake** application system to provide early and comprehensive information to applicants
 - Implement single intake for all Planning cases
To be completed Winter 2009
 - Implement an interdepartmental review committee for major projects
Underway, to be completed Fall 2008
- Establish a **case management** system to enhance timely application processing, including management of priority applications and including enhanced internal and external communication
To be completed Spring 2009



II

Provide more comprehensive, consistent, and timely review of projects

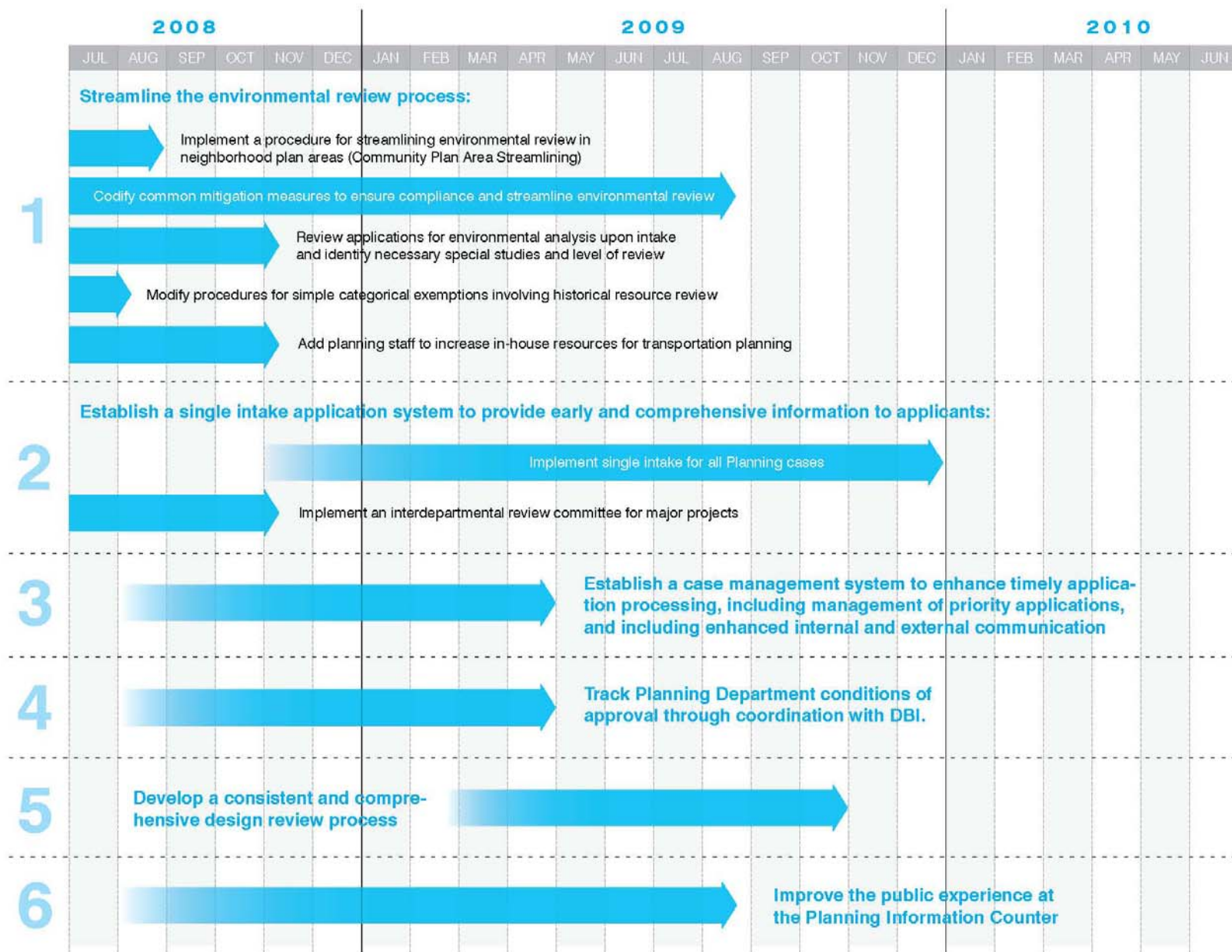
- Track Planning Department **conditions of approval** through coordination with DBI
To be completed Spring 2009
- Develop a consistent and comprehensive **design review** process
To be completed Fall 2009
- Improve the public experience at the **Planning Information Counter**
To be completed Summer 2009



III

Recognize and support preservation of significant resources while improving the efficiency and predictability of the preservation program

- Increase certainty and consistency in the **historic resource review** process
 - Streamline preservation review at the Planning Information Counter
To be completed Fall 2009
 - Modify procedures for simple categorical exemptions involving historic resource review
Underway, to be completed Summer 2008



