



CITY OF SARATOGA

13777 FRUITVALE AVENUE • SARATOGA, CALIFORNIA 95070 • (408) 868-1200

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Mary-Lynne Bernald

Kookie Fitzsimmons

Rishi Kumar

Tina Walia

Yan Zhao

Incorporated October 22, 1956

April 7, 2021

The Honorable Anna Caballero
California State Senate
State Capitol Building, Room 5052
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Opposition to Senate Bill 6 (Caballero)

Dear Senator Caballero,

I am writing on behalf of the City Council of the City of Saratoga to express opposition to Senate Bill (SB) 6, which would allow high density residential development on parcels zoned for office or retail commercial if the development meets or exceeds density the legislation deems appropriate to accommodate housing for lower income households, including a minimum density of 20 units per acre for suburban jurisdictions. This bill does not require developers to designate any of the new units as below market for the lower income families that need them the most. Furthermore, development applications submitted under SB 6 would also be eligible for streamlined ministerial approval allowed under SB 35 if the project meets SB 35 requirements and at least 50% of the office or retail commercial site has been vacant for 3 years or more. SB 6 will effectively eliminate the ability of cities to protect their commercial space and establish high density housing zones without regard to adjoining land uses.

Housing affordability and homelessness are among the most critical issues facing California cities. Proposed laws like SB 6 assume that the housing crisis can be solved by eliminating imagined barriers to development. For at least the past 15 years, Saratoga has not denied a single application for housing. SB 6 and other similar bills that seek to chip away at local zoning regulations put developers first, not the lower income individuals and families that need us to find a way to solve the affordable housing crisis. SB 6 would fail to increase development of below market units.

We urge the State Legislature and the Governor to reject this bill and seek a collaborative solution to the housing crisis that allows local jurisdictions to retain local control while also providing the much-needed resources for lower income Californians and creating real incentives for development of below market units.

Sincerely,

Yan Zhao, Mayor
City of Saratoga

