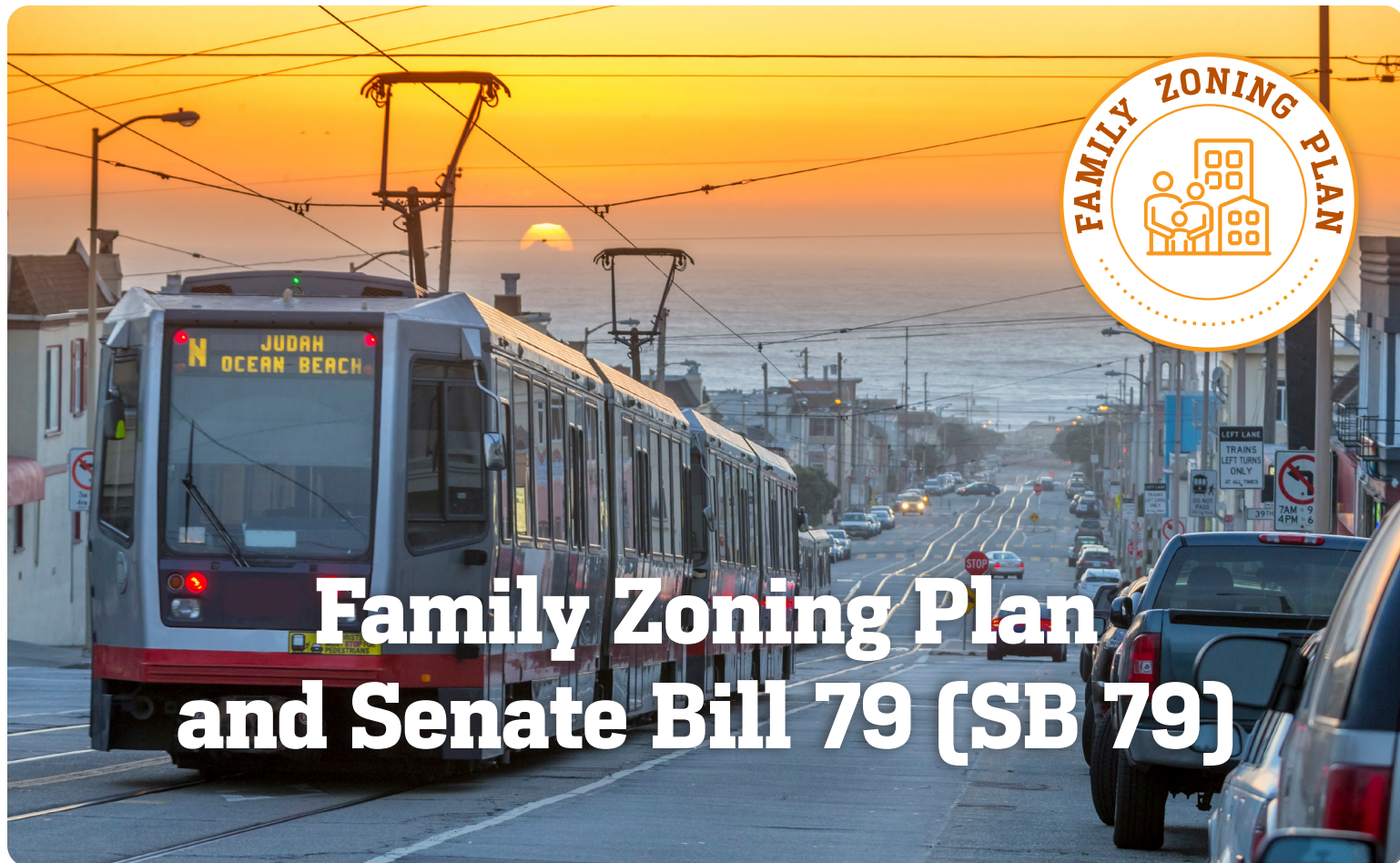




Family Zoning Plan and Senate Bill 79 (SB 79)

