

Senate Bill 79 (SB 79)



Background

Senate Bill 79, known as the "Abundant and Affordable Homes Near Transit Act," was signed into law in October 2025 and became effective on July 1, 2026. SB 79 promotes increased housing near transit by establishing new by-right development standards for residential and commercial parcels located within $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ miles of eligible transit stops. The bill applies to Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) stops as defined by Section 65912.156(p) of the legislation and categorizes them into two tiers, Tier 1 and Tier 2, with corresponding scaled development standards. TOD stops within the Southwest Valley Community Plan Areas (CPAs) are designated as Tier 2, which includes Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and bus routes with a full-time dedicated lane with peak-period headways that qualify as Major Transit Stops.

SB 79 Local Implementation

The City's initial response to implementing SB 79 involves two ordinances that work together and took effect in June 2026.

Phased Implementation Ordinance — Pausing SB 79 Implementation

SB 79 permits a local jurisdiction to temporarily pause its enforcement in certain areas if it can demonstrate it already has sufficient zoning capacity and needs more time to assess sensitive sites. The City of Los Angeles is utilizing this option to pause SB 79 in:

- Areas where existing zoning meets SB 79's density/capacity targets
- Lower-resource areas as identified in the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC) Maps
- Sites within designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones
- Areas vulnerable to sea level rise
- Sites with historic resources designated before January 1, 2025

It also makes some exemptions permanent, including identified industrial employment hubs and parcels more than a mile from a transit-oriented development (TOD) stop. In summary, instead of applying SB 79 citywide on its effective date of July 1, 2026, the City is pausing its implementation in environmentally sensitive areas, designated historic zones, lower-resource areas, or areas already sufficiently zoned while it sorts out the details. The City is legally permitted to do so under the phased implementation option provided by state law.

Low-Rise Ordinance — What Replaces SB 79 in the Interim

To allow SB 79 to be paused in the previously noted areas, the City expanded the Citywide Mixed-Income Incentive Program's (MIIP) Corridor Transition incentives. The incentive program was renamed the Low-Rise Ordinance, and its incentives were broadened to include all residential zones, including single-family residential zones, within half a mile of an "Opportunity Station Area," which covers TOD stops in areas mostly classified as Moderate/Higher Opportunity according to the state's TCAC housing designation. This program encourages mid-scale housing, such as bungalow courts, row houses,

and townhomes, by providing density, height, and FAR bonuses in exchange for the inclusion of affordable units. It does not change the underlying zoning but functions as an optional housing incentive program available for TOD stops within the Southwest Valley Community Plan Areas (CPAs) and other eligible areas in the City.

The City is exercising its legal option to pause SB 79 in sensitive or already adequately zoned areas, while also expanding a local incentive program (Low-Rise Ordinance) to promote affordable infill housing near transit, and has additional exceptions for fire-risk zones, coastal areas, and designated historic sites.

SB 79 and the Southwest Valley Community Plans Update

While the SB 79 implementation effort is not part of the Southwest Valley Community Plans Update, it could lead to future adjustments to the draft zoning and land use designations to implement SB 79. As of the publication of the Southwest Valley Community Plans DEIR, the City has adopted the Phased Implementation and Low-Rise Ordinance and is seeking guidance from the City Council to develop a TOD Alternative Plan. Given this context, to account for potential environmental impacts from SB 79, regardless of future updates to the City's approach to

incorporating this state legislation into its local zoning regulations, the environmental analysis for the Southwest Valley Community Plan DEIR used more conservative assumptions for SB 79. A conservative approach likely overestimates the cumulative development from parcels affected by SB 79 by the Plan's horizon year (2050), but it ensures that the EIR considers SB 79 as part of the environmental analysis for the Proposed Plan and No Project scenarios.

Figure 1: SB 79 Eligible Transit-Oriented Development Stops in the Southwest Valley CPAs

