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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2649**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** House Housing, Community Development & Veterans (originally sponsored by Representatives Ryu, Doglio, Lekanoff, Ormsby, and Pollet; by request of Office of the Governor)

AN ACT Relating to homeless shelter capacity; amending RCW 43.185C.050; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature recognizes that leaving people living outside is unacceptable and constitutes an emergency, and that immediate action is necessary to bring more people inside before the next winter. The legislature recognizes that long-term reforms are needed to reduce homelessness by expanding the supply of affordable housing, ensuring adequate behavioral health treatment, increasing accessible housing to those with disabilities, and funding permanent supportive housing while further finding that current shelter capacity is inadequate to address the immediate need. Each county or local government legislative authority has developed a five-year homeless housing plan. These plans identify actions necessary to reduce homelessness and increase housing affordability. Within the plans each jurisdiction has projected how many households remain unsheltered and those still not in a permanent housing solution. It is the intent of the legislature to direct counties to work collaboratively with cities in a regional approach in order to reduce the projected unmet need identified in each five-year plan.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.185C.050 and 2018 c 85 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Each local homeless housing task force shall prepare and recommend to its local government legislative authority a five-year homeless housing plan for its jurisdictional area, which shall be not inconsistent with the department's statewide guidelines issued by December 1, 2018, and thereafter the department's five-year homeless housing strategic plan, and which shall be aimed at eliminating homelessness. The local government may amend the proposed local plan and shall adopt a plan by December 1, 2019. Performance in meeting the goals of this local plan shall be assessed annually in terms of the performance measures published by the department. Local plans may include specific local performance measures adopted by the local government legislative authority, and may include recommendations for any state legislation needed to meet the state or local plan goals.

(a) In counties with a population of more than forty thousand persons, the county shall review current zoning and development regulations of its unincorporated area and report to the department by December 1, 2021, with a list of all parcels within the jurisdiction that are zoned, suitable, and potentially feasible for development of additional shelters, sanctioned camping capacity equivalent, affordable housing designed to serve persons with disabilities, permanent supportive housing, and behavioral health facilities. An assessment of surplus public property, as defined in RCW 39.33.015, must be included in this review.

(b) In counties with a population of more than forty thousand persons, each city with a population of more than fifteen thousand shall review current zoning and development regulations and report to the department by December 1, 2021, with a list of all parcels within the jurisdiction that are zoned, suitable, and potentially feasible for development of additional shelters, sanctioned camping capacity equivalent, affordable housing designed to serve persons with disabilities, permanent supportive housing, and behavioral health facilities. An assessment of surplus public property, as defined in RCW 39.33.015, must be included in this review.

(c) For each parcel reported in (a) and (b) of this subsection, the county or city shall list the number of expected units or capacity for services on that parcel, the type of facility that could be developed, and any populations that cannot be served on that parcel. This information must be used in developing recommendations required in (f) of this subsection to close resourcing gaps in the homeless housing plan. Cities and counties shall provide a consolidated list to the department along with an assessment if the listed parcels are sufficient to address regional housing needs with respect to sheltering, sanctioned camping, affordable housing designed to serve persons with disabilities, and permanent supportive housing.

(d) If the department determines that the total capacity zoned, suitable, and potentially feasible is not adequate to meet the region's needs, the department shall convene the cities, county, and the local homeless housing task force to develop a plan for addressing unmet housing and sheltering needs and to provide a report for the governor and appropriate legislative committees on barriers to meeting housing goals. For the purposes of this subsection, the region's needs must be quantified by:

(i) A regional analysis endorsed by the local homeless housing task force that identifies necessary capacity, whenever available; or

(ii) When no such analysis exists, the number of unsheltered individuals in the region as identified in the point-in-time count as required by the United States department of housing and urban development.

(e) If a jurisdiction is unable to complete the report required in this subsection, a jurisdiction may request assistance from the department in fulfilling the requirements of (a) or (b) of this subsection.

(f) Shelter and housing gap analysis plans for addressing unmet housing and sheltering needs required in (d) of this subsection must be completed by December 31, 2022, and include (i) an accounting of the law, policy, and resource changes that will be implemented by the local government to meet the needs identified in (d) of this subsection; and (ii) recommendations to the state regarding law, policy, and resource changes needed at the state level to achieve the local goal. These recommendations must include an anticipated implementation timeline.

(g) The department is authorized to produce additional guidance regarding (a) and (b) of this subsection, which may include:

(i) The types of facilities needed in the region;

(ii) The populations that would be served by those facilities; and

(iii) Further definition of the terms zoned, suitable, and feasible for purposes of this subsection, including: Factors that would make the property developable, required nexus to existing or planned infrastructure, current use, long-term operational needs and planning efforts, financial feasibility of development, ability to meet the needs of the user, the time period required for project completion, and potential for shared use.

(2) Eligible activities under the local plans include:

(a) Rental and furnishing of dwelling units for the use of homeless persons;

(b) Costs of developing affordable housing for homeless persons, and services for formerly homeless individuals and families residing in transitional housing or permanent housing and still at risk of homelessness;

(c) Operating subsidies for transitional housing or permanent housing serving formerly homeless families or individuals;

(d) Services to prevent homelessness, such as emergency eviction prevention programs including temporary rental subsidies to prevent homelessness;

(e) Temporary services to assist persons leaving state institutions and other state programs to prevent them from becoming or remaining homeless;

(f) Outreach services for homeless individuals and families;

(g) Development and management of local homeless plans including homeless census data collection; identification of goals, performance measures, strategies, and costs and evaluation of progress towards established goals;

(h) Rental vouchers payable to landlords for persons who are homeless or below thirty percent of the median income or in immediate danger of becoming homeless; and

(i) Other activities to reduce and prevent homelessness as identified for funding in the local plan.

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