



American Planning Association
Washington Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

February 20, 2026

The Honorable Davina Duerr
Local Government Committee
Washington State House of Representatives
Olympia, WA

Subject: SB 6026

Dear Chair Duerr,

I am writing on behalf of the American Planning Association, Washington Chapter (APA WA) with comments regarding **SB 6026**. Our approximately 1,400 members are planning professionals who advise elected and appointed officials on land use, transportation, economic development and environmental policy; enforce development regulations; administer the permit process; and provide public information to and engagement with our constituents regarding growth and change to cities, towns, counties, non-profit organizations and more.

A longstanding legislative priority for APA WA is advancing initiatives to increase affordable housing choices, which has been the aim of recent legislation such as HB 1377 (2019), HB 1220 (2021), HB 1110 (2023), HB 1337 (2023), HB 1042 (2023), and HB 1998 (2024). We appreciate all your and your colleagues' work on this challenging issue.

As directed by recent legislation, cities and counties have completed significant changes to local development regulations. Those changes were primarily adopted in 2024 and 2025, with some changes still pending in 2026, through Comprehensive Plan Periodic Updates and have already achieved results, including the following:

- Each jurisdiction has made strategic changes to ensure that the city and urban growth area can accommodate housing at all income levels, including removing restrictions to subsidized housing in all zones except industrial.
- In the Puget Sound area alone, housing capacity was expanded by over 800,000 units, focused in areas zoned for moderate density, including small apartments and mid-rise multifamily units. (Source: [PRSC Housing Incentives and Tools Survey](#))
- Urban growth areas across the state must allow up to two Accessory Dwelling Units per parcel.

As it takes time for upstream policy and legislative changes to be realized in the form of new construction, APA WA suggests consideration of a modified approach. **In lieu of imposing detailed new requirements in state law at this time, consider requiring local governments who do not meet their housing targets within five years of their periodic update to open up commercial and**

mixed-use zones to more residential development. Specific suggested legislative language is offered below; legislators may also wish to keep specific provisions from the current version of SB 6026 regarding the geographic areas to which these provisions should apply.

RCW 36.70A.070(2)

NEW (i) Following adoption of a mandatory Periodic Update, cities over 30,000 population that are not meeting the five (5) year targets for housing serving all economic segments of the community shall remove regulations that prohibit ground floor residential development in commercial and mixed-use zones.

APA WA believes this policy approach would meet the intent of SB 6026 and provide incentive to local jurisdictions to meet adopted housing targets, while allowing time for existing legislative efforts to play out in local jurisdictions.

In conclusion, APA WA supports initiatives designed to increase affordable housing choices and requests that you consider a different policy approach in **SB 6026**. We welcome an opportunity to speak with you about the suggestion.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



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