II. REVIEW AND APPROVALS

Provide more comprehensive, consistent, and timely review of projects



IV

Enable the Planning Commission to focus on higher-level policy issues

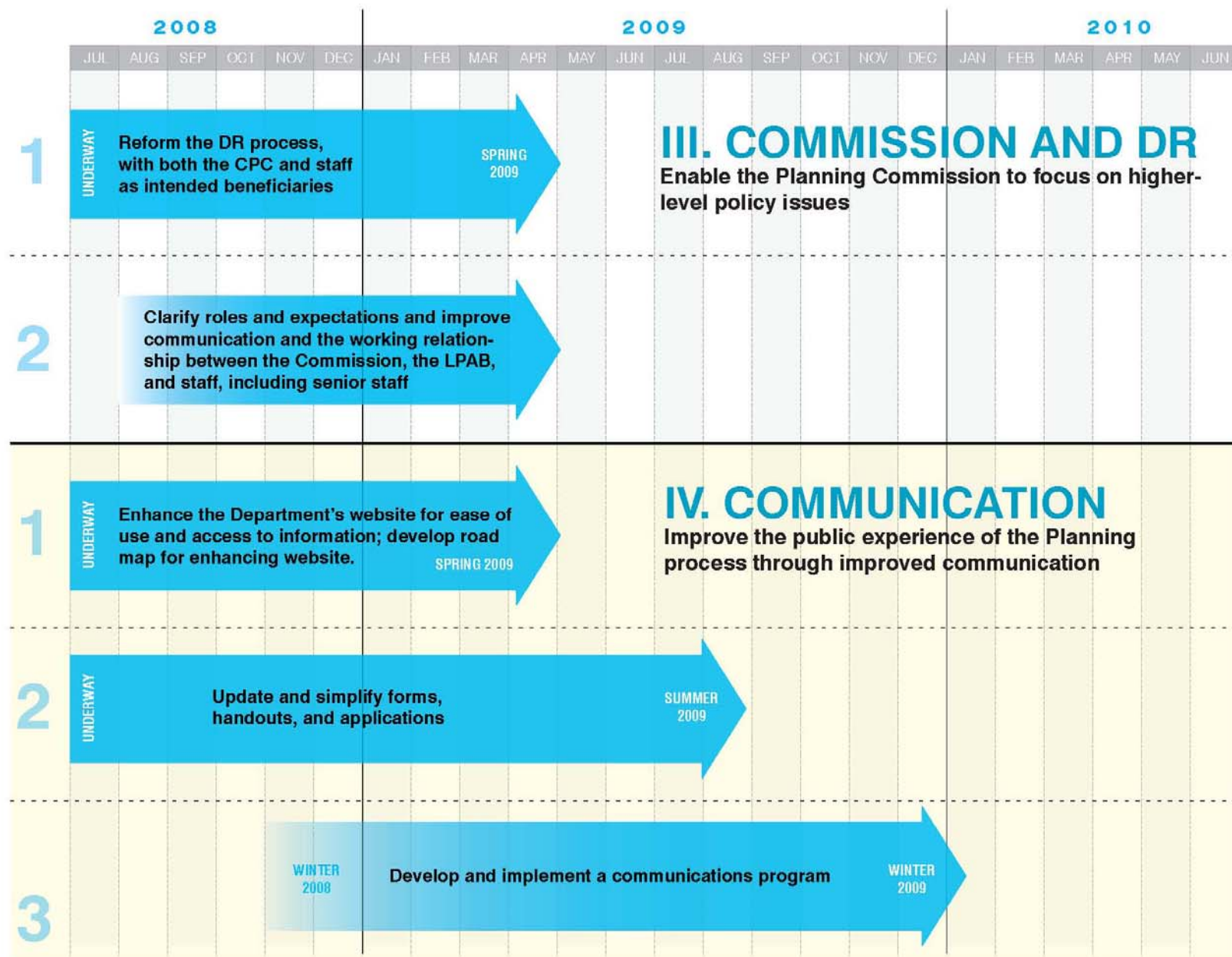
- Reform the **Discretionary Review Process**, with both the Planning Commission and staff as intended beneficiaries
Underway, to be completed Spring 2009
- Clarify **roles and expectations** and improve **communication** and the working relationship between the Planning Commission, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, and staff, including senior staff
To be completed Spring 2009



V

Improve the public experience of the Planning process through improved communication

- Enhance the Department's **website** for ease of use and access to information
Underway, to be completed Spring 2009
- Update and simplify **forms and handouts**
Underway, to be completed Spring 2009
- Develop and implement a **communications program**
To be completed Winter 2009

