AN ACT Relating to managing growth by planning and zoning for accessory dwelling units; amending RCW 43.21C.495, 35.63.210, 35A.63.230, and 36.70A.400; adding new sections to chapter 36.70A RCW; creating a new section; and repealing RCW 36.70.677 and 43.63A.215.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. (1) The legislature makes the following findings:

(a) The growth management act directs certain cities within urban growth areas to allow accessory dwelling units. However, excessive regulatory and design barriers often limit production in many cities where accessory dwelling units are allowed.

(b) Accessory dwelling units provide environmental benefits. They promote energy efficiency compared with average size single-detached houses, and incentivise adaptive reuse of existing homes and materials.

(c) Siting accessory dwelling units near transit hubs and near public amenities can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by increasing walkability, shortening household commutes, and limiting sprawl.
(d) Accessory dwelling units can meet the needs of Washington's growing senior population, making it possible for this population to age in their communities by offering senior-friendly housing, which prioritizes physical accessibility, in walkable communities near amenities essential to successful aging in place, including transit and grocery stores, without requiring costly renovations of existing housing stock.

(e) Washington state is experiencing a housing affordability crisis. Many communities across the state are in need of more housing for renters, across the income spectrum.

(f) Many cities dedicate the majority of residentially zoned land to single-detached houses that are increasingly financially out of reach for many households. Due to their smaller size, accessory dwelling units can provide a more affordable housing option in those single-family zones.

(g) Accessory dwelling units are frequently rented below market rate, providing additional affordable housing options for renters.

(h) Accessory dwelling units are often occupied by tenants who pay no rent at all; among these tenants are grandparents, adult children, family members with disabilities, friends going through life transitions, and community members in need. Accessory dwelling units meet the needs of these people who might otherwise require subsidized housing space and resources needed by other households.

(i) Homeowners who add an accessory dwelling unit to her or his property may benefit from added income and an increased sense of security.

(j) Removing certain regulatory barriers to the construction of accessory dwelling units may substantially reduce construction costs, thereby enabling more homeowners to add accessory dwelling units to their properties. The increased availability of accessory dwelling units will provide benefits to homeowners, renters, the community, and the environment.

(2) The legislature intends to promote and encourage the creation of accessory dwelling units as a means to address the need for additional affordable housing options. The legislature encourages local governments to increase the availability of affordable housing by subsidizing accessory dwelling units with local sales tax revenue, as authorized by chapter 338, Laws of 2019.
NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 36.70A
RCW to read as follows:

The definitions in this section apply throughout sections 3, 4,
and 5 of this act unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Accessory dwelling unit" means a dwelling unit located on
the same lot as a single-family housing unit, duplex, triplex,
townhome, or other housing unit.

(2) "Attached accessory dwelling unit" means an accessory
dwelling unit located within or attached to a single-family housing
unit, duplex, triplex, townhome, or other housing unit.

(3) "Covered cities" means all cities, code cities, and towns
located in a county planning under RCW 36.70A.040 and that had a
population of at least two thousand five hundred, as determined by
the office of financial management.

(4) "Covered counties" means all counties planning under
36.70A.040 that have a population of at least fifteen thousand, as
determined by the office of financial management.

(5) "Detached accessory dwelling unit" means an accessory
dwelling unit that consists partly or entirely of a building that is
separate and detached from a single-family housing unit, duplex,
triplex, townhome, or other housing unit.

(6) "Dwelling unit" means a residential living unit that provides
complete independent living facilities for one or more persons and
that includes permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating,
cooking, and sanitation.

(7) "Gross floor area" means the interior habitable area of a
dwelling unit including basements and attics but not including a
garage or accessory structure.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 36.70A
RCW to read as follows:

(1) Covered cities and covered counties must adopt or amend by
ordinance and incorporate into their development regulations, zoning
regulations, and other official controls, an authorization for the
creation of accessory dwelling units that is consistent with this
section and section 4 of this act.

