

Claudia Bill-de la Peña
Mayor

May 3, 2021

The Honorable Mike McGuire
Chair, Senate Governance and Finance Committee
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 621 (EGGMAN) CONVERSION OF HOTELS AND MOTELS.
STREAMLINING- NOTICE OF OPPOSITION**

Dear Chair McGuire:

The City of Thousand Oaks must respectfully oppose SB 621. This bill would authorize a developer to submit an application to convert a motel or hotel into multifamily housing units under a ministerial approval process, with the commitment to set aside 10% of the units to lower income. The resulting housing units may be used for rent or sale. The units dedicated for low income must be restricted for 55 years if it is rental or 45 years if it is for sale. Qualifying motels or hotels must be vacant for six months prior to the application.

The City of Thousand Oaks is in its 6th Cycle of its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and Housing Element Update, while also amending the General Plan. During public hearings and planning sessions, residents have expressed the need for more affordable housing units for essential workers, young adults, families and senior adults. Although SB 621 is a resourceful approach to develop more multifamily housing, conversions will only yield 10% in affordable units. The bill eliminates local discretion yet benefits from CEQA exemption, parking limitations and streamlining permit process.

Motels and hotels are short-term affordable housing alternatives. In recent years, motel/hotel conversions have become favorable options for housing homeless individuals and families. During the recent pandemic, the City of Thousand Oaks was able to shelter homeless individuals under Project House Key to provide temporary shelter.

Grants under the auspices of Project HomeKey have allowed local governments to convert existing motels/hotels into transitional units. According to Governor Newsom 94 motels across the State produced over 6,000 critically needed units for homeless individuals.

As the State Legislature continues to place mandates for cities to address local homeless issues, many cities struggle to find parcels or lack funding to construct new emergency shelters or transitional housing. Motel/hotels have become a viable alternative as a quick pathway for housing production. By allowing developers the ability to convert existing motels/hotels into market rate housing projects, impacts the potential supply local governments have that can quickly and efficiency used for homeless housing.

For these reasons, the City of Thousand Oaks opposes SB 621.

Sincerely,



Claudia Bill-de la Peña
Mayor

cc:

Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin
Senator Henry Stern
David Mullinax- Regional Public Affairs Manager, dmullinax@cacities.org
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