

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 1305

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, March 30, 1995

Title: An act relating to growth management.

Brief Description: Revising restrictions on growth outside of urban growth areas.

Sponsors: Representatives Johnson, Sheldon, Reams, Mastin, L. Thomas and Basich.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 3/29/95, 3/30/95 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Hale, McCaslin and Winsley.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Heavey.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: The Growth Management Act was enacted in 1990 and 1991, establishing a variety of requirements for certain counties, and the cities located in those counties.

Each county planning under all requirements of the Growth Management Act, in cooperation with the cities located within its boundaries, develops a countywide planning policy to guide the comprehensive plans that the county and those cities develop. Counties are recognized as being regional governments. Cities are recognized as the primary providers of urban government services within urban growth areas.

Among other requirements, a county planning under all of the requirements of the Growth Management Act must designate urban growth areas within the county inside of which urban growth shall occur and outside of which urban growth shall not occur. Every city must be included within an urban growth area. Other areas may be included in an urban growth area if they are already characterized by urban growth or are adjacent to such areas. The county uses a 20-year population forecast prepared by the Office of Financial Management as the basis for designating its urban growth areas.

A county planning under all of the requirements of the Growth Management Act must adopt a comprehensive plan with a rural element that includes lands not located within an urban growth area and which have not been designated for agriculture, forest, or mineral resources. The rural element must permit land uses compatible with the rural character of these lands and provide for a variety of densities.

Legislation was enacted in 1994 authorizing local governments to adopt service agreements for the provision of regional services and other services.

Summary of Amended Bill: Urban Growth Areas. An urban growth area may include territory that is located outside of a city: (1) whether or not the urban growth area includes a city; or (2) is a designated fully contained community.

Each urban growth area must permit a range of urban densities.

Cities and counties are allowed broad discretion in their comprehensive plans to make choices about how growth is to be accommodated. While these choices may be included in the sizing or configuration of an urban growth area, they must be made in a measurable way and with a documented rationale. While objective analysis is essential, counties and cities may consider subjective factors, such as land supply and market factors.

Within an urban growth area, growth may also occur in areas adjacent to territory already characterized by urban growth that will be served adequately by a combination of both existing public facilities and services and any additional needed public facilities and services that are provided by either public or private sources.

Urban growth may also be located in designated fully contained communities.

Language is changed so that urban governmental services are provided primarily by cities.

Urban governmental services should not be extended to or expanded in rural areas except when shown to be necessary to protect basic public health and safety and the environment and when such services are financially supportable at rural densities and do not permit urban development.

King County's 1989 approval of the Bear Creek Master Planned Development is "grandfathered" as part of the county's urban growth area.

Rural Element of County Comprehensive Plan. The rural element may also provide for innovative techniques (e.g., clustering, density transfer) that will accommodate appropriate rural uses.

"Hold-Harmless". No comprehensive plan adopted or amended before the effective date of this act may be considered in noncompliance with the statute pertaining to the mandatory elements of comprehensive plans or the statute concerning urban growth areas if the comprehensive plan is in compliance with these two statutes as amended by this act.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The amended bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: No one.