



May 27, 2020

The Honorable Mike McGuire
Senate Governance and Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 408
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 1385 – Rezone Commercial Land for Housing

Dear Senator McGuire and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Council of Infill Builders, a statewide organization of real estate professionals committed to improving California through infill development, I write to support Senate Bill 1385, to allow housing developments, including affordable units, with a density of at least 20 units to the acre be allowed on land otherwise designated by local governments for office or retail commercial use.

California is in the midst of a dire housing shortage relative to our population and number of jobs, leading to high rents and unaffordable home prices for most residents. A primary reason for that shortage is restrictive local zoning throughout the state's major population and job centers, which limits the amount of land available for new housing to be built. Commercial corridors represent prime opportunities to make more of this land available for housing, particularly in high-opportunity, transit-rich areas that have seen substantial decreases in retail activities. Housing in these areas can be transit-friendly, given that vehicle lanes in commercial corridors can be repurposed to dedicated rapid transit.

To make this legislation more impactful, we suggest adding a provision eliminating the minimum parking requirements that local governments sometimes impose on housing in these commercial zones. Minimum parking requirements hurt housing affordability and add unnecessary costs for home buyers and renters, while discouraging transit usage, walking and biking. We also suggest a provision increasing allowable height and density on these lands based on proximity to major transit and jobs.

The Council of Infill Builders thanks you for your attention and consideration of SB 1385.

Sincerely,

Meea Kang
Board Member, Council of Infill Builders