

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5457

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As Passed Senate, March 1, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to implementing growth management task force legislative recommendations regarding small cities.

**Brief Description:** Implementing growth management task force legislative recommendations regarding small cities.

**Sponsors:** Senators Short, Lovelett, Kuderer and Shewmake.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs: 2/02/23, 2/07/23 [DP].

**Floor Activity:** Passed Senate: 3/1/23, 48-0.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Authorizes cities or towns located in a fully planning county to opt out of a full review and revision of its comprehensive plan update if they meet certain criteria.
- Requires the Department of Commerce to review the population growth rate for a city or town participating in the partial review for purposes of program eligibility.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, LAND USE & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Lovelett, Chair; Salomon, Vice Chair; Torres, Ranking Member; Kauffman and Short.

**Staff:** Maggie Douglas (786-7279)

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*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.*

**Background:** Growth Management Act. The Growth Management Act (GMA) is the comprehensive land use planning framework for counties and cities in Washington. The GMA establishes land-use designation and environmental protection requirements for all Washington counties and cities. The GMA also establishes a significantly wider array of planning duties for 28 counties, and the cities within those counties, that are obligated to satisfy all planning requirements of the GMA. These jurisdictions are sometimes said to be fully planning under the GMA.

The GMA directs fully planning jurisdictions to adopt internally consistent comprehensive land use plans. Comprehensive plans are implemented through locally adopted development regulations, and both the plans and the local regulations are subject to review and revision requirements prescribed in the GMA. Comprehensive plans must be reviewed and, if necessary, revised every ten years to ensure that it complies with the GMA. When developing their comprehensive plans, counties and cities must consider various goals set forth in statute.

**Summary of Bill:** A city or town located in a fully planning county may opt out of a full review and revision of its comprehensive plan update if they meet the following criteria:

- has a population fewer than 500;
- is not located within ten miles of a city with a population over 100,000;
- experienced a population growth rate of fewer than 10 percent in the preceding ten years; and
- has provided the Department of Commerce (Commerce) with notice of its intent to participate in a partial review and revision of its comprehensive plan.

Commerce shall review the population growth rate for a city or town participating in the partial review at least three years prior to when the update is due and notify cities or towns of their eligibility.

A city or town that opts out of a full review and revision of its comprehensive plan must update its critical areas regulations and its capital facilities element and its transportation element as part of its scheduled update.

**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: This is a proposal vetted by the GMA task force this interim. For context, this bill applies to 24 cities that contain less than one tenth of one percent of the state's population—about 6500 people. This helps calibrate the planning

requirements to the size and regional needs of a jurisdiction. It alleviates the burden on small cities for administrative paperwork but still requires those cities to complete things like their critical areas ordinances and capital facilities plan. This bill contains trigger language that if a city's population or growth rate changes significantly, they are required to complete the full review and revision of their comprehensive plan.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Shelly Short, Prime Sponsor; Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities; Dave Andersen, Washington Department of Commerce; Bryce Yadon, Futurewise.

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