

FINAL BILL REPORT

EHB 2561

C 196 L 00

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Authorizing the preservation and development of national historic towns outside of urban growth areas.

Sponsors: Representatives Rockefeller, Woods, Mulliken, Scott, Lantz, Ogden, Constantine and Haigh.

House Committee on Local Government
Senate Committee on State & Local Government

Background:

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires a county and its cities to plan under its requirements if the county meets specified population and growth criteria. The GMA requires all counties and cities in the state to designate and protect critical areas and to designate natural resource lands. The GMA imposes additional requirements on counties and cities planning under RCW 36.70A.040 (GMA jurisdictions), including adoption of county-wide planning policies, designation of urban growth areas (UGAs), and adoption of comprehensive plans and implementing development regulations. "Urban growth" is defined in the GMA to mean growth making intensive use of land to an extent creating incompatibility with natural resource uses.

According to the state Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, numerous sites, buildings and facilities in Washington are designated as national historic landmarks.

Summary of Bill:

Counties planning under RCW 36.70A.040 (GMA counties) may authorize and designate national historic towns that may constitute urban growth outside urban growth areas (UGAs) if specified conditions are satisfied. A GMA county may allocate a portion of its 20-year population projection to the national historic town to correspond to the projected number of permanent town residents.

For purposes of this authority, an "existing national historic town" is defined as a town or district that has been designated a national historic landmark by the United States Secretary of the Interior based on its significant historic urban features and that historically contained a mix of residential, commercial, or industrial uses.

A GMA county may designate a national historic town to constitute urban growth outside UGAs only if:

- the GMA county's comprehensive plan specifically identifies policies to guide the town's preservation, redevelopment, infill, and development;
- the GMA county's comprehensive plan and development regulations specify a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, tourism-recreation, waterfront, or other historical uses as well as infrastructure and services to promote the town's historic character and economic sustainability;
- the town's boundaries include all areas contained within the national historic landmark designation and limited areas determined by the GMA county as necessary for transitional uses and buffering;
- the GMA county's comprehensive plan and development regulations preclude new urban or suburban land uses in the town's vicinity, including the areas for transitional uses and buffering, in areas other than designated UGAs;
- the GMA county's development regulations provide for architectural controls and review procedures applicable to rehabilitation, redevelopment, infill, or new development to promote the town's historic character;
- the GMA county finds that the national historic town is consistent with critical areas regulations; and
- the on-site and off-site infrastructure impacts are fully considered and mitigated concurrent with development.

Provisions regarding additional limited areas for transitional uses and buffering must: (1) be compatible with the town's historic character; and (2) protect existing natural and built environments under GMA requirements, including visual compatibility, within and beyond these areas.

The town may include the types of uses existing at times during its history; uses are not limited to those existing at the time of historic designation. Further, portions of the town may include urban densities if those densities reflect historical patterns.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 0

Senate 46 1 (Senate amended)

House 96 0 (House concurred)

Effective: June 8, 2000