FAMILY ZONING PLAN AND SB 79 COMPLIANCE

- 1 California Senate Bill 79 (SB 79), signed into law in October 2025, creates stronger linkages between transit and housing.** SB 79 changes height and density rules to allow taller buildings near major transit stops. These changes are aimed at increasing housing affordability and availability, strengthening transit systems, and decreasing carbon emissions.
- 2 In many cases, SB 79 allows taller heights than those proposed under Mayor Lurie's Family Zoning Plan.** This is especially true in the residential areas around transit and commercial streets, where the Family Zoning Plan proposes to keep the existing 40-foot height limit, compared to heights of 55 to 95 feet (5 to 9 stories) permitted under SB 79.
- 3 The Family Zoning Plan would qualify as San Francisco's "Alternative Plan," allowing the use of local height limits instead of SB 79 heights.** Based on preliminary analysis, the combination of the proposed Family Zoning Plan plus existing zoning elsewhere would meet the criteria in SB 79 to qualify as an "Alternative Plan." There are a small number of parcels that are not subject to changes under the Family Zoning Plan that will require modest zoning changes to bring them into compliance before the law goes into effect on July 1, 2026.
- 4 The Family Zoning Plan is a tailored, neighborhood-driven approach to meet San Francisco's housing needs.** It provides equivalent densities as SB 79 but focuses more of the new housing on transit and commercial streets, with more modest changes in the surrounding residential areas.



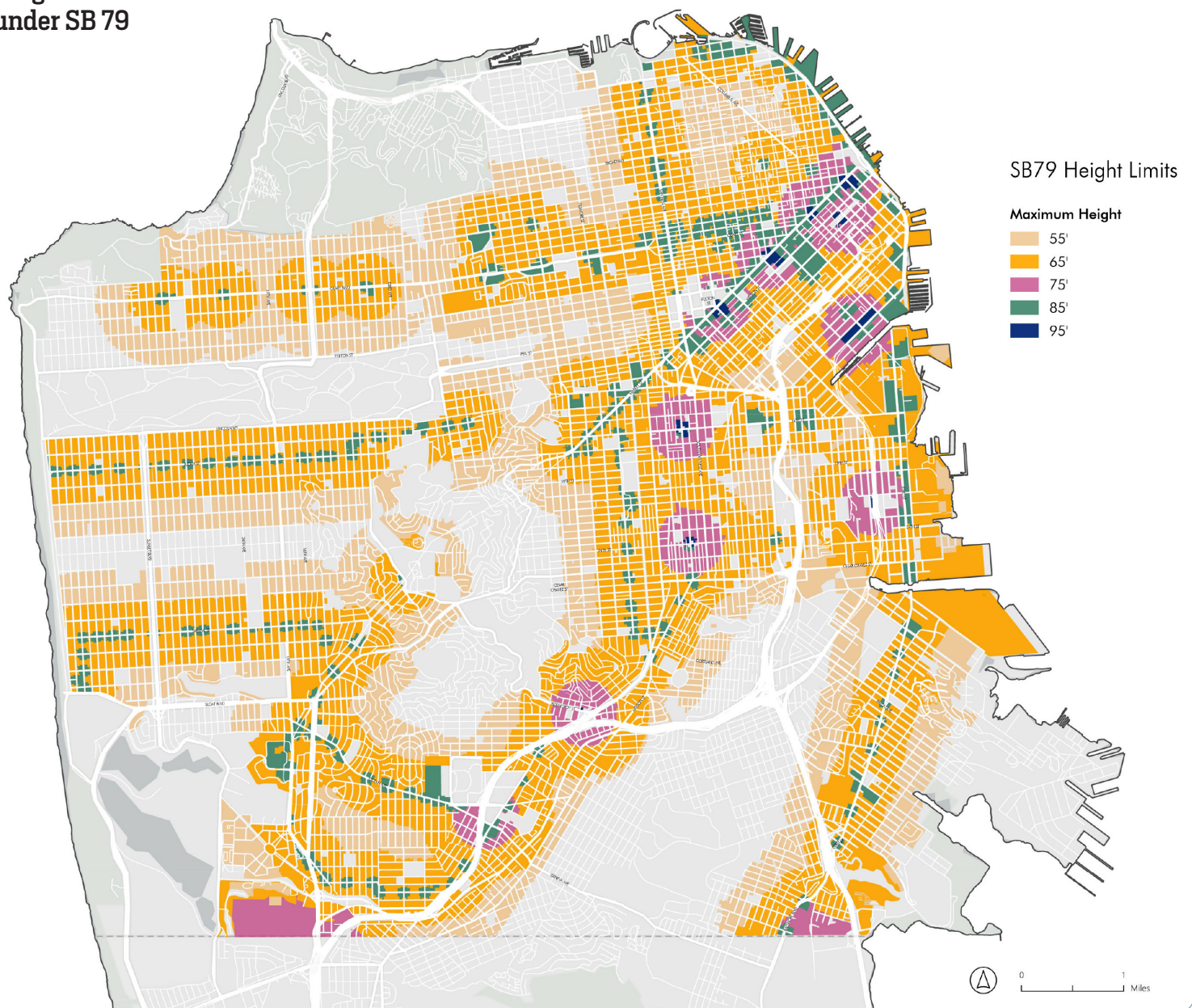
SB 79 OVERVIEW

California Senate Bill 79 (SB 79) takes effect July 1, 2026. However, the legislation has **phased implementation**, with different requirements coming into effect at different times.

