

Housing Accountability & Affordability Act

Senator Scott Wiener, 11th Senate District

Summary:

SB 35 aims to expedite the approval process of housing developments, including affordable housing, to address the state's housing shortage crisis. The bill will streamline only projects that add low-income housing units and permit cities on track to meet Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goals to maintain control of housing approvals.

Special Streamlining Rules

What Gets Streamlined?

- Multifamily development projects of two units or more.
- Projects in an urbanized area, where at least 75% of the perimeter is developed with "urbanized" uses.
- Projects located on a parcel zoned for residential, or for residential mixed use, where 2/3 of the use is for residential.
- Projects consistent with objective zoning and design review standards in effect at the time it is proposed.
- Projects must not be located in or on environmentally sensitive lands, including coastal zone, farm land, wetlands, fire hazard zone, earthquake fault zone, flood plain, conservation area, protected habitat, etc.

When is Streamlining Required?

- Streamlining occurs only if a city or county fails to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goals.
- Localities that fail to meet their above-moderate income RHNA share in the preceding 4 years will be required to streamline any project within that locality that includes at least 10% of units for lower-income households.
- Localities that fail to meet their low- or very low-income RHNA share in the preceding 4 years will be required to streamline any project that includes at least 50% of units for lower-income households.

Streamlining Process:

- Streamlined projects must pay prevailing wage - including affordable housing developments.
- Certain market-rate projects of 25 or more units must utilize a skilled and trained workforce, i.e., a union workforce. Developments that are 100% affordable are exempt from this requirement.

Exemptions:

- Streamlined approval is not available if a project requires any of the following: 1) demolition of housing subject to recorded covenant, ordinance, or law that restricts rents to levels affordable to persons of moderate, low, or very low income; 2) housing subject to rent or price control; and 3) housing occupied by tenants within the past 10 years.

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF NONPROFIT HOUSING

CA SENATE BILL NO. 35