



## Amend the Low-Rise Ordinance to Ensure that Housing Is Built in High-Resource Transit-Rich Areas

1 message

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To: councilmember.park@lacity.org, Clerk.CPS@lacity.org

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Dear Los Angeles City Council Members,

As a Los Angeles resident, I stand with Abundant Housing LA in support of ROBUST IMPLEMENTATION OF SB 79, the Abundant and Affordable Homes Near Transit Act. I recognize the constructive work that the Department of City Planning has done on the proposed SB 79 Phased Implementation and Low-Rise ordinances. Furthermore, I am pleased that the City Planning Commission recommended revising the Low-Rise Ordinance with two key changes advocated for by Abundant Housing LA: the restoration of a REAR YARD OPEN SPACE OPTION for Low-Rise Ordinance projects, and the ALLOWING OF BALCONIES TO ENCROACH INTO THE REQUIRED FRONT YARD SETBACK. These changes will allow greater flexibility in design and in many cases improved livability for residents. As the ordinance moves forward to the Planning and Land Use Management Committee on 5/26, and subsequently to full council, please support these positive refinements to the ordinance. I am also appreciative that the adjustment of the rear setback from 4 to 8 feet, supported by the City Planning Commission, maintained overall building volume by removing the step back requirement.

Despite improvements recommended by the City Planning Commission, ADDITIONAL AMENDMENTS MUST BE MADE TO ENSURE PROJECT FEASIBILITY, a goal agreed upon by members of the city council when the council opted to implement SB 79 via the Low-Rise Ordinance rather than via local programs with more expansive building standards. The following changes are essential to ensure that the Low-Rise Ordinance can produce much needed housing in high-resource Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) zones.

1. ALLOW HEIGHT OF FIVE FLOORS AND FORM-BASED DENSITY FOR LOW-RISE PROJECTS OFFERING DEEPER AFFORDABILITY. Economic and feasibility analysis conducted by AECOM identified height as a major barrier to project feasibility for the Low-Rise Ordinance, and the lack of interest from the development community in the ordinance since the Citywide Housing Incentive Program was adopted has provided additional evidence that the program's building standards are too restrictive. The simplest way to ensure greater feasibility is to extend programs with more robust building standards, including the Transit-Oriented Incentive Area (TOIA) program and the Affordable Housing Incentive Program (AHIP) to the high-resource TOD zones. BUT AT THE VERY LEAST, THE COUNCIL SHOULD BE AMENDING THE LOW-RISE ORDINANCE TO INCLUDE A LOW-RISE BONUS (AS OUTLINED IN EXHIBIT 2B OF CITY PLANNING'S STAFF REPORT) ALLOWING A HEIGHT OF FIVE FLOORS AND FORM-BASED DENSITY IN EXCHANGE FOR DEEPER AFFORDABILITY. This amendment will both increase feasibility and implement council direction to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing by increasing the supply of deed-restricted affordable housing in high-resource TOD zones.

2. ALLOW ATTACHED AT-GRADE PARKING BEHIND UNITS: Requiring that parking be either underground or behind the whole building is unnecessary and expensive. It will prevent many projects from ever getting proposed, as small at-grade parking areas will be the most feasible option for parking provision on many modestly sized parcels. Please allow at-grade attached parking behind sidewalk-oriented units and common space.

Los Angeles has an opportunity to implement SB 79 in a way that promotes family-friendly housing and advances fair housing. With the amendments outlined above, the City can better ensure that new zoning capacity becomes real homes, including affordable homes, in the neighborhoods where access to housing opportunity has been most restricted.

Thank you for your continued leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Mr. Kemal Pulungan