



February 17, 2026

House Economic Matters Committee

Bill: House Bill 691 - State Government - Procedures - Permitting Efficiency for Housing Development Projects

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Economic Committee,

On behalf of the City of Gaithersburg, we respectfully express our support for House Bill 691, *State Government – Procedures – Permitting Efficiency for Housing Development Projects*.

The City of Gaithersburg is committed to expanding housing opportunities, supporting balanced and sustainable growth, and ensuring that development occurs in a manner consistent with community priorities and infrastructure capacity. Predictable and efficient state permitting processes are critical to helping municipalities like Gaithersburg advance housing initiatives in a timely and cost-effective manner. Improved coordination across state agencies and modernization of permitting procedures, as proposed in HB 691, will support local governments in meeting housing needs while maintaining appropriate environmental and public oversight.

In addition, timely and coordinated permitting processes are particularly important for local governments working to align housing development with transportation investments, public facilities planning, and infrastructure capacity. Delays or inconsistencies at the state level can create uncertainty that ultimately slows projects and increases costs for both municipalities and residents. Enhancing coordination and transparency in permitting will help ensure that local housing priorities can move forward in a predictable and responsible manner.

For these reasons, the City of Gaithersburg respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 691.

Respectfully submitted,

Jud Ashman, Mayor
City of Gaithersburg

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