
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Senator María Elena Durazo, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Pursuant to Rule 29.10(d)

Bill No: SB 1423
Author: Stern
Version: 8/13/26

Hearing Date: 8/28/26
Fiscal: Yes
Consultant: Favorini-Csorba

REGIONAL PLANNING: STANDARDIZED SPATIAL PLANNING DATASETS

Requires the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation to create a consolidated online platform to make publicly available statewide standardized spatial planning datasets for use in local planning.

Background

The California Constitution allows cities and counties to “make and enforce within its limits, all local, police, sanitary and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws.” It is from this fundamental power (commonly called the police power) that cities and counties derive their authority to regulate behavior to preserve the health, safety, and welfare of the public—including land use authority.

Planning and Zoning Law. State law provides additional powers and duties for cities and counties regarding land use. The Planning and Zoning Law requires every county and city to adopt a general plan that sets out planned uses for all of the area covered by the plan. A general plan must include specified mandatory “elements,” including a housing element that establishes the locations and densities of housing, among other requirements. Cities’ and counties’ major land use decisions—including most zoning ordinances and other aspects of development permitting—must be consistent with their general plans. The Planning and Zoning Law also establishes a planning agency in each city and county, which may be a separate planning commission, administrative body, or the legislative body of the city or county itself. Cities and counties must provide a path to appeal a decision to the planning commission and/or the city council or county board of supervisors.

Local governments use their police power to enact zoning ordinances that shape development, such as setting maximum heights and densities for housing units, minimum numbers of required parking spaces, setbacks to preserve privacy, lot coverage ratios to increase open space, and others. These ordinances can also include conditions on development to address aesthetics, community impacts, or other particular site-specific considerations.

Land use planning technical advice. The California Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) serves as the state’s comprehensive planning agency. To help local officials comply with statutory requirements and implement best practices in land use planning, LCI publishes a variety of documents that provide technical advice to cities and counties: chief among them are the General Plan Guidelines. LCI’s General Plan Guidelines recommend the information that local planners should collect, suggest goals, policies, and objectives that local general plans could adopt, and list numerous examples of feasible implementation measures to

carry out those local goals. LCI must regularly review and revise these guidelines, which were last comprehensively updated in 2017. LCI also develops a wide range of other technical advisory documents on land use planning topics including compatibility with military installations, fire hazard planning, climate adaptation, and environmental justice.

LCI's Site Check tool. Among the tools that LCI has produced is its “Site Check” mapping tool. Site Check is a freely available interactive tool that allows the public to layer maps of various types of natural hazard zones, sensitive environmental sites, and other land use information to identify parcels that may be suitable for development. It is intended to help users “quickly find parcels where housing projects may qualify for streamlining and exemptions under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Developers and public agencies considering how CEQA may apply to a housing project can turn to Site Check as a ‘first step’ in their evaluations.” Among other layers, Site Check allows users to visualize the boundaries of:

- Urban areas;
- Zoning designations;
- Transit stops and vehicle miles traveled data;
- Special habitat areas;
- Prime farmlands or farmlands of statewide importance;
- Wetlands and riparian areas;
- Earthquake and fault zones;
- State Conservancy Boundaries;
- 100-year flood plains; and
- Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ).

Planning requirements. The Legislature has required cities and counties to take on dozens of additional planning responsibilities in recent years, including to adopt plans to mitigate flooding, fire hazards, habitat loss, climate hazards, environmental justice issues, extreme heat, traffic deaths, and impacts from warehouses, among others. Legislation has also reduced local discretion and eliminated project-specific environmental review pertaining to some kinds of housing projects, necessitating more upfront planning to ensure new development’s impacts are adequately addressed.

The Planning and Conservation League wants LCI to develop additional planning tools for local governments.