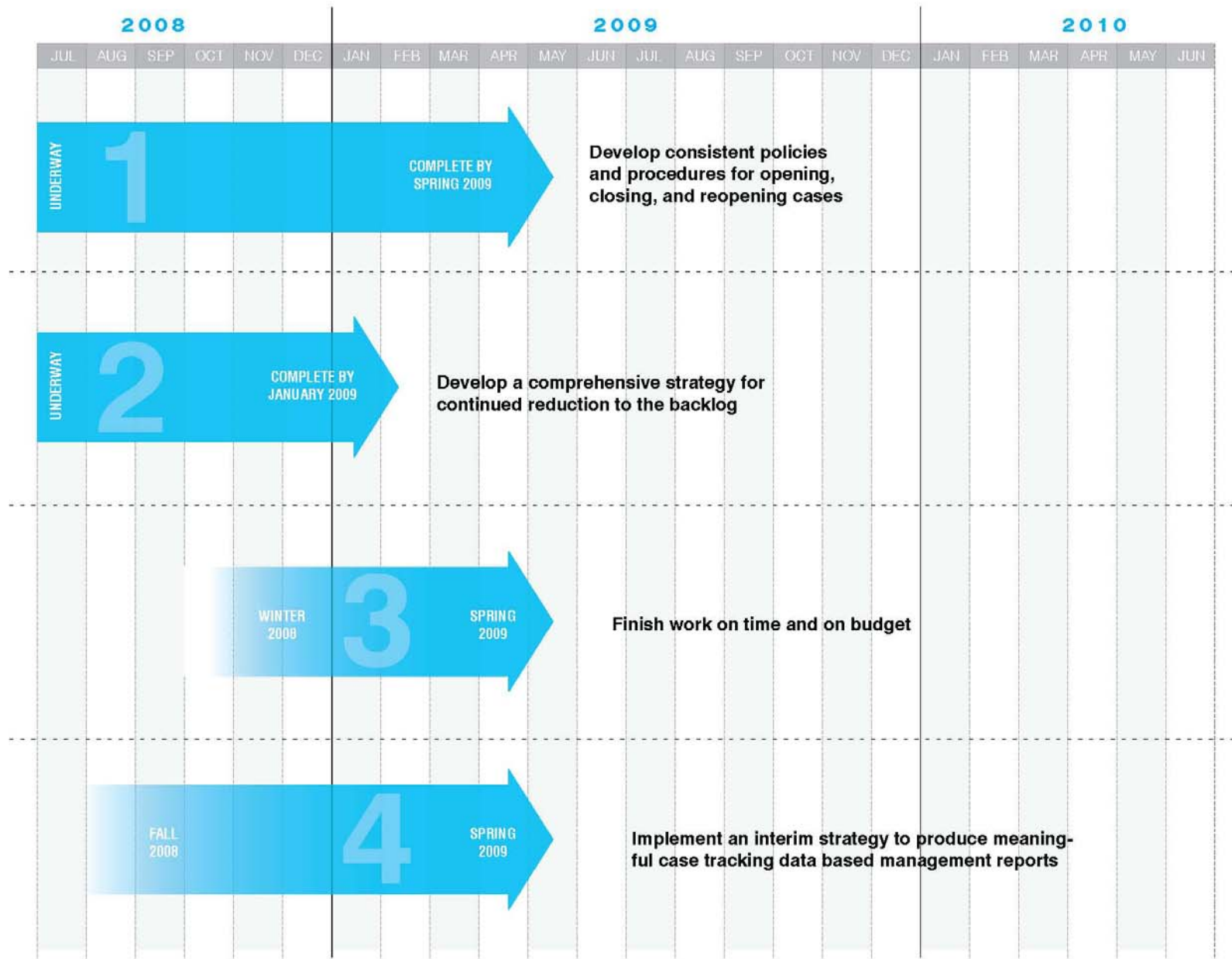




VI

Improve Department effectiveness by providing appropriate management structures and oversight

- Develop consistent **policies and procedures** for opening, closing, and reopening cases
Underway, to be completed Spring 2009
- Develop a comprehensive strategy for continued **reduction to the backlog**
Underway, to be completed Winter 2008
- Establish appropriate **scope control** and communication mechanisms for long range plans
To be completed Spring 2009
- Implement an interim strategy to produce meaningful **management reports**
To be completed Spring 2009



V. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Improve Department effectiveness by providing appropriate management structures and oversight



Near Term Items

- Streamlining Environmental Review
 - Streamlining environmental review in neighborhood plan areas
 - Use of a consultant pool for environmental review of projects
 - New procedures for categorical exemptions with historic resource review



Next Steps

- Seeking feedback from the Commission on the Draft Action Plan
- Continued discussion with staff and other stakeholders
- Finalized Action Plan will be posted to the website
- Detailed implementation plans will be developed by staff implementation teams
- Regular reports to the Commission on the status of the Action Plan initiatives