It establishes statewide minimum zoning standards for allowed housing density and building height limits near major transit stops. More than three-quarters of properties in San Francisco (120,000 parcels) fall within areas subject to SB79. Over 60% of these properties (75,000 parcels) are within the geography of the Family Zoning Plan.

The allowed heights and densities vary by type of transit stop and distance from that transit stop, as shown in the map below. The greatest heights and densities are allowed near Caltrain and BART stations, and more intermediate heights and densities are allowed near Muni light rail and major bus rapid transit stops.

Heights Limits under SB 79



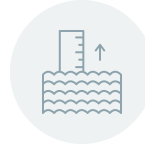
July 2026 to 2032: Near-term Compliance and Temporary Exemptions

From July 2026 until 2032 (one year after San Francisco's next Housing Element is due), SB 79 provides **temporary exemptions for certain properties**. During this period, individual parcels will be exempted from SB 79 if any of the following conditions applies:



Minimum Density

The underlying zoning allows at least 50% of the density permitted under SB 79



Sea Level Rise

It is in an area vulnerable to one -foot or more of sea level rise



Low Resource

It is in an area identified as “low resource” by the state



Historic Landmarks

It was listed on a local historic register as of January 1, 2025.

With the adoption of the Family Zoning Plan, most sites in San Francisco would meet these near-term requirements and be exempt from SB 79 through 2032. However, a small number of parcels outside of the plan area would not meet these criteria and would be subject to SB 79. The City could make modest zoning change outside of the Family Zoning Plan so that these parcels qualify for the temporary exemption (i.e., by changing the zoning to allow at least 50% of the SB 79 density).

2032 and After: Long-Term Compliance and “Alternative Plan”

After 2032, the temporary exemptions will expire, and SB 79 heights and densities would apply to these properties.

San Francisco may also adopt an **Alternative Plan** in lieu of using the heights permitted under SB 79. San Francisco can create this Alternative Plan and seek state certification any time before 2032.

To qualify, **an Alternative Plan must do all the following:**

- Provide at least equivalent overall housing capacity as SB 79 (both in units and total floor area); and,
- Maintain at least 50% of SB 79 densities on every parcel that allows housing; and,
- Maintain at least 50% of the total unit capacity in each station area compared to SB79.

How will Adoption of the Family Zoning Plan Affect SB 79 Implementation?

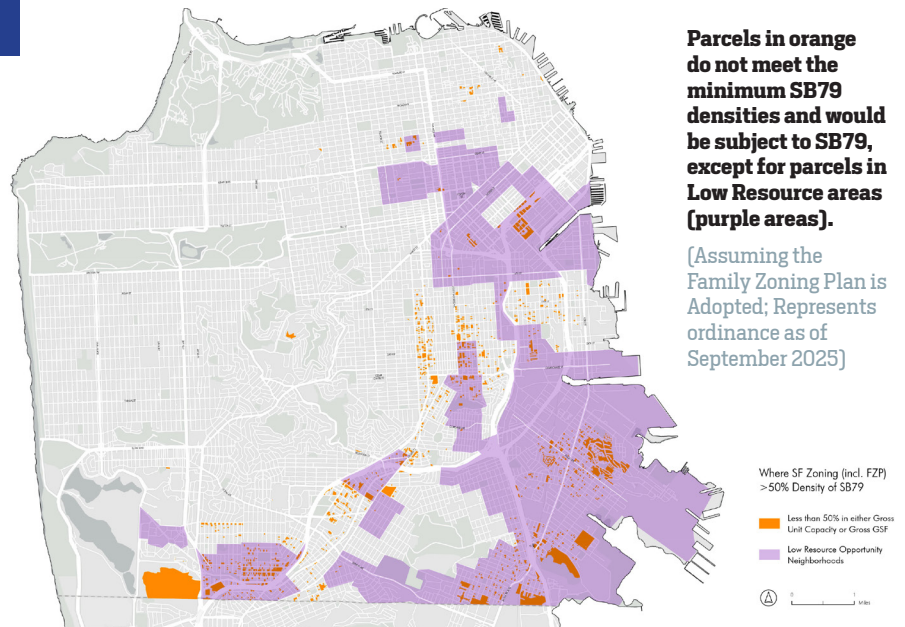
With the adoption of the Family Zoning Plan, San Francisco will be well on its way to having an Alternative Plan that allows the City to define its own height limits, rather than use those required by SB 79.