Proposed Law

Senate Bill 1423 requires LCI, on or before July 1, 2028, to compile, standardize, maintain, and make publicly available through a consolidated online platform a core set of statewide standardized spatial planning datasets. These datasets must include:

- FHSZs, as specified;
- 100-year and 500-year flood plains;
- Coastal and inland areas subject to sea level rise inundation;
- Wetlands and riparian areas;
- Biological resource areas that contain, support, or are necessary to sustain important biological or ecological resources, as specified;
- Legally protected lands and lands under a conservation easement;

- Prime and unique farmlands and farmland of statewide and local importance; and
- Lands subject to Williamson Act contracts.

LCI must update the datasets as new or revised data becomes available from the originating state or federal source agencies.

On or before January 1, 2029, LCI must develop and provide guidance for agencies to inform them on how to use and integrate these datasets in regional planning processes and products. It must also provide technical assistance for the use of the data.

SB 1423 also provides that state, regional, and local governments may consider use of the datasets in the development and production of land use and infrastructure plans, and states that the bill does not:

- Prevent agencies from using more precise or current data;
- Create new regulatory requirements;
- Regulate land use or zoning;
- Establish land use designations; or
- Preempt the local land use authority of cities or counties.

Comments

1. Purpose of the bill. According to the author, “Senate Bill 1423 equips California’s local and regional planning agencies with standardized spatial datasets. By providing comprehensive, statewide mapping tools, this legislation ensures that planners can make informed, equitable decisions regarding climate resilience, land use, and ecosystem protection. For too long, our planning agencies have relied on outdated or fragmented geographic information. SB 1423 changes this by establishing a centralized, state-supported repository of spatial data. This ensures that every community, regardless of resources, has access to the high-quality environmental, infrastructural, and demographic mapping needed to drive smart, sustainable development.”

2. Spot the difference. LCI’s Site Check tool maps various hazards and other land use datasets. SB 1423 requires LCI to develop a new tool that uses many of the same datasets. Specifically, SB 1423 overlaps with Site Check by including similar, although not always identical, requirements to display FHSZs, flood plains, special habitat areas, farmland, and wetlands and riparian areas. SB 1423’s proposed tool includes certain coastal inundation zones, conservation easements, the 500-year flood plain, and other biological resources, but does not include other relevant information for planning such as infill areas that are included in Site Check. Additionally, the bill directs LCI to use datasets that are already available from state or federal agencies. Because similar information is already available, including in a publicly accessible map through Site Check, it is unclear whether the tool developed under SB 1423 will prove useful to planners.

3. Gut and amend. As approved by the Senate, SB 1423 required the California Transportation Commission to conduct a study, and submit a report to the Legislature, on opportunities to improve the Active Transportation Program. On June 10th, 2026, the author amended the bill to remove those contents and insert the current provisions. Because this topic was never heard in the Senate, the Senate Rules Committee referred the amended bill under Senate Rule 29.10(d) to

the Senate Committee on Local Government for a hearing on the Assembly's amendments. At its hearing, the Committee has four choices:

- Send the bill back to the Senate Floor, recommending concurrence;
- Send the bill back to the Senate Floor, recommending nonconcurrence;
- Send the bill back to the Senate Floor, without recommendation; or
- Hold the bill.

Assembly Actions

Assembly Local Government Committee:	8-1
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	11-3
Assembly Floor:	52-19

Support and Opposition (8/27/26)

Support: Planning and Conservation League (Sponsor)

Brentwood Alliance of Canyons & Hillsides

California Native Plant Society

California Wildlife Foundation

Canyon Back Alliance

Center for Biological Diversity

Coastal Corridor Alliance

Council of Infill Builders

Endangered Habitats League

Environmental Center of San Diego

Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks

Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve

Hills for Everyone

Los Angeles Waterkeeper

Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust

Nature Conservancy; the

Palomar Audubon Society

Pomona Valley Bird Alliance

Rural Canyons Conservation Fund

San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

San Diego Bird Alliance

State Alliance for Firesafe Road Regulations (SAFRR)

Stewards of the Arroyo Seco

The Escondido Creek Conservancy

Tubb Canyon Desert Conservancy

Wildlife Conservation Network

Opposition: California Apartment Association

California Building Industry Association

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