



R-31

Date: May 7, 2019

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Al Austin, Eighth District *al*
Councilmember Stacy Mungo, Fifth District *SM*

Subject: Oppose SB 50 (Weiner) regarding housing development

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Request the City Council to oppose Senate Bill 50 (Weiner), which would preempt local zoning laws to allow higher density housing near “transit-rich” and “jobs-rich” areas, including in single-family neighborhoods, and take a “one-size-fits-all” to addressing land use for housing throughout the entire state.

BACKGROUND:

Long Beach has taken a proactive position to addressing the housing shortage that is not only affecting the City, but the entire state. In May 2017, the City Council approved a comprehensive plan entitled “Revenue Tools and Incentives for the Production of Affordable and Workforce Housing,” and the City has implemented or is in the process of implementing many of those policies.

In March 2018, the City Council voted to confirm the General Plan Land Use Element PlaceType and Height Maps, which will allow for additional housing development along many of the City’s corridors. This was the result of over a decade of staff work and sometimes contentious public debate over where and how much housing should be allowed and the impacts on city services and neighborhoods. In the end, we reached a consensus on how best to meet our future housing needs while still preserving much of what makes Long Beach special.

Senate Bill 50 (Weiner) would require local governments to grant an equitable communities incentive to allow density bonuses in the construction of new housing. The incentives would include reducing parking requirements and increasing the allowable height to 45-55 feet. Under SB 50 any neighborhood within one-half mile of a rail station or one-quarter mile from a bus route or near a “job rich area” would be required by state law to allow four or five-story apartment buildings, potentially built curb to curb, and with no on-site parking. The building square footage could be 2.5 or 3.25 times the lot size (FAR) — which far exceed the current limits for our single-family neighborhoods.

Moreover, while Long Beach continues to work to address our affordable housing needs, particularly near transit, SB 50 focuses mainly on the creation of market-rate housing and

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takes away planning oversight from local jurisdictions and shifts it to the state.

While the City is working to encourage additional housing in the City, Long Beach's plan takes into account the diversity of neighborhoods and their distinct characteristics throughout the City. If SB 50 becomes law, it would remove most of the local control that Long Beach has for the development of new housing in many parts of the City. Many other local governments, including Los Angeles and San Francisco, are opposing SB 50 because of its preemption of local land use regulations and procedures.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no significant fiscal impact with this recommendation.