

Communication from Public

Name: Devon Williams
Date Submitted: 08/04/2025 01:36 PM
Council File No: 25-0002-S19

Comments for Public Posting: There is worry that SB 79's half-mile buffer around transit stops ignores the City's designated transit corridors and lets dense apartments pop up in single-family, historic and light-industrial zones. But a 2013 study by Shishir Mathur and Christopher Ferrell found that suburban transit-oriented development (TOD) within half a mile of stations had neutral or even positive impacts on nearby single-family home sale prices (see e.g., <https://transweb.sjsu.edu/research/Effect-Suburban-Transit-Oriented-Developments-Residential-Property-Values>). Surveys by the Puget Sound Regional Council and Metro confirm that average walking distance to transit is under half a mile, so focusing new housing within that range matches real-world behavior and avoids spillover traffic or parking issues (see e.g. <https://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/tsdluguidancepaper.pdf> and <https://planitmetro.com/2014/06/10/whats-a-walk-shed-to-transit/>). Anecdotally, I live half a mile from a major transit stop and have lived in LA for four years now without a car, without issue. I highly doubt a single person complaining about the distance to a transit hub has ever actually used the public transportation in LA. "Sutor, ne ultra crepidam", as they say. Many feel SB 79 sets no hard requirement for affordable units or supporting infrastructure and could undermine existing incentives and Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goals. However, research on inclusionary zoning (IZ) shows that well-designed IZ policies produce substantial Below-Market-Rate (BMR) housing without slowing overall production (see <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01944363.2022.2027263>). Terner Center modeling also shows that pairing IZ requirements with transit-oriented bonuses boosts both BMR totals and total housing supply (see <https://ternercenter.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Inclusionary-Zoning-Los-Angeles-April-2024.pdf>). There's a fear that SB 79 will overtax water and power supplies, strain city services and make rents, crime and traffic worse. However, compact multi-family housing near transit uses roughly half the energy and 30 percent less water per household than detached single-family homes, easing utility demand (see e.g. <https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/use-of-energy/homes.php> or https://www.caee.utexas.edu/prof/kockelman/public_html/TRB14neighborhoodsLCA.pdf). Transit-oriented neighborhoods also generate about 44 percent fewer vehicle trips compared to conventional developments, and studies find that higher pedestrian presence around stations lowers crime by increasing "eyes on the street" (e.g. <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/assets/Uploads/finalreportcrp128.pdf> and <https://todresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/725.pdf>). It is an unfortunate and depressing fact that those who are most affected by these decisions aren't provided the same opportunity to participate in local politics. I am open to considering arguments against SB 79 based in empirical studies, but I have yet to see one. There is no reason for 74% of LA to be zoned for single-family housing during a housing crisis. If you want to own a home, that is totally fine. But buying a home in the middle of the second-largest city in the United States and pretending you and the next 50 generations of your lineage deserve to live and die in the same house is silly. As these people love to say, "you've got to break a few eggs to make an omelette", and the city of LA is ravenous. Regretfully, Devon Williams