



May 4, 2022

The Honorable Laura Friedman
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento CA 95814

Support for AB 2097 Residential and commercial development: parking requirements.

Assemblymember Friedman,

On behalf of MidPen Housing Corporation, I write to express our strong support for your Assembly Bill 2097 to eliminate local minimum parking requirements for residential and commercial buildings.

MidPen Housing is one of the nation's leading nonprofit developers, owners and managers of high-quality affordable housing and onsite resident services. Since MidPen was founded in 1970, we have developed over 100 communities and 8,000 homes for low-income families, seniors and those with supportive housing needs throughout Northern California.

AB 2097 will eliminate requirements that homes and commercial buildings near transit or in neighborhoods with less car use be built with more parking than is necessary. By reducing the over-building of parking, this bill would reduce traffic, greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, reduce the cost of housing to renters and homeowners, and improve the prospects of small neighborhood businesses fighting to survive during the pandemic.

On-site parking reduces the housing supply by taking up space that could otherwise be used for additional apartments. Providing on-site parking is also very expensive, costing \$30,000 to \$75,000 per space to build. This cost is passed on to renters and home buyers, regardless of whether they own a car. In a recent study by Santa Clara University, researchers found that the cost of garage parking to renter households is approximately \$1,700 per year or an additional 17% of a housing unit's rent¹. In response to the pandemic and the closure of restaurants and small shops, local governments have allowed businesses to expand into on-site and street parking spaces to allow safe outdoor dining and shopping. These new and more productive uses of parking spaces have shown us the way forward to create more inviting and sustainable neighborhoods and allow small businesses to survive and in some cases, thrive. This bill would remove arbitrary restrictions that prevent small businesses from using their property for its most productive use.

AB 2097 will prevent the wasteful overproduction of parking spaces, and reduce car dependency and carbon emissions. It will also encourage greater transit usage and more housing and business growth

¹ Gabbe, C. J., & Pierce, G. (2017). Hidden Costs and Deadweight Losses: Bundled Parking and Residential Rents in the Metropolitan United States. *Housing Policy Debate*, 27(2), 217–229.



near transit, helping to create revitalized and pedestrian-friendly commercial corridors and downtowns throughout California.

This bill does not prohibit property owners from building on-site parking. Rather, it gives them the flexibility to decide on their own how much on-site parking to provide, instead of requiring compliance with a one-size-fits-all mandate.

Thank you for your leadership in addressing climate change and promoting sustainable transportation, affordable housing and livable communities with this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Matthew O. Franklin
President & CEO, MidPen Housing Corporation

cc:

Senator Mike McGuire
Senator Bill Dodd
Senator Jim Nielsen
Senator Steve Glazer
Senator Nancy Skinner
Senator Bob Wieckowski
Senator Scott Wiener
Senator Anna Caballero
Senator Josh Becker
Senator Dave Cortese
Senator John Laird
Assemblymember Marc Levine
Assemblymember Jim Frazier
Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Assemblymember Mia Bonta
Assemblymember Phil Ting
Assemblymember Bill Quirk
Assemblymember Kevin Mullin
Assemblymember Marc Berman
Assemblymember Alex Lee
Assemblymember Ash Kalra
Assemblymember Mark Stone
Assemblymember Robert Rivas
Nevada V. Merriman, Director of Policy, MidPen Housing