

SB 79 Concerns

La Jolla Town Council

August 14, 2025



SB 79

Overrides local zoning to allow high density developments within one-half mile radial (crow flies) distance from qualifying major transit stops

- Includes major transit stops in 2050+ Regional Transportation Plans (RTP)
- Coverage is roughly equivalent to the Transit Priority Area (TPA) map

"Local Control"

- Local jurisdictions are allowed to exclude areas more than one-mile walking distance from transit
- Local jurisdictions can propose alternate plans (within 60 days) provided they create the capacity for the same number units

SB 79 Density Allowances *(as of June 24, 2025)*

Tier	Transit Stop Definition	1/4 Mile			1/2 Mile		
		Height	Density	FAR	Height	Density	FAR
1	1) Heavy Rail Transit (Long distance Amtrak)	75 ft	120 du/ac	3.5	65 ft	100 du/ac	3.0
	2) Very High Frequency Commuter Rail						
2	1) Light Rail Transit (Trolley & Local Amtrak)	65 ft	100 du/ac	3.0	55 ft	80 du/ac	2.5
	2) High Frequency Commuter Rail						
	3) Bus Rapid Transit						
3	1) Frequent Commuter Rail Service	55 ft	80 du/ac	2.5	45 ft	60 du/ac	2.0
	2) Ferry Service						
	3) Any major transit <u>stop</u> designated by the applicable authority						
	4) Transit-oriented development in a county with no more than 15 passenger rail stations						

SB 79 is not Transit-Oriented Development

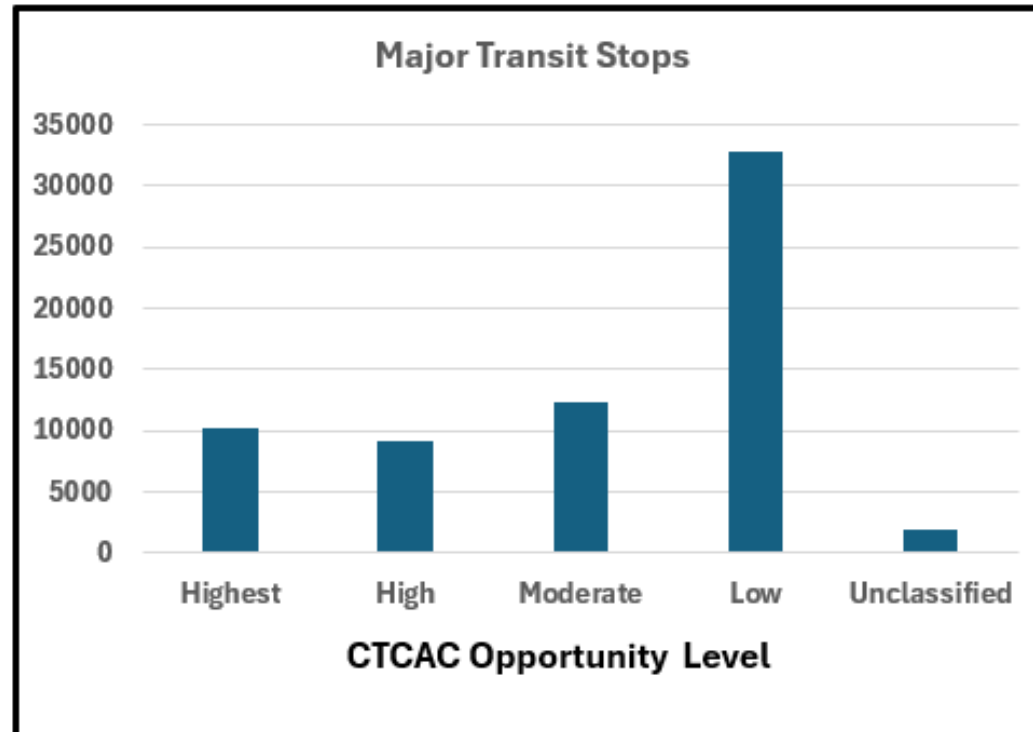
San Diego's experience with the Bonus ADU program predicts that most of the development allowed by SB 79 will be in single-family neighborhoods a mile or more from transit rather than adjacent to transit where it makes the most sense to achieve the purported goals of the bill.

