
April 15, 2025

The Honorable Scott Wiener
Senator, California State Senate
1021 O St, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 79 (Wiener) Transit-oriented Development
Notice of Opposition (As of 04/15/2025)**

Dear Senator Wiener,

The City of Redondo Beach writes to express our opposition to your measure, SB 79. This measure disregards state-certified housing elements and bestows land use authority to transit agencies without any requirement that developers build housing, let alone affordable housing.

SB 79 doubles down on the recent trend of the state overriding its own mandated local housing elements. This latest overreaching effort forces cities to approve transit-oriented development projects near specified transit stops – up to seven stories high and a density of 120 homes per acre – without regard to the community's needs, environmental review, or public input.

Our residents take great pride in the city's identity, and this legislation could limit their ability to participate in zoning decisions. The proposed changes would also lead to increased traffic congestion and overcrowding, further challenging the city's ability to maintain its quality of life for its residents.

In addition, SB 79 would impose considerable demands on city resources, requiring extensive upgrades to roads, utilities, and other critical infrastructure to accommodate the growth in housing density. These demands come at a time of uncertainty regarding federal funding support, amplifying the financial strain and leaving the city at risk of facing severe fiscal challenges. Such circumstances place Redondo Beach in a challenging position as it strives to uphold its commitments to residents while navigating the substantial burdens posed by this bill.



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Most alarmingly, SB 79 defies cities' general plans and provides transit agencies unlimited land use authority on property they own or have a permanent easement, regardless of the distance from a transit stop. Transit agencies would have the power to determine all aspects of the development including height, density, and design, without any regard to local zoning or planning.

This broad new authority applies to both residential and commercial development. Transit agencies could develop 100% commercial projects — even at transit stops — and not provide a single new home, while simultaneously making the argument that more housing must be constructed around transit stops.

The City of Redondo Beach appreciates and respects your desire to pursue a housing production proposal. However, as currently drafted, SB 79 will not spur much-needed housing construction in a manner that supports local flexibility, decision-making, and community input. State-driven ministerial or by-right housing approval processes fail to recognize the extensive public engagement associated with developing and adopting zoning ordinances and housing elements.

California will never produce the number of homes needed with an increasingly state-driven, by-right housing approval process. What we need is a sustainable state investment that matches the scale of this decades-in-the-making crisis.

For these reasons, the City of Redondo Beach opposes SB 79. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at James.Light@redondo.org.

Sincerely,

Mayor James A. Light
City of Redondo Beach