(2) Ordinances, development regulations, and other official
controls adopted or amended pursuant to this section and sections 4
and 5 of this act are only required to apply in the portions of
towns, cities, and counties that are within urban growth areas
designated under this chapter.

(3) Attached or detached accessory dwelling units may not be
considered as contributing to the overall underlying density within
the urban growth area boundary of a county for purposes of compliance
with this chapter.

(4) (a) Any action taken by a covered city or covered county to
comply with the requirements of this section and section 4 of this
act, or to implement the options specified in section 5 of this act
within its urban growth area boundary is not subject to legal
challenge under this chapter or chapter 43.21C RCW.

(b) A covered city or covered county that does not comply with
the requirements of this section and section 4 of this act is subject
to legal challenge under this chapter.

(5) (a) (i) Covered cities that had a population of at least two
thousand five hundred and counties that had a population of at least
fifteen thousand as of April 1, 2019, must adopt ordinances,
regulations, or other official controls to implement the requirements
of section 4 of this act that take effect by July 1, 2021.

(ii) A city or county that becomes a covered city or county as a
result of population growth must adopt ordinances, regulations, or
other official controls to implement the requirements of section 4 of
this act that take effect no later than twelve months after a
determination by the office of financial management that the city in
a county planning under RCW 36.70A.040 has a population of two
thousand five hundred or a county planning under RCW 36.70A.040 has a
population that exceeds fifteen thousand.

(b) Beginning July 1, 2021, the requirements of section 4 of this
act:

(i) Apply and take effect in any covered city or covered county
that has not adopted ordinances, regulations, or other official
controls as required by this section; and

(ii) Supersede, preempt, and invalidate any local development
regulations that conflict with the provisions of section 4 of this
act.

(6) Nothing in this section or section 4 or 5 of this act
requires or authorizes a city or county to authorize the construction
of an accessory dwelling unit in a location where development is
restricted under other laws, rules, or ordinances as a result of
physical proximity to on-site sewage system infrastructure, critical areas, or other unsuitable physical characteristics of a property.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 36.70A RCW to read as follows:

Through ordinances, development regulations, and other official controls adopted or amended as required by section 3 of this act, covered cities and covered counties:

(1)(a) Must allow at least one accessory dwelling unit on all lots that are located in all zoning districts that allow for single-family homes; the accessory dwelling units allowed under this subsection (1)(a) may be either attached accessory dwelling units or detached accessory dwelling units; if the unit is a detached accessory dwelling unit, the lot must be at least three thousand five-hundred square feet.

(b) May not establish a requirement for the provision of off-street parking for accessory dwelling units;

(c) May not require the owner of a lot on which there is an accessory dwelling unit to reside in or occupy the accessory dwelling unit or another housing unit on the same lot, and may not require a period of continuous ownership before permitting construction of an accessory dwelling unit on a lot;

(d) May not charge permitting and plan review fees under chapter 19.27 RCW for accessory dwelling units that exceed fifty percent of the fees charged for single-family residences;

(e) May not establish an impact fee amount for accessory dwelling units that is greater than fifty percent of the amount set for single-family residences; and

(f)(i) May not require installation of a new or separate utility connection between an accessory dwelling unit and a utility unless the jurisdiction finds that the site-specific technical, environmental, or financial considerations warrant a separation of utility connections for accessory dwelling units from other housing units on the lot;

(ii) May not consider attached accessory dwelling units to be new residential uses for the purpose of calculating connection fees or capacity charges for utilities; and

