
Technology & Economic Development Committee

HB 1819

Brief Description: Creating and using digital infrastructure maps to inform economic development decisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Tarleton, Habib, Maxwell, Orwall, Morris, Farrell, Sells, Fitzgibbon and Tharinger.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires agencies to create maps displaying energy, broadband, and transportation infrastructure.
- Directs the Department of Commerce and Department of Transportation to use the maps to identify infrastructure gaps and priority areas for future investment.

Hearing Date: 2/19/13

Staff: Jennifer Thornton (786-7147).

Background:

Department of Commerce.

The Department of Commerce (Department) was created in 2009 as a successor agency to the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development. The Department is a medium-sized, cabinet-level state agency with the mission to grow and improve jobs in Washington State. The Department's work is organized around the eight priorities of competitiveness, education and workforce training, efficient and effective regulation, infrastructure investment, community capacity, rural focus, sector focus, and small business.

A variety of programs and functions including the State Energy Office and the Broadband Office are administered by the Department. The Department also provides administrative support for the Community Economic Revitalization Board.

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.

Department of Transportation.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) was created in 1977 to consolidate the functions of six separate agencies. The WSDOT is responsible for administering the statewide transportation system and ensuring that people and goods move safely and efficiency across the state. In addition to building, maintaining, and operating the state highway system, WSDOT is responsible for the state ferry system, and works in partnership with others to maintain and improve local roads, railroads, airports, and multimodal alternatives to driving. The WSDOT works towards achieving the goals of safety, preservation, mobility, environmental quality, system stewardship, and economic vitality.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature finds that:

- significant public and private infrastructure investments are made for the purposes of energy, information networks, and transportation, which are critical to achieving long-term global competitiveness and to creating equal access to economic opportunity; and
- access to a broader array of information would enable the state to make more informed investment decisions.

The Legislature intends to direct the creation and use of digital cross-system infrastructure maps to inform and develop state economic development priorities.

The State Energy Office and the Broadband Office of the Department of Commerce, and the Community Economic Revitalization Board, in collaboration with the Department of Transportation and Department of Natural Resources, are directed to develop digital layered maps that identify:

- major power facilities and energy infrastructure sites;
- broadband availability; and
- rail corridors, public highways, and ports.

The Department of Commerce and Department of Transportation are directed to analyze the maps to identify gaps in infrastructure corresponding with economic corridors and priority areas for future investment, and jointly report the infrastructure gaps and investment recommendations to the Legislature by January 1 of each year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 15, 2013.

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