
UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Bill No: SB 484
Author: Laird (D)
Amended: 6/25/25 in Assembly
Vote: 21

SENATE NATURAL RES. & WATER COMMITTEE: 6-0, 4/8/25
AYES: Limón, Seyarto, Allen, Hurtado, Laird, Stern
NO VOTE RECORDED: Grove

SENATE HOUSING COMMITTEE: 11-0, 4/29/25
AYES: Wahab, Seyarto, Arreguín, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cortese, Durazo,
Gonzalez, Grayson, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 6-0, 5/23/25
AYES: Caballero, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab
NO VOTE RECORDED: Dahle

SENATE FLOOR: 37-0, 5/28/25
AYES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear,
Cabaldon, Caballero, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove,
Hurtado, Jones, Laird, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh,
Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern,
Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener
NO VOTE RECORDED: Cervantes, Limón, Reyes

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0, 9/4/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Coastal resources: coastal development permits: infill area
categorical exclusion

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill requires the California Coastal Commission (commission) to identify coastal zone infill areas in three jurisdictions where the commission retains

coastal development permitting authority for a 10 year categorical exclusion from that permitting requirement for residential housing projects comprised entirely of very low, low, and moderate income housing units, as provided.

Assembly Amendments of 6/25/25 require the commission to post a map of the identified categorical exclusion areas by August 1, 2027, and make various clarifying and technical changes.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Pursuant to the California Coastal Act of 1976 (Coastal Act) (Public Resources Code (PRC) §§30000 *et seq.*) establishes the commission in the California Natural Resources Agency.
- 2) Includes legislative findings and declarations in the Coastal Act that:
 - a) The coastal zone is a distinct and valuable natural resource of vital and enduring interest to all the people, the permanent protection of the state's natural and scenic resources is a paramount concern to present and future residents, and existing uses and future developments that are carefully planned and developed consistent with the Coastal Act are essential to the economic and social well-being of the people of the state (PRC §30001).
 - b) It is important for the commission to encourage the protection of existing and the provision of new affordable housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate income in the coastal zone (PRC §30604).
- 3) Provides in the Coastal Act for the planning and regulation of development within the coastal zone, as defined:
 - a) A person planning to perform or undertake any development in the coastal zone is required to obtain a coastal development permit (CDP) from the commission or local government enforcing a certified local coastal program (LCP) (PRC §30600).
 - i) The coastal zone means the coastal land and waters of California, and includes the lands that extend inland generally 1,000 yards from the mean high tide line, as specified, with various exceptions, including the San Francisco Bay (PRC §30103).

- b) The commission, after a public hearing and a two-thirds vote is authorized to exclude a category of development or any category of development within a specified geographic area for the requirement to obtain a CDP if there is no potential for any significant adverse effect on coastal resources or public access, subject to certain restrictions, as provided (PRC §30610e, §30610.5b).
- 4) Prohibits, pursuant to the Coastal Act, requiring a LCP from including housing policies and programs (PRC §30500.1).
- 5) Pursuant to the Housing Element Law, requires every city and county to prepare and adopt a general plan, including a housing element, to guide the future growth of a community. The housing element must identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs, identify adequate sites with appropriate zoning to meet the housing needs of all income segments of the community, and ensure that regulatory systems provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development.
- 6) Pursuant to the Housing Element Law, requires a city or county, where the inventory of sites does not identify adequate sites to accommodate the need for groups of all household income levels, to complete rezoning of those sites, including adoption of minimum density and development standards, within one to three years, as specified.
- 7) Pursuant to the Housing Element Law, clarifies that LCP updates, for local governments in the coastal zone, shall be completed in the same period required for the completion of rezones as part of the rezone program in the housing element.

This bill:

- 1) Requires the commission, on or before July 1, 2027, to identify infill areas within three local jurisdictions that do not have a certified LCP for categorical exclusion from coastal development permitting requirements if the development is a residential housing project comprised entirely of units that are deed restricted for persons of very low, low, or moderate income, as provided:
 - a) Requires the categorical exclusion to remain in effect until June 30, 2027, unless a LCP is certified prior to that date, as provided.
 - b) Requires each of the areas identified by the commission to be effective upon a two-thirds vote of the commission, as specified.

