

---

## Local Government Committee

---

### HB 2092

**Brief Description:** Modifying the buildable lands requirements of the department of community, trade, and economic development.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Miloscia and Springer.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (Department) to prepare an annual report listing the methods used by local governments for the review and evaluation of "buildable lands" programs as required under the Growth Management Act.
- Requires the Department to annually provide pertinent local governments with technical assistance and information regarding methodologies for implementing and evaluating comprehensive planning for increased population densities and urban growth.
- Requires the Department to report annually to the Legislature regarding its assessment of the success of the buildable lands programs in achieving cities' and counties' goals for accommodating anticipated urban growth.

**Hearing Date:** 2/20/07

**Staff:** Thamas Osborn (786-7129).

**Background:**

**"Countywide Planning Policy" Required by the GMA**

The legislative authority of each county fully planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA county) must adopt a "countywide planning policy" (CPP) in cooperation with the cities located in whole or part within the county. A CPP is a written policy statement or statements that is used for establishing a countywide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. A CPP must address certain planning and analysis provisions, including policy considerations pertaining to:

---

*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

- Implementing urban growth area requirements;
- Affordable housing needs;
- County-wide economic development and employment;
- Siting public capital facilities; and
- Transportation needs.

**Population Projections and Planning for Urban Growth Areas**

Counties and cities are also required to satisfy specific planning requirements pertaining to urban growth areas (UGAs). Using population projections made by the Office of Financial Management (OFM), and subject to statutory requirements, GMA counties and each city within those counties must plan for population densities in UGAs so as to accommodate the urban growth that is projected to occur during the succeeding 20-year period.

**GMA "Buildable Lands" Program**

Six western Washington counties (*i.e.*, Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston counties), and the cities within those counties, are required to establish a review and evaluation process known as the "buildable lands" program. The purpose of the program is to determine whether a county and its cities are achieving appropriate urban densities and identify measures that will be taken to comply with GMA requirements.

In order to meet GMA requirements, the buildable lands program must:

- Encompass land uses and activities within and outside of UGAs and provide for the annual collection of specified data to the extent necessary to determine the quantity and type of land suitable for development;
- Provide for the evaluation of the collected data every five years; and
- Provide for the amendment of county-wide planning policies (CPPs) and comprehensive plans, as needed to remedy an identified inconsistency, or to bring these policies into compliance with the GMA.

The evaluation component must satisfy specific minimum requirements, including:

- Determining whether there is sufficient land suitable to accommodate county-wide population projections and subsequent population allocations within the county and between the county and its cities; and
- Determining the density of housing that has been constructed and the amount of land developed for commercial and industrial uses within a UGA, in accordance with specified requirements.

If the evaluation demonstrates an inconsistency between what has occurred since the adoption of the CPPs, comprehensive plans, and development regulations and what was envisioned in those policies, plans, and GMA provisions, the county and its cities must adopt and implement measures that are reasonably likely to increase consistency during the subsequent five-year period.

By December 31, 2007, the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (Department) must submit to the appropriate committees of the Legislature a buildable lands report analyzing the effectiveness of certain activities in achieving the goals envisioned by CPPs, comprehensive plans, and development regulations of counties and cities. Not later than July 1, 1998, the Department must prepare a list of the methods used by counties and cities in implementing buildable lands requirements.

**Summary of Bill:**

The act makes various procedural and substantive changes to the reporting and technical assistance requirements that must be met by the Department in executing its responsibilities with respect to the buildable lands program. Under these revised requirements, the Department must:

- Prepare an annual report listing the methods used by local governments for the review and evaluation of programs related to planning for urban development and increased population densities;
- Provide the pertinent local governments with technical assistance and information on an annual basis regarding methodologies for implementing and evaluating comprehensive planning for increased population densities and urban growth; and
- Report annually to the House and Senate regarding its assessment of the success of the requisite review and evaluation process in achieving cities' and counties' goals for accommodating anticipated urban growth. This assessment must include recommendations for legislation necessary to increase the effectiveness of buildable lands programs.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 15, 2007.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.