

Submitter: Mike Riddle
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4035

To: Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee,

1. The need to scale: We need "Room to Build"

Current acreage restrictions often force developers to prioritize density over livability. When land is limited, every square foot must be a buildable lot just to make the project break even, which leaves no room for community infrastructure.

The Point: HB 4035 increases the acreage limits, which allows us to move beyond choosing between a housing unit and a public park. With more land, we can deliver both.

The Goal: To transition from simply placing "units on a map" to creating cohesive neighborhoods that foster long-term pride in ownership.

2. Economic Viability: Amenities Require "Rooftops"

Essential community features—such as playgrounds, childcare centers, or community pools—require a specific "rooftop count" to be sustainable. Small-scale developments lack the population density to fund or maintain these facilities.

The Point: Larger-scale projects provide the necessary "customer base" to support and maintain high-quality amenities like splash pads and integrated trail systems.

The Goal: To ensure that "quality of life" features are financially viable and built into the project without inflating the final price of the homes.

3. Market Demand: Delivering Walkable Lifestyles

Today's market—from first-time homebuyers to retirees—demands connectivity. Residents no longer want to drive 20 minutes for a coffee or a park; they want these features integrated into their neighborhood.

The Point: HB 4035 provides the flexibility to integrate small-scale commercial spaces and diverse housing types (like townhomes and "missing middle" units) within the same development.

The Goal: To create "15-minute neighborhoods" where daily needs and recreation are within a short, walkable distance from the front door.