- 2) Requires the commission, in consultation with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to select jurisdictions in various regions of the coast and that vary in population size for one another in identifying the categorical exclusion areas.
- 3) Requires the commission, in consultation with HCD, to do the following in identifying categorical exclusion infill areas:
 - a) Identify the largest feasible categorical exclusion areas.
 - b) Ensure the areas affirmatively further fair housing, as provided.
 - c) Consider each selected jurisdiction's inventory of housing element sites, as provided.
 - d) Avoid sites that are projected to be impacted by sea level rise and associated coastal hazards.
- 4) Continues to require a qualifying residential housing project in a categorical exclusion area to obtain a land use entitlement otherwise required by the local jurisdiction.
- 5) Requires a development proponent prior to beginning construction of a proposed residential housing project subject to the categorical exclusion described in 1) to request from the commission a notice of exclusion, and require the commission to provide that exclusion, as specified.
- 6) Requires the commission to post on its internet website clearly defined maps of the categorical exclusions areas on or before August 1, 2027.
- 7) Requires the commission, on or before January 1, 2035, to submit a legislative report identifying the number of projects constructed or currently under construction that received the categorical exclusion described in 1), as provided.

[NOTE: See the Senate Natural Resources and Water, and Housing Committees' analyses for additional information regarding this bill.]

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) The CCC estimates General Fund costs of approximately \$220,000 annually for two years for one position to perform the required spatial analysis and coordinate with HCD to delineate the required categorical exclusion areas, prepare the necessary staff reports and maps for the CCC to approve the categorical exclusions, and oversee initial implementation.

- 2) Costs of an unknown, but likely minor, amount for HCD to consult with the CCC.

SUPPORT: (Verified 9/4/25)

Audubon California
Azul
Bay Area Council
Black Surfers
California Apartment Association
California Coastal Commission
California Coastal Protection Network
California Housing Partnership
California Institute for Biodiversity
California Marine Sanctuary Foundation
CAUSE
Center for Biological Diversity
Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation
Defenders of Wildlife
Endangered Habitats League
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin
Environmental Protection Information Center
Green Foothills
Housing California
Los Angeles Waterkeeper
Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust
MidPen Housing
National Parks Conservation Association
Natural Heritage Institute
Natural Resources Defense Council
Orange County Coastkeeper
People's Self-Help Housing
Planning and Conservation League
Protect San Antonio Valley
Salted Roots
Surfrider Foundation
The Honorable Eleni Kounalakis, Lieutenant Governor, State of California
The Nature Conservancy
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Western Sonoma County Rural Alliance

OPPOSITION: (Verified 9/4/25)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the author, “California is facing a critical housing shortage, and affordability is a greater challenge on the coast where two-thirds of California’s population resides. Thoughtful and sustainable development can take place on our coast without compromising the integrity of the Coastal Act or the preservation of our coastline and coastal resources. The City of Santa Cruz, with its pro-housing designation, serves as a prime example of this balanced approach.”

“Senate Bill 484 introduces a pilot program in three coastal jurisdictions that lack a certified local coastal program (LCP), directing the Coastal Commission to identify infill sites where 100% affordable housing can be developed without the need for a coastal development permit. This bill is limited to areas where the Coastal Commission is the permitting authority for development because there is not an approved LCP [in those areas], thereby retaining local control for the jurisdictions that have certified LCPs.”

“Senate Bill 484 harmonizes the urgent need for affordable housing with the principles established by voters when they created the Coastal Commission. By leveraging the Commission’s existing authority to establish categorical exemptions for certain types of development, SB 484 requires the Coastal Commission to streamline 100% affordable housing development within infill sites in limited parts of our coast, ensuring that both affordable housing and environmental protections are prioritized.”

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES:

NO VOTE RECORDED: Ahrens, DeMaio, Irwin

Prepared by: Katharine Moore / N.R. & W. / (916) 651-4116
9/6/25 10:40:14

**** **END** ****