



CITY COUNCIL

Amy Thomas Howorth
Mayor

David Lesser
Mayor Pro Tem

Joe Franklin
Councilmember

Nina Trieu Tarnay
Councilmember

Steve S. Charelian
Councilmember

April 14, 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

Dear Senator Wiener,

The City of Manhattan Beach writes to express our opposition to SB 79 (Wiener), which would disregard state-certified housing elements. 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 without regard to the community's needs, environmental review, or public input.

Manhattan Beach has a significant amount of property that lies within ½ mile of a Tier 2 transit-oriented development stop. This land contains a number of different uses including open space and single-family residential uses. SB 79 would allow development of multi-family housing at a density of up to 80 units per acre, which is higher than any other property in the City. The 55-foot height limit established by the bill in and of itself would be significantly greater than that of much of the property in the vicinity. If an applicant were to request a density bonus, this height limit would become irrelevant, as the project could request that it be waived.

Additionally, 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. While no transit agency currently owns or leases land in Manhattan Beach, Metro has a large yard and maintenance facility immediately adjacent to the City. Redevelopment of this yard and maintenance facility without necessary environmental review could pose significant health and safety concerns to the public. The lack of any public review process would also disregard government's obligation to consider the desires of the people it serves.

MANHATTAN BEACH CITY HALL

1400 Highland Avenue, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

www.manhattanbeach.gov · (310) 802-5000

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 Manhattan 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 really need is a sustainable state investment that matches the scale of this decades-in-the-making crisis. For these reasons, the City of Manhattan Beach strongly opposes SB 79.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Thomas Howorth", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Amy Thomas Howorth
Mayor
City of Manhattan Beach

Cc: City of Manhattan Beach City Council
The Honorable State Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi
The Honorable State Senator Ben Allen
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Jeff Kiernan, League of California Cities Public Affairs Manager
League of California Cities, cityletters@calcities.org
California Contract Cities Association



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July 10, 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 7/8/25)**

Dear Senator Wiener,

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