Including future transit projects that aren't planned for completion until 2050 or beyond ensures that those SB 79 projects will auto-dependent, *not* transit-oriented.

Neighbors For A Better San Diego has estimated that SB 79 would cover 90% of all multi-family/commercial zoned areas and over 50% of single-family zoned areas in San Diego. This is infill sprawl, not transit-oriented development.

SB 79 does not Affirmatively Further Fair Housing

San Diego's experience with the Bonus ADU program further predicts that SB 79 developments will be heavily skewed towards **Low and Moderate Resource** areas and away from **High and Highest Resource** areas.



Source: California State Geoportal High-Quality Transit Stops, CTCAC Opportunity Map

SB 79 is the wrong solution to housing affordability

California's affordability challenges are not due to insufficient zoning

- By definition, every city that has a Certified Housing Element has zoned for sufficient housing

San Diego has three times the zoned capacity for new housing as its projected need (RHNA), without counting ADUs, Complete Communities or other density bonuses

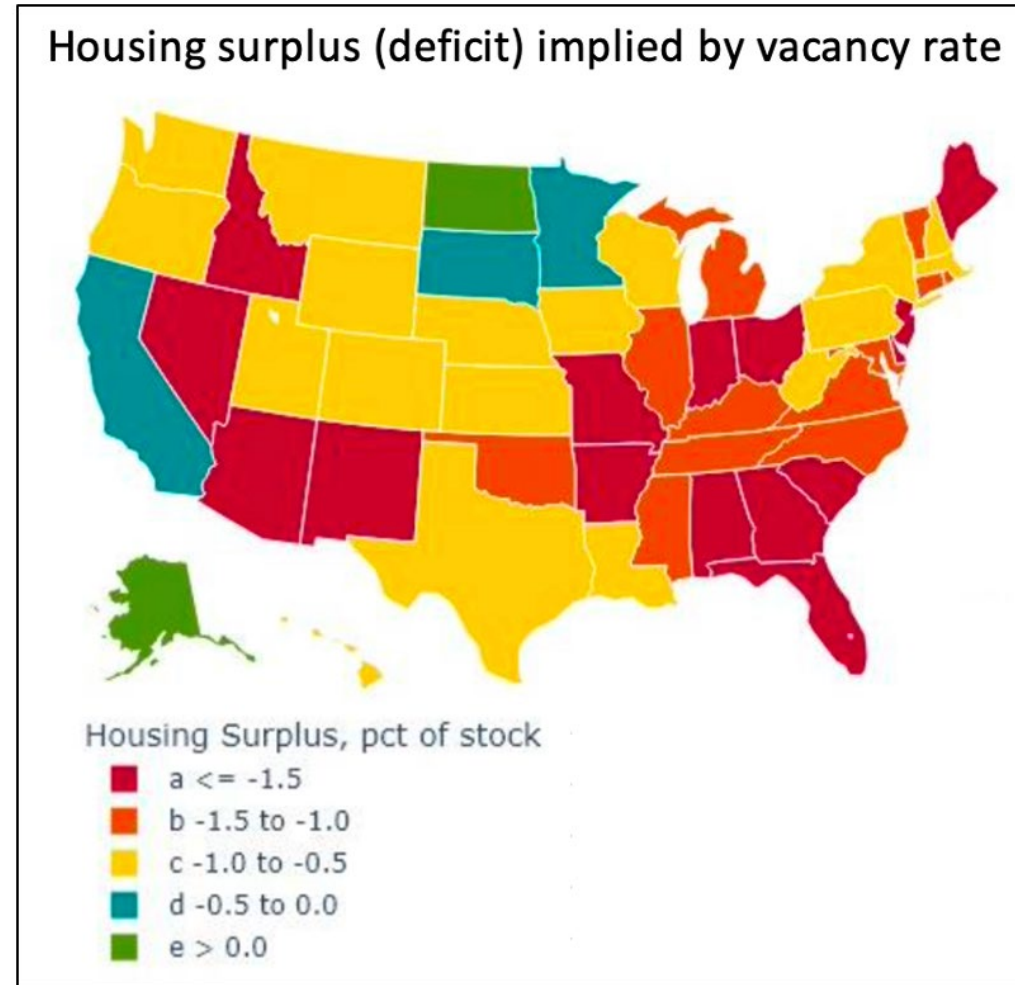
- Once there is sufficient zoning, further increases are counterproductive because they drive land banking and real estate speculation, not housing
- Housing production is primarily driven by *absorption rate*, which is the rate at which new units can be introduced into the market without driving down rents.

