

Date of Hearing: January 14, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Juan Carrillo, Chair

AB 748 (Harabedian) – As Amended January 5, 2026

SUBJECT: Single-family and multifamily housing units: preapproved plans

SUMMARY: Requires local agencies to develop a program for the preapproval of single-family and multifamily residential housing plans and include information in their annual progress reports (APRs) regarding the number of residential housing units that are approved using a preapproved housing plan. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires each local agency to develop a program for the preapproval of single-family and multifamily residential housing plans by July 1, 2027. The program shall comply with all of the following:
 - a) Requires a local agency to accept single-family and multifamily residential housing plan submissions for preapproval.
 - b) Requires a local agency to approve or deny the application for preapproval pursuant to standards established in applicable state and local housing regulations.
 - c) Allows a local agency to charge the applicant the same permitting fees that the local agency would charge an applicant seeking approval for the same-sized single-family or multifamily residential housing unit in reviewing and approving a preapproved housing plan submission.
 - d) Requires an application for preapproval to include a statement by the applicant that the applicant has sufficient authority, license, or ownership interest in the plan to submit the plan for preapproval and, if approved, posted on the local agency's website, as required by the bill.
- 2) Requires a local agency to, as part of the program specified in 1) above, post single-family and multifamily residential housing plans that are preapproved on the local agency's website.
 - a) Provides that the posting of a preapproved plan, pursuant to 2) above, shall not be considered an endorsement of the applicant or approval of the applicant's application for a single-family or multifamily residential housing unit by the local agency.
 - b) Requires a local agency to post the contact information of the applicant of a preapproved housing plan, as provided by the applicant. Provides that the local agency is not responsible for the accuracy of the contact information provided by the applicant.
 - c) Requires a local agency to remove a preapproved housing plan from their internet website within 30 days of receiving a request for removal from the applicant.
- 3) Allows a local agency to admit plans that have been developed and preapproved by the local agency for single-family and multifamily residential housing plans into the program.

- a) Specifies that a local agency is not required to post a preapproved single-family or multifamily residential housing plan that is not submitted by an applicant.
- 4) Provides that a local agency is not prevented from voluntarily accepting or admitting additional plans at higher densities in additional zoning district into the preapproved housing plan program, at the local agency's discretion.
- 5) Prohibits the preapproval program from applying to single-family or multifamily residential housing plans intended for use in a master-planned community, a planned unit development, or a similar large-scale development that includes the subdivision of land for the construction of multiple new housing units.
- 6) Requires a local agency to approve or deny an application for a single-family or multifamily residential housing unit that uses a preapproved housing plan ministerially without discretionary review. The bill also requires the local agency to either approve or deny the application within 30 days from the date the local agency receives a completed application, if the lot for which the application is proposed meets the soil conditions, topography, flood zone, zoning regulations, and design review standards for which the preapproved plan was designed and the application utilizes either of the following:
 - a) A plan for a single-family or multifamily residential housing unit that has been preapproved by the local agency within the current triennial California Building Standards Code rulemaking cycle.
 - b) A plan that is identical to a plan used in an application for a single- or multifamily residential housing unit approved by the local agency within the current triennial California Building Standards Code (CBSC) rulemaking cycle.
- 7) Requires large jurisdictions, as defined, and small jurisdiction, as defined, to include the number of units of residential housing that are approved using a preapproved housing plan in their APR beginning on April 1, 2028, and April 1, 2030, respectively.
- 8) Prohibits the bill from applying to a small jurisdiction, as defined, until January 1, 2029.
- 9) Defines the following terms:
 - a) "Large jurisdiction" means a county that is not a small jurisdiction or any city with a population with 25,000 or more as of January 1, 2019, within that county.
 - b) "Local agency" means a city, county, or city and county.
 - c) "Multifamily residential housing" means a building containing 2-10 residential units.
 - d) "Single-family residential housing" has the same meaning as defined in applicable housing regulations.
 - e) "Small jurisdictions" means a county with a population of less than 250,000 as of January 1, 2019, any city within that county, or a city with a population of less than 25,000 as of January 1, 2019.

