



Scott Weiner has another bill to build denser housing in California

*By Alexei Koseff, San Francisco Chronicle, March 9, 2020*

“After failing to pass legislation to open up less densely populated parts of California to multifamily housing, state Sen. Scott Wiener is trying again with a ‘lighter touch’ plan aimed at suburbs.

“The San Francisco Democrat today introduced [SB902](#), which would essentially eliminate single-family zoning across the state by allowing multi-unit housing in nearly all residential neighborhoods. Unlike [SB50], Wiener’s new proposal would cap the number of units that could be built in the smallest communities at two [per lot], three in midsize cities.

“SB902 would create a right to build or convert homes into small multifamily housing in any residential neighborhood in the state, outside of areas at high risk of wildfires.

“In unincorporated areas and cities up to 10,000 people, the bill would allow duplexes on any property. It would permit a building with up to three units in a city with between 10,000 and 50,000 people, and up to four units in a city with more than 50,000.

“The legislation would not make changes to local height or design standards — a major source of anxiety for many opponents of SB50.

“But the new bill does create an option for cities to rezone residential parcels for apartment or condominium projects up to 10 units, without having to go through the formal environmental review that Wiener said can add five to 10 years to the process. Unlike his previous measure, allowing such construction would be up to cities — it would not be a state requirement.

“The provision would apply to neighborhoods near public transit and in [high-income areas with access to jobs and good schools](#). Cities could choose to adopt the change for any qualifying area through an ordinance.

“The League of California Cities, which led opposition to SB50, declined to discuss Wiener’s latest proposal before its members had a chance to review the language. But the organization shared a ‘blueprint for more housing’ that it [released last week](#), which suggested that California should provide options for changes to local regulations. Among more than a dozen it suggested was ‘allowing up to fourplexes in single-family zones.’

“Led by Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins of San Diego, the Senate Democratic caucus is working on a new housing production bill to replace SB50, which left the Democrats bitterly divided. That forthcoming measure could remove some of the urgency for Wiener’s SB902, though he said his bill would be complementary to whatever the Senate leadership comes up with.



Scott Weiner has another bill to build denser housing in California

“There is significant political space to make change and move the dial around housing this year,” he said.”

**[Read the full article here.](#)** More information about the League of California Cities Housing Production Proposal referred to in the article [can be found here.](#)