Housing supply and affordability are not the same

Based on vacancy rates, California does not have a shortage of housing.

Yet it's housing stock is not affordable to most Californians, pointing to causes other than total supply.

Looking at the experience of other cities, SB 79's upzoning will worsen the problem, not solve it.



Source: Census Bureau, Moody's Analytics

Other problems with SB 79

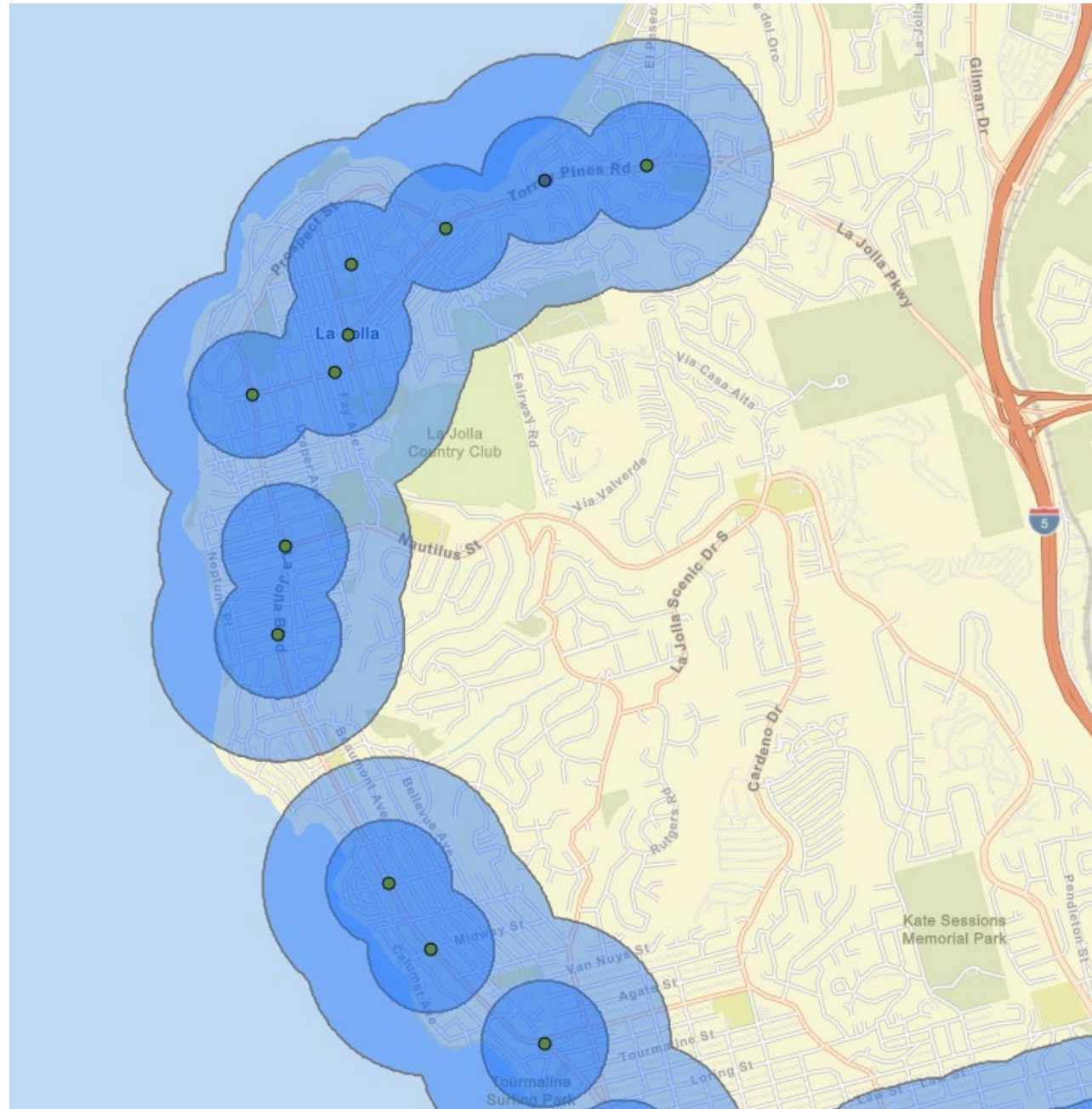
- No protection for preserving naturally occurring affordable housing
- No restriction on short-term vacation rentals
- No exemptions for high fire hazard zones or requirements for fire equipment access
- Alternate plans are impossible because of the excessive number of units allowed by SB 79
- Affordable housing requirements aren't reconcilable with local inclusionary housing programs