If the plan is adopted (as proposed in September 2025), the total housing capacity in the rezoned areas would be greater than what SB79 requires, thus meeting the main criteria to qualify as an Alternative Plan. Because some parcels not included in the Family Zoning Plan currently permit less than 50% of SB79 densities, modest zoning changes on these properties (as mapped below) would be necessary for the City to submit a qualifying Alternative Plan that covers the whole city.

IF THE FAMILY ZONING PLAN IS ADOPTED

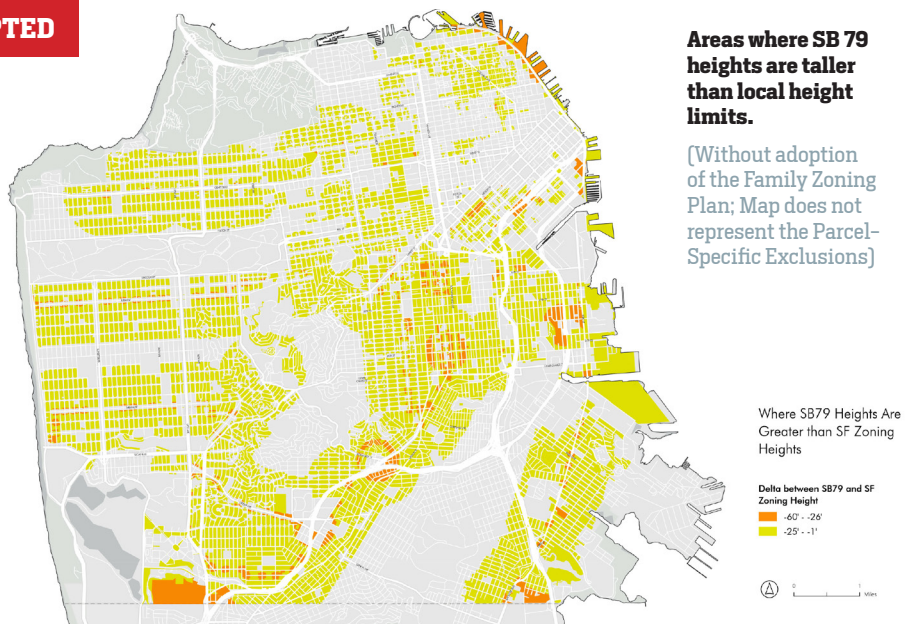
SB 79 heights and densities would only apply to a limited number of areas in the city, which are approximated in orange in the following map. The properties that qualify for exemptions through 2032 are sites in a low-resource area, sites vulnerable to sea level rise, and local historic landmarks.

If the City makes additional, modest zoning changes to these parcels, San Francisco will be able to create a compliant Alternative Plan to exempt the City from SB 79.



IF THE FAMILY ZONING PLAN IS NOT ADOPTED

SB 79 default heights and densities would replace existing zoning and result in taller buildings across large areas of the city. SB 79 would permit greater height than the Family Zoning Plan on 57,000 parcels. Outside of the Family Zoning Plan area, SB 79 would permit greater height than existing zoning on 39,000 parcels. This map shows how much taller buildings might be under SB 79 compared to local height limits (if the Family Zoning Plan is not adopted).



SUMMARY

Adopting the Family Zoning Plan allows San Francisco to:

- Tailor growth to San Francisco's unique geography and community needs.
- Avoid Builders Remedy and other state penalties while meeting other city goals.
- Work towards an Alternative Plan that avoids extensive height increases allowed under SB 79.

If the Family Zoning Plan is not adopted:

- SB 79's default zoning will apply citywide.
- This would result in increased building heights and densities, especially in residential areas near transit.

Learn More and Get Involved!

For more information, visit the Family Zoning Plan website (see link below) for resources, including these factsheets:

- [Overview: What is the Family Zoning Plan?](#)
- [Factsheet: What Happens if We Don't Rezone?](#)
- [Factsheet: Small Business Protections](#)
- [Factsheet: Tenant Protections](#)
- [Factsheet: Rezoning Capacity Calculations](#)

Learn More and Get Involved!

- ① Visit our website below to learn more about the Family Zoning Plan and sign up for email updates.
- ② Share your thoughts by attending a hearing or sending letters to the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, and Mayor.
- ③ Email us if you want to invite the Planning Department to speak to your community group.



Learn more, visit us online:
sfplanning.org/sf-family-zoning-plan



Or contact us at:
sf.housing.choice@sfgov.org

