
Local Government & Housing Committee

HB 2697

Brief Description: Incorporating effective economic development planning into growth management planning.

Sponsors: Representatives Reardon, Anderson, Berkey, Pflug, Sullivan, Nixon, Esser, Delvin, Jarrett, Upthegrove and Simpson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds economic development to the list of required elements of a growth management comprehensive plan.

Hearing Date: 2/5/02

Staff: Scott MacColl (786-7106).

Background:

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires a county and its cities to plan if the county meets specified population and growth criteria. Counties not meeting these criteria may choose to plan under the GMA. Currently, 29 of 39 Washington counties are required or have chosen to plan under the major GMA requirements (GMA jurisdictions).

The GMA establishes 13 "planning goals" that must be considered, including encouraging economic development and growth in areas with insufficient growth, reducing sprawl, encouraging urban growth in urban areas, processing permits in a timely and fair manner, and protecting private property rights. The planning goals are not listed in any particular order and are only intended to guide development of comprehensive plans and development regulations.

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 GMA jurisdictions, including identification and protection of critical areas; identification and conservation of agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands; and adoption of county-wide planning policies to coordinate comprehensive planning among counties and their cities.

The GMA also requires GMA jurisdictions to adopt comprehensive plans with certain required elements. First, the comprehensive plan must include a *land use element* that designates the proposed general distributions, location and use of land. Second, a *housing element* is included to inventory available housing and identify sufficient land for housing. Third, the plan must include a *capital facilities plan element* that identifies existing capital facilities and forecasts future capital facilities needs and funding. Fourth, the plan must also have a *utilities element* to describe the general location and capacity of existing and proposed utilities. Fifth, a *rural element* must specify policies for land development and uses for lands that are not designated for urban growth or natural resource uses. Finally, the plan's *transportation element* implements the land use element and identifies facilities and service needs, level of service standards, traffic forecasts, demand management strategies, intergovernmental coordination, and financing.

Summary of Bill:

An economic development element is added to the list of required elements in a comprehensive plan. The element requires establishing local goals, objectives, and provisions for economic growth, vitality, and quality of life. The element must include:

- An assessment of the economic contributions made by existing commercial and industrial sectors to the community or region;
- An assessment of opportunities for business retention, expansion, recruitment, and economic benefits of natural amenities; and
- An assessment of future needs, including for capital facilities, land use, and housing, to manage projected growth and foster economic vitality.

The inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs in the housing element is expanded to include identifying the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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