- 10) Finds and declares that the lack of housing is a matter of statewide concern and is not a municipal affair as that term is used in Section 5 of Article XI of the California Constitution. Therefore, this bill applies to all cities, including charter cities.
- 11) Provides that no reimbursement is required by this bill because a local agency or school district has the authority to levy service charges, fees, or assessments sufficient to pay for the program or level of service mandated by this bill.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires each local agency to develop a program for the preapproval of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) by January 1, 2025, as follows:
 - a) Establishes that the local agency must:
 - i) Accept ADU plans for preapproval from any applicant without restriction.
 - ii) Approve or deny the application for preapproval pursuant to applicable state and local housing regulations.
 - b) Allows the local agency to charge the applicant permitting fees for the review of the plans submitted for preapproval, as long as the fees are the same as those that would be charged to review the plans if a standard ADU application were filed.
 - c) Requires the local agency to post the preapproved ADU plans on the agency's website, with the contact information of the party that submitted the plans included. The posting of the plans shall not be considered an endorsement of the applicant, or an approval of the applicant's application. The local agency is required to remove preapproved plans within 30 days, at the applicant's request.
 - d) Allows the local agency to admit ADU plans developed and approved by the local agency independently of this program into the preapproved ADU program. [Government Code (GOV) § 65852.27]
- 2) Requires a local agency to approve or deny an application for an ADU ministerially and without discretionary review within 30 days, if the applicant uses either of the following:
 - a) ADU plans preapproved pursuant to the program established in 1), as long as they were approved by the local agency within the current triennial CBSC rulemaking cycle.
 - b) ADU plans that are identical to a plan that was preapproved pursuant to 1), as long as they were approved by the local agency within the current CBSC rulemaking cycle. (GOV § 65852.27)
- 3) Finds and declares that the lack of housing is matter of statewide concerns and is not a municipal affair. Therefore, the program described in 1) and 2) above applies to all cities, including charter cities. (GOV § 65852.27)

FISCAL EFFECT: This bill is keyed fiscal and contains a state-mandated local program.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Bill Summary.** This bill requires small jurisdictions and large jurisdictions to develop a program for the preapproval of single-family and multifamily residential housing plans by January 1, 2029, and by July 1, 2027, respectively. The bill defines small jurisdictions as a county with a population of less than 250,000 as of January 1, 2019, any city within that county, or a city with a population of less than 25,000 as of January 1, 2019. Conversely, the bill defines a large jurisdiction as a county that is not a small jurisdiction or any city with a population with 25,000 or more as of January 1, 2019, within that county.

Under this bill, if a single-family or multifamily residential housing plan is preapproved, the bill requires the local agency to post the preapproved plan and the applicant's contact information on the local agency's website. The bill specifies that posting a preapproved plan is not an endorsement of the applicant or approval of the applicant's application for a single-family or multifamily residential housing unit by the local agency. The bill also specifies that the local agency is not responsible for the accuracy of the applicant's contact information. If a local agency receives a request to remove a preapproved housing plan from their website by the applicant, the bill requires that the local agency remove the preapproved housing plan within 30 days of the request.

If a local agency receives an application for a single-family or multifamily residential housing unit that uses a preapproved plan, the bill requires the local agency to approve or deny the application ministerially without discretionary review. The bill further requires a local agency to approve or deny the application with 30 days from the date of the local agency receiving a completed application, if:

- a) The lot for which the application is proposed meets soil the conditions, topography, flood zone, zoning regulations and design review standards for which the preapprove housing plan was designed; and,
- b) The application utilizes either of the following:
 - i) A plan for a single-family or multifamily residential housing unit that has been preapproved by the local agency within the current triennial building code cycle.
 - ii) A plan that is identical to a plan used in an application for a single- or multifamily residential housing unit by the local agency withing the current triennial building code cycle.

Lastly, this bill requires local agencies to include information on the number of residential housing units that are approved using a preapproved housing plan on their APRs to Department of Housing and Community Development. Small jurisdictions are required to report this information on their APR beginning April 1, 2030, and large jurisdictions are required to report this information beginning April 1, 2028.

This bill is sponsored by the author.