How can SB 79 be fixed?

- Exclude communities with a certified Housing Element.
- Establish walking distance as the measurement of proximity to transit.
- Limit Tiers 2 and 3 to one-quarter mile, with just Tier 1 extending to one-half mile.
- Restrict major transit stops to existing transit or near-term horizon of a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).
- Exempt single-family zoned areas.
- Prohibit short-term vacation rentals.
- Ensure that all projects comply with standards for multi-family housing, including fire safety, common areas, onsite management, and restrictions on development on steep hillsides.
- Reduce densities, heights, and floor area ratios in transition zones.

SB 79 shouldn't move forward without these commonsense amendments

**What parts of
La Jolla would
be impacted
by SB 79?**



Nautilus Street Example

Distance to transit:

Radial=630 ft, Walking = 0.1 mi

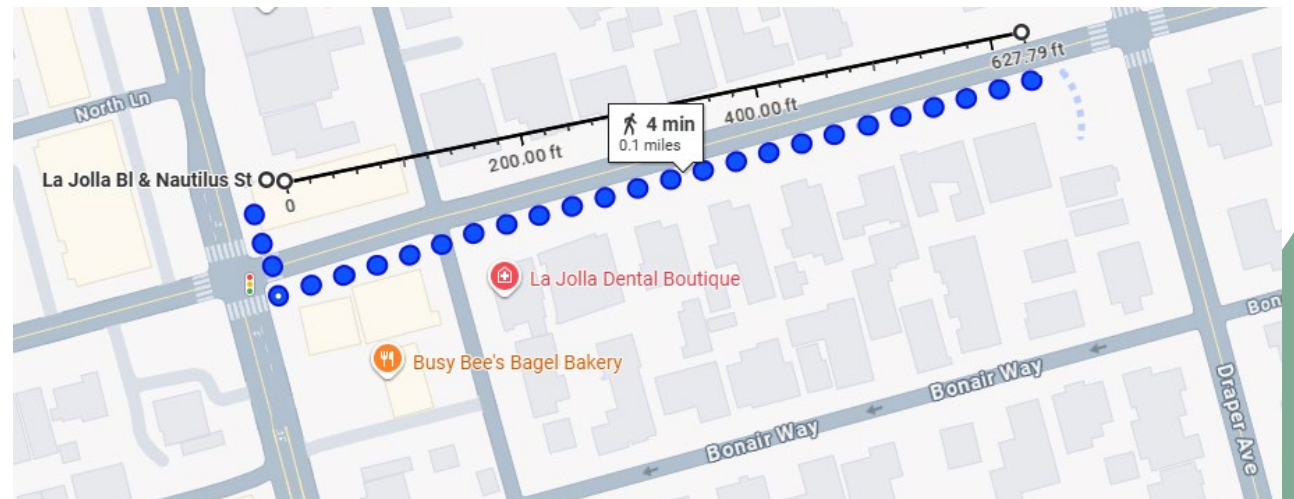
=> Tier 2 (future BRT) within ¼ mile:

Minimum Height 65 ft

Minimum Density 100 units/acre

(23 units on a 10,000 square foot lot)

Minimum FAR 3.0 (4-6 stories)

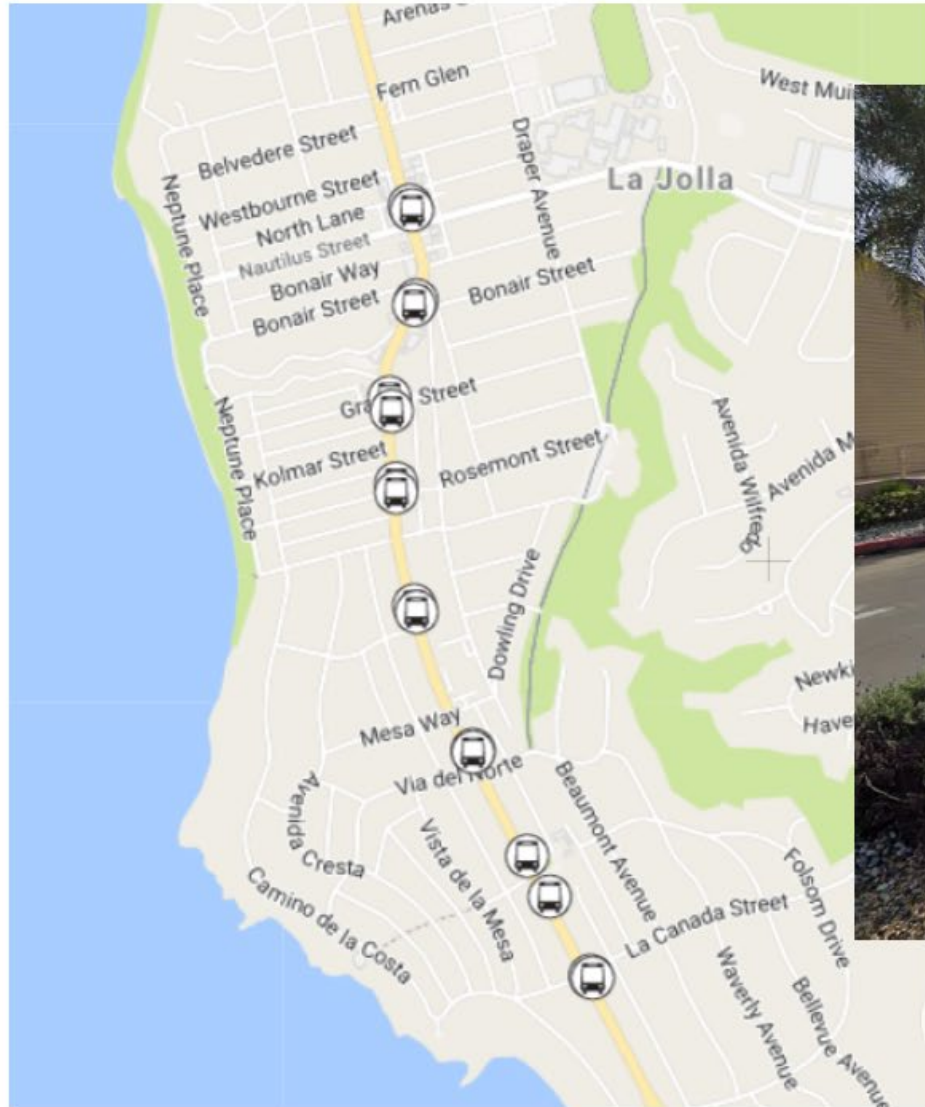


Major Transit Stops and Bus Rapid Transit



Bus Rapid Transit is essentially a "Train on Tires"

Planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route on La Jolla Boulevard in Bird Rock



Thank you!

Geoffrey Hueter

Neighbors For A Better San Diego

Better4SD@gmail.com

NFABSD.org

