



To: SCCBC Issues and Policies Committee

From: Robert Singleton, Executive Director
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RE: Senate Bill 50, Planning Zoning, equitable incentive

Overview:

On December 3rd, 2018 State Senator Scott Weiner (D-San Francisco) introduced Senate Bill 50. The Planning, Zoning, Housing Development, and Equitable Communities Incentive. The bill proposes to increase minimum zoning near “transit rich” and “jobs rich” areas through an amendment to the State’s Density Bonus Program.

“This bill would require a city, county, or city and county to grant upon request an equitable communities incentive when a development proponent seeks and agrees to construct a residential development, as defined, that satisfies specified criteria, including, among other things, that the residential development is **either a job-rich housing project or a transit-rich housing project**, as those terms are defined; the site does not contain, or has not contained, housing occupied by tenants or accommodations withdrawn from rent or lease in accordance with specified law within specified time periods.”¹

The zoning standards to be applied, as well as the anti-displacement and sensitive communities exemptions to be used, are still subject to discussion and further legislative definition. Furthermore, It is understood by the bill authors that a “one size fits all” approach will not work for all communities in California, and thus additional direction is being sought from smaller communities, like Santa Cruz County, to help further define what is appropriate.

Lastly, it is recommended that the Santa Cruz County Business Council take an official stance in support or against SB50 in principle.

Background:

SCCBC Staff have met with representatives from California YIMBY, which is the main advocacy organization supporting the legislation and working to get it passed, to discuss how a

¹ California Legislative Counsel’s Digest



community the size of Santa Cruz County will potentially be affected by the legislation. In response to their asking for an endorsement position from the Business Council, SCCBC staff have asked for a specific opportunity to define how these automatic upzoning might be written to be more in line with our community's unique values.

Discussion:

As it is currently written, SB50 provides eligible projects a reasonable expectation of receiving an “equitable communities incentive”, should they meet the affordability requirements of the State Density Bonus Program, adhere to local, *objective* zoning standards with the base project; and be considered either transit rich or jobs rich.

Transit Rich

For the purposes of this legislation, transit rich is defined as either being within a half mile of a major transit stop (Rail or Ferry Station), or within a quarter mile of a high quality bus corridor.

A high quality bus corridor is defined as a continuous bus route that has 15 minutes headways during peak commuter hours, and equivalent weekend service that has 30 minute headways.

Should the classification of transit rich be applied differently in Santa Cruz County? If so, what should we consider transit rich?

Jobs Rich

“Job-rich housing project” means a residential development within an area identified by the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Office of Planning and Research, based on indicators such as proximity to jobs, high area median income relative to the relevant region, and high-quality public schools, as an area of high opportunity close to jobs.²

Thus jobs rich is largely undefined, and will be left up to HCD for designation, However, we can provide input as to how these areas could be drawn in communities like Santa Cruz.

Should jobs rich be defined as places where commuters live, or where jobs are hosted, or both?

² SB Bill Text and Definitions



What areas of Santa Cruz should be deemed “jobs rich”?

Sensitive Communities

Local jurisdictions can provide limited waivers to “sensitive communities”, that they themselves designate.

How should Santa Cruz County designate our sensitive communities?

Zoning Requirements for Transit and Jobs Rich Areas

- .5 parking spaces per unit
- 3 additional concessions awarded under existing density bonus law
- Transit rich near .5 miles of ferry or rail:
 - Maximum Height req of 55 feet,
 - FAR 3.5
- Transit rich near high quality bus corridor
 - Maximum Height req of 45 feet
 - FAR 2.5

Do these minimum requirements work for Santa Cruz County?

Should high quality bus corridor be scaled down to affect more of Santa Cruz?

How should the local Density Bonus law interface with SB50?

Recommendation:

That the SCCBC Committee on Issues and Policies recommend to the Board of Directors that the Business Council formally adopt a support position in principle on SB50;

And that SCCBC staff submit to California YIMBY a summary white paper detailing how SB50 should apply to communities of a similar size to Santa Cruz, based upon the feedback collected during our February 14th Committee meeting.