



American Planning Association  
**California Chapter**

*Creating Great Communities for All*

March 5, 2021

The Honorable Speaker Pro Tem Toni Atkins  
State Capitol, Room 205  
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT FOR SB 9 (ATKINS) – Streamlined Approval for Small-Scale Developments of Duplexes and Lot Splits**

Dear Senator Atkins:

The American Planning Association, California Chapter (APA California) is pleased to support your bill, SB 9, which would require ministerial approval for both duplexes and urban lot splits if certain conditions are met.

APA California supports efforts to streamline and encourage housing development, particularly in a time when California continues to face an unprecedented housing crisis, compounded by the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. SB 9 specifically requires a local jurisdiction to ministerially approve a housing development of up to two units (a duplex) or the subdivision of a parcel map into two equal parcels (an urban lot split), while still allowing a jurisdiction to impose objective zoning and design standards that don't conflict with the provisions of this bill. The bill applies specific conditions that must be met to approve these types of developments, including that the development is located in an urbanized area and is not located on a number of protected and sensitive habitats or environmental hazards. The bill also applies important anti-displacement protections by prohibiting the approval of a development that requires the demolition or alteration of existing housing that is deed restricted or has been occupied for the last three years.

Finally, SB 9 exempts the adoption of an ordinance to implement the provisions of SB 9 from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). With the exemption from CEQA, jurisdictions will be able to implement these legislatively approved changes quickly to encourage these types of developments that are consistent with state policy.

APA supports these changes to encourage the production of small multi-family projects, which will increase the market for generally more affordable units. We appreciate all your efforts and leadership on this issue and are pleased to support SB 9. If you have any questions, please contact Lauren De Valencia, [lauren@stefangeorge.com](mailto:lauren@stefangeorge.com), APA California's lobbyist.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Eric Phillips'.

Eric Phillips  
Vice President Policy and Legislation  
APA California

cc: Senate Governance and Finance Committee  
Senate Housing Committee  
Senate Republican Caucus  
The Governor  
The Office of Planning and Research