

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: See attached letter for posting.

Council File 25-1083 — October 6, 2026 SB 79 Local Alternative Plan Report

I urge the City Council and PLUM Committee to reject this report in its current form.

The October 6 City Planning report is rushed, poorly organized, unnecessarily complicated, and incomplete. It proposes a citywide system for redistributing SB 79 housing capacity even though important legal and implementation questions remain unresolved and the final eligibility mapping is still not complete.

More importantly, the City's first reduced-density approach has already produced a very important result: City Planning reports that, as of October 2026, there are NO KNOWN APPLICATIONS FILED under the Low-Rise program. (just like last time ZERO)

That should be a major warning before the City repeats the same basic approach on a much larger scale.

The report relies heavily on theoretical "capacity" rather than whether projects are actually economically feasible. Under the proposed Local Alternative Plan framework, the City may reduce many sites to as little as 50 percent of the development capacity otherwise provided by SB 79 and attempt to move that capacity elsewhere. These rules apply even to single-family properties.

But zoning capacity on paper is not the same as housing production.

If the reduced development allowance is not economically attractive enough for property owners to sell and developers to build, then no housing is produced regardless of what a planning spreadsheet says.

The City's own report also acknowledges the practical problem created by shifting capacity around. Approximately 75 percent of a station area lies in the outer one-quarter to one-half mile area. If capacity is reduced there, substantially more capacity must be concentrated in the much smaller area closer to the station, and City Planning itself acknowledges that this may not be feasible in some station areas. Does the council understand this dynamic?

Before moving forward with another complicated alternative to SB 79, the City should first explain why its existing reduced-intensity approach has produced ZERO known applications.

Any revised plan should include real economic feasibility analysis, explain which zoning levels are actually expected to produce housing, identify where redistributed capacity would go, and establish measurable housing-production benchmarks.

The Council should not approve another theoretical zoning exercise that may look compliant on paper but fails to produce housing in practice.

Please reject this report in its current form and require City Planning to return with a clear, understandable, economically credible SB 79 implementation plan. It must include major rezoning, development of walkable, livable, transit friendly, real livable cities. No buildings that warehouse people. More shops downstairs/ apartments up-stairs. Real planning!

Theo Swerissen