

Impact of Recent State Legislation on the Venice Coastal Zone

Recent California housing legislation significantly reshapes development rules in the Venice Coastal Zone. While these laws aim to accelerate housing production, reduce parking, and increase density near transit, none override the California Coastal Act. Instead, they require certified Land Use Plan (LUP)/Local Coastal Program (LCP) amendments and Coastal Development Permit (CDP) consistency determinations, creating an ongoing tension between state housing mandates and coastal access, environmental protection, and hazard policies.

1. Assembly Bill 2097 – Parking Requirements

AB 2097 prohibits local governments from imposing minimum automobile parking requirements for most residential, commercial, and other projects located within ½ mile of major transit stops.

Impact in Venice Coastal Zone:

- Venice has several transit nodes (e.g., near the Metro E Line and high-frequency bus corridors). Projects near these stops can proceed without mandated parking, reducing construction costs and encouraging transit-oriented development.
- Coastal land use plans and the Coastal Act still apply; AB 2097 does not override coastal resource protections, but any local coastal program (LCP) must adjust parking standards for eligible sites.
- The City and Coastal Commission are navigating how to update LCPs to integrate AB 2097 while safeguarding coastal access and managing parking impacts from inland visitors.

2. Senate Bill 79 – Transit-Oriented Housing

SB 79 (effective July 1, 2026) preempts local density limits and legalizes higher-density, multi-family housing near public transit stops, overriding some local zoning controls and offering eligibility for streamlined or ministerial approval pathways for projects meeting criteria.

Impact in Venice Coastal Zone:

- The legislation is likely to apply to areas near transit corridors (e.g., along Lincoln Boulevard and near rail/bus nodes), boosting potential housing capacity.
- Local coastal programs, however, must still concurrently comply with coastal policy on resource protection and public access, meaning SB 79 benefits may be regulated by coastal permitting requirements even when density preemption applies.
- City of Los Angeles pushback: The City Council has formally opposed aspects of SB 79 and is pursuing local alternative plans permitted under the law, allowing tailored zoning standards so long as net capacity is not reduced across all SB 79 areas.
- In coastal contexts, density increases must still be evaluated under the Coastal Act and certified LCP policies (e.g., public access, scenic resources, hazards), meaning even if SB 79 encourages density near transit, coastal permitting may add project conditions or constraints.

3. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Legislation and SB 1077

California's ADU regime (culminating in multiple new laws through 2024-2025) broadly mandates ministerial approval of ADUs/JADUs, reduces parking requirements, and streamlines ADU permitting statewide, reflecting an ongoing trend toward expanding smaller housing units.

SB 1077 (2024) requires the California Coastal Commission and HCD to develop guidance by mid-2026 to help local governments amend coastal programs and simplify ADU permitting in the Coastal Zone.

Impact in Venice Coastal Zone:

- Current ADU permitting in the Coastal Zone often triggers a CDP, which lengthen timelines and uncertainty. SB 1077's guidance aims to streamline LCP amendments so ADUs can be processed more like inland ADUs, while still respecting Coastal Act policies.
- ADUs remain subject to coastal resource and hazard review where appropriate.

4. State Density Bonus Law

California's Density Bonus Law offers developers incentives (increased unit count, reduced parking, waivers of standards) for providing affordable housing and requires that these bonuses be permitted consistent with state law.

- State law requires density bonuses and incentives be administered consistent with the Coastal Act and LCPs; they do not displace Coastal Act protections.
- Amendments like AB 2560 (pending, and potential good news for us) would clarify that coastal projects must obtain CDPs and remain consistent with coastal resource protection while implementing density bonuses.

Impact in Venice Coastal Zone:

- Density bonus incentives can encourage more housing in areas like Venice, but implementation must be integrated into the City's certified LCP so that coastal access, hazards, and sensitive habitat protections are upheld.

5. SB 9 / SB 10 (lot splits & middle housing)

State laws like SB 9 enable duplexes and lot splits; in the Coastal Zone these are implemented through LCP amendments and remain subject to Coastal Act policies. Local LUP/LCP provisions must be updated to harmonize SB 9 while protecting coastal resources.

6. CEQA and Housing Streamlining

Recent state CEQA reforms (e.g., AB 130) reduce environmental review for certain infill housing, potentially expediting development timelines; however, coastal projects still often trigger similar protections through coastal permitting.

7. AB 2011 Affordable Housing & High Road Jobs Act

Laws like AB 2011 (Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act) allow ministerial, CEQA-exempt approvals for certain affordable housing on commercial corridors and mixed-income projects. But Coastal permits are still required.

8. Summary of Impact in the Venice Coastal Zone

All housing mandates in the Coastal Zone still must be consistent with the Coastal Access and Coastal Resource protections of the Coastal Act and the certified Venice Land Use Plan (the Venice LCP in future). CDPs remain central to approvals. These new laws offer tools to reduce procedural barriers for affordable housing projects but do not exempt coastal development from Coastal Act and LUP/LCP consistency. Coastal permitting and resource protection remain mandatory.