

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5617

As of January 11, 2022

Title: An act relating to population criteria for designation of local downtown and neighborhood commercial district revitalization and official local main street programs.

Brief Description: Concerning population criteria for designation of local downtown and neighborhood commercial district revitalization and official local main street programs.

Sponsors: Senators Cleveland, Mullet and Wilson, L..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Business, Financial Services & Trade: 1/11/22.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Clarifies the Main Street Program criteria for having a population less than 190,000 within a local government's boundary is to be determined at the time of designation.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS, FINANCIAL SERVICES & TRADE

Staff: Clinton McCarthy (786-7319)

Background: Washington Main Street Program. The state Main Street Program (Program) provides technical assistance for local comprehensive downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization initiatives. The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) operates the Program through a contract with the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation. DAHP provides initial site evaluations by technical specialists, training for local programs and staff, and design and implementation assistance to local governments, businesses, organizations, and property owners undertaking revitalization initiatives. DAHP also may provide financial assistance for initial start-up costs for a local program.

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

DAHP may designate local downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization programs and official local Main Street programs (local programs) for such assistance based on certain criteria including:

- the degree of interest and commitment to comprehensive downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization and historic preservation by both the public and private sectors;
- the evidence of potential private sector investment in the downtown or neighborhood commercial district;
- a downtown or neighborhood commercial district with sufficient historic fabric to become a foundation for an enhanced community image;
- the capacity of the organization to undertake a comprehensive program and the financial commitment to implement a long-term downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program that includes a commitment to employ a professional program manager and maintain a sufficient operating budget;
- DAHP's existing downtown revitalization program's tier system; and
- the National Main Street Center's criteria for designating official Main Street cities.

DAHP may not designate a program undertaken by a local government with a population over 190,000 people.

Summary of Bill: The limit of having a population less than 190,000 within the local government's boundary is clarified to be determined at the time of designation. The Program statute that outlines the duties of DAHP in administering the program is not applicable to any local downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program unless the boundaries have been identified and approved by DAHP.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Vancouver's population is very close to the 190,000 population limit for the Main Street Program. The Main Street Program is a proven job creator, and now more than ever our small businesses need all the tools they can get. This bill ensures that Vancouver can continue to be part of this program and the bill will grandfather them in. Without the Main Street Program, there would not be a Downtown Vancouver Association. There are now 196,000 residents of Vancouver. Without this bill, Vancouver cannot continue to participate in the program. Vancouver has an award winning plaza and has a public art program as the result of some of the work that the Main Street Program has done.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Annette Cleveland, Prime Sponsor; Brian Enslow, City of Vancouver; Michael Walker, Vancouver Downtown Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.