

# Housing Options for Working Families



Working families are struggling to get affordable housing near their jobs and communities. The Legislature can increase housing options for the unhoused, retirees, and low- and middle-income families by reforming exclusionary zoning, legalizing significant density near transit, and making it easier to build affordable housing.

- ❑ **Reform Exclusionary Zoning** (HB 1110/SB 5190) – Zoning that blocks construction of more affordable, denser, housing options should be reformed so more housing options are available for wage-earning workers and their families.

HB 1110/SB 5190 are bipartisan bills to lift restrictions on building houses for more than one family, such as duplexes and triplexes. Zoning restrictions that limit denser development not only make housing less affordable and accessible, they drive urban sprawl which harms the environment. Too many cities are zoned, primarily or almost exclusively for only one kind of housing: single-family homes, which also happen to be the most expensive kind.

HB 1110/SB 5190 proposes to allow up to four homes on a single residential lot in cities with populations of 6,000 or greater, or if they are located within the urban growth areas of major cities, like Seattle. It would also allow up to six homes on lots within a half-mile of frequent public transit stops, creating more affordable housing opportunities for wage-earning Washingtonians.

- ❑ **Legalize Significant Density Near Transit** (HB 1517/SB 5466) – Last year, Washington passed a transportation funding package that included \$3 billion for public transit, by far its biggest investment ever. The state now has a responsibility to get the most out of that investment, and the way to do that is to have more people living and working near transit stops. In urban planning-speak, that's called transit-oriented development (TOD).

HB 1517/SB 5466 would provide development targets within the 1,320 yards around light rail and bus rapid transit station areas and give local jurisdictions flexible tools to meet these targets in ways that reflect the unique characteristics of their communities. The Urban



Institute predicts that this approach will create hundreds of thousands of new housing units close to the frequent transit service that will help families and workers commute to work and services efficiently.

Housing development near transit corridors helps working families spend less time stuck in traffic and more time with each other. These kinds of investments give people more choices and afford them the freedom to get to work, to the store, to school, and to places of recreation without having to rely on expensive vehicles or congested roads if they choose not to. HB 1517/SB 5466 will help address both our housing crisis and traffic problems.

- ❑ **Make It Easier to Build** (HB 1167) – By streamlining permitting, and removing parking mandates, lawmakers can remove barriers to housing construction and lower homes' costs.
- ❑ **Flexibility on Parking Minimums** (HB 1351/SB 5456) – Prohibiting the imposition of minimum parking requirements except under certain circumstances, particularly within proximity to public transit services.



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906 Columbia St. SW, Olympia, WA, 98501 – 360-943-0608 – [wslc.org](http://wslc.org) – [TheStand.org](http://TheStand.org)

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