(iii) May require a new or separate utility connection directly between an accessory dwelling unit and a utility and may subject the connection to a connection fee or capacity charge that must:
(A) Be proportionate to the burden of the proposed accessory dwelling unit, based on its size or number of plumbing fixtures, upon the water or sewer system;
(B) Not exceed the reasonable cost of providing the service; and
(C) Not be inconsistent with water availability requirements, water system plans, small water system management plans, or established policies adopted by the water or sewer utility provider; and
(2) Must achieve at least three of the following five policy outcomes that apply in all zoning districts that allow for single-family homes:
   (a) Allow at least two accessory dwelling units on all lots on which there is a single-family housing unit, duplex, triplex, fourplex, rowhouse, townhome, or apartment building, regardless of zoning district; the two accessory dwelling units may be in any of the following configurations:
      (i) One attached accessory dwelling unit and one detached accessory dwelling unit;
      (ii) Two attached accessory dwelling units; or
      (iii) Two detached accessory dwelling units, which may be comprised of either one or two detached structures;
   (b) Do not establish a maximum gross floor area requirement for accessory dwelling units that is less than one thousand square feet;
   (c) Do not establish a roof height limitation on accessory dwelling units of less than twenty-four feet;
   (d) Adopt model accessory dwelling unit architectural plans that are preapproved for public use under some or all local building and environmental permitting requirements; or
   (e) Allow detached accessory dwelling units to be sited at the lot line of the rear yard if the rear yard is adjacent to an alley.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. A new section is added to chapter 36.70A RCW to read as follows:
Covered cities and counties are encouraged, but not required, to adopt ordinances, development regulations, and other official controls that:
(1) Do not require impact fees under chapter 82.02 RCW for accessory dwelling units;
(2) Do not establish tree retention requirements for accessory dwelling units that are in addition to any tree retention requirements for single-family housing units;

(3) Do not prohibit the sale or other conveyance of a condominium unit solely on the grounds that the unit was originally built as an accessory dwelling unit;

(4) Require an accessory dwelling unit to be accessible to fire department apparatus by way of a public street or approved fire apparatus access;

(5) Do not establish a minimum gross floor area requirement for accessory dwelling units that is greater than two hundred square feet;

(6) Do not establish a limit for the percent of the rear yard that an accessory dwelling unit may cover that is less than sixty percent of the rear yard;

(7) Do not establish setback regulations that are more restrictive than for single-family housing units;

(8) Do not require that the exterior design or appearance of an accessory dwelling unit be similar to the exterior design or appearance of the principal housing unit, including through regulations that require an accessory dwelling unit to have similar roof pitch, siding, or windows as the primary housing unit;

(9) Do not count the gross floor area of an accessory dwelling unit against any floor area ratio limitations that apply to single-family or other primary housing units;

(10) Allow detached accessory dwelling units to be sited within five feet of a lot line if there is written approval from the property owner with whom the lot line is shared on file in the jurisdiction in which the detached accessory dwelling unit is located; and

(11) Do not regulate the location of the entry doors of accessory dwelling units.

Sec. 6. RCW 43.21C.495 and 2019 c 348 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) If adopted by April 1, 2021, amendments to development regulations and other nonproject actions taken by a city to implement RCW 36.70A.600 (1) or (4), with the exception of the action specified in RCW 36.70A.600(1)(f), are not subject to administrative or judicial appeals under this chapter.
(2) Amendments to development regulations and other nonproject actions taken by a covered city or county consistent with the requirements of sections 3 and 4 of this act or to achieve the options encouraged in section 5 of this act are not subject to administrative or judicial appeals under this chapter.

Sec. 7. RCW 35.63.210 and 1993 c 478 s 8 are each amended to read as follows:

Any covered city or covered county, as defined in section 2 of this act, that is planning under this chapter shall comply with sections 3 and 4 of this act.

Sec. 8. RCW 35A.63.230 and 1993 c 478 s 9 are each amended to read as follows:

Any covered city or covered county, as defined in section 2 of this act, that is planning under this chapter shall comply with sections 3 and 4 of this act.

Sec. 9. RCW 36.70A.400 and 1993 c 478 s 11 are each amended to read as follows:

Any city or county, as defined in section 2 of this act, that is planning under this chapter shall comply with sections 3 and 4 of this act.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 10. The following acts or parts of acts are each repealed:

(1) RCW 36.70.677 (Accessory apartments) and 1993 c 478 s 10; and
(2) RCW 43.63A.215 (Accessory apartments—Development and placement—Local governments) and 1993 c 478 s 7.

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