- 2) **Author's Statement.** According to the author, "AB 748 streamlines the approval process for both single-family and multifamily housing by requiring local agencies to establish pre-approved housing plan programs. Under the bill, large jurisdictions would be required to

develop these programs by July 1, 2027, while small jurisdictions would have until January 1, 2029. By providing homeowners and developers with a standardized set of housing models to choose from, the bill not only accelerates post-disaster rebuilding but also facilitates the construction of new housing statewide. This standardized and predictable approval pathway cuts through bureaucratic red tape, reduces costs, and removes delays that often prevent housing from being built. By making it easier to rebuild and create new homes, AB 748 increases overall housing supply, supports faster community recovery, and helps ensure more families can access stable, affordable places to live.”

- 3) **Permitting Power.** Planning for and approving new development is mainly a local responsibility. The California Constitution allows cities and counties to “make and enforce within its limits, all local, police, sanitary and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws.” It is from this fundamental power, commonly called the police power, that cities and counties derive their authority to regulate behavior to preserve the health, safety, and welfare of the public – including land use authority. Cities and counties enforce this land use authority through zoning regulations, as well as through an “entitlement process” for obtaining discretionary as well as ministerial approvals.

The scale of the proposed development, as well as the existing environmental setting determine the degree of local review that occurs. For larger developments, the local entitlement process commonly requires multiple discretionary decisions regarding the subdivision of land, environmental review pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and project review by the local agency’s legislative body (city council or county board) or by a planning commission delegated by the legislative body.

- 4) **Building Codes.** The California Building Standards Code (CBSC) contains building standards and regulations as adopted by the CBSC. These standards include, among other requirements, structural standards for building safety (the Building Code), fire safety standards (the Fire Code), energy efficiency standards (the Energy Code), and standards for green buildings (CalGreen).

The CBSC updates the Building Standards Code on a three-year cycle. Once adopted at the state level, cities and counties in California then enact an ordinance to adopt the codes. New construction and improvements to existing buildings must comply with the current building codes, and improvements to an existing building may trigger additional code upgrades for other parts of the building.

Existing law requires the building department of every city or county to enforce the provisions of the State Housing Law, the California Building Standards Code (CBSC), and the other specified rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to the State Housing Law.

- 5) **The Permit Streamlining Act.** The Permit Streamlining Act (PSA) requires public agencies to act fairly and promptly on applications for development proposals. Under the PSA, public agencies have 30 days to determine whether applications for development projects are complete and request additional information; failure to act results in an application being “deemed complete.” The PSA applies to the discretionary approval phase of a development review process; this is the phase where the agency, in its discretion, decides whether it approves of the concept outlined in the development proposal.

- 6) **Preapproved Plans.** In an effort to increase standardization and predictability in housing approvals, there has been increased interest at the state and local level in preapproved plans for housing development.

Building on the success of prior ADU laws, AB 1332 (Juan Carrillo), Chapter 759, Statutes of 2023, established a preapproved plan program for ADUs which this bill draws heavily from. Under AB 1332, local governments were required to develop a program for the preapproval of ADU plans by January 1, 2025. Under this program, anyone can submit plans for preapproval, and the local government must review them based on existing state ADU and building code standards. The local agency is allowed to charge the same permitting fees as they would for a regular ADU application to review submittals for ADUs requesting preapproval. Once approved, these plans must be posted on the local government's website, along with the applicant's contact information (though the agency isn't responsible for its accuracy). Applicants can also request their ADU plans be removed if they no longer wish to participate in the program. Local governments are also allowed to include their own preapproved ADU plans or ones approved by other local governments in California in the preapproved plan program, since the same ADU standards apply statewide. If a local government receives an application for a detached ADU using a preapproved or previously approved plan from the current building code cycle, the local government must approve or deny the permit application within 30 days, without discretionary review. Because this program just went into effect on January 1, 2025, it is still too early to tell how successful or impactful it will be in terms of increasing ADU production.

- 7) **Related Legislation.** AB 1206 (Harabedian) of 2025 is a substantially similar bill which was held in Senate Appropriations Committee.
- 8) **Previous Legislation.** AB 1332 (Juan Carrillo) Chapter 759, Statutes of 2023, required local governments to create a program for the pre-approval of ADUs.
- 9) **Arguments in Support.** None on file.
- 10) **Arguments in Opposition.** None on file.
- 11) **Double-Referral.** This bill is double-referred to the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee, where it will be heard on January 14, 2026.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None

Opposition

None

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