

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2573

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government & Housing

Title: An act relating to the clarification of regional transit authority facilities as essential public facilities.

Brief Description: Clarifying regional transit authority facilities as essential public facilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Simpson, Morris, Williams, Nelson, Eddy, Lias, Chase, Maxwell and Moeller.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government & Housing: 1/21/10, 1/28/10 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds regional transit authority facilities to the list of essential public facilities delineated under the Growth Management Act.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Simpson, Chair; Nelson, Vice Chair; Miloscia, Springer, White and Williams.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Angel, Ranking Minority Member; DeBolt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fagan, Short and Upthegrove.

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

The Growth Management Act (GMA) is the comprehensive land use planning framework for county and city governments in Washington. Enacted in 1990 and 1991, the GMA establishes numerous requirements for local governments obligated by mandate or choice to

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fully plan under the GMA (planning jurisdictions) and a reduced number of directives for all other counties and cities.

The GMA directs planning jurisdictions to adopt internally consistent comprehensive land use plans that are generalized, coordinated land use policy statements of the governing body. Comprehensive plans must address specified planning elements, each of which is a subset of a comprehensive plan. The implementation of comprehensive plans occurs through locally adopted development regulations.

Comprehensive plans must include a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities. Although not expressly defined in statute, the GMA specifies that essential public facilities include facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, regional transportation facilities, and state and local correctional facilities. Comprehensive plans and development regulations may not preclude the siting of essential public facilities.

Two or more contiguous counties each having a population of 400,000 persons or more may establish a regional transit authority to develop and operate a high capacity transportation system. As defined in statute, regional transit authority facilities include land and land interest, vehicles and vessels, passenger waiting areas, and other specified facilities.

Although not delineated in the GMA, the Legislature, in statewide transportation planning provisions, has declared improvements to high capacity transportation systems to be essential public facilities.

Summary of Bill:

Regional transit authority facilities are added to the delineated list of essential public facilities in the GMA.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Under existing law, comprehensive plans must include a process for siting essential public facilities. Regional transit authority facilities are essential public facilities, but to arrive at that conclusion, one has to connect the legal dots via multiple statutes and a decision of the Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board. This bill does not change existing law or the permit requirements of cities, but rather it clarifies existing law

and the process for siting essential public facilities. This bill will help save time and money in the early stages of proposed projects.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Steve Sheehy, Sound Transit.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.