

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6015

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As of January 11, 2024

**Title:** An act relating to parking configurations for residential uses.

**Brief Description:** Concerning residential parking configurations.

**Sponsors:** Senators Shewmake, Kuderer and Liias.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs: 1/11/24.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires cities and counties to enforce certain parking configurations for residential development.

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

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

**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, obligated to satisfy all planning requirements of the GMA. These jurisdictions are sometimes said to be fully planning under the GMA.

The GMA also 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

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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.

Minimum Residential Parking Requirements. Minimum residential parking requirements mandated by municipal zoning ordinances cities and counties planning under the GMA are subject to the following requirements:

- for affordable housing units that are affordable to very low-income or extremely low-income individuals and located within one-quarter mile of a transit stop receiving transit service at least two times per hour for 12 or more hours a day, minimum residential parking requirements may be no greater than one parking space per bedroom or a three-quarter space per unit;
- for housing units specifically for seniors or people with disabilities and located within one-quarter mile of a transit stop receiving transit service at least four times per hour for 12 or more hours a day, a city may not impose minimum residential parking requirements for the residents of such housing units. A city may require a developer to record a covenant that prohibits the rental of a unit subject to this parking restriction for any purpose other than providing housing for seniors or people with disabilities; and
- for market rate multifamily housing units located within one-quarter mile of a transit stop that receives transit service from at least one route that provides service at least four times per hour for 12 or more hours per day, minimum residential parking requirements may be no greater than one parking space per bedroom or a three-quarter space per unit.

A city may establish a requirement for the provision of additional parking space per bedroom or per unit if the jurisdiction has determined particular housing unit to be in an area with a lack of access to street parking capacity, physical space impediments, or other reasons supported by evidence that would make on-street parking infeasible for the unit.

Minimum Parking Standards for Middle Housing Types. Cities that are required or choose to plan under the GMA may not:

- require off-street parking as a condition of permitting development of middle housing within one-half mile walking distance of a major transit stop;
- require more than one off-street parking space per unit as a condition of permitting development of middle housing on lots smaller than 6000 square feet; and
- require more than two off-street parking spaces per unit as a condition of permitting development of middle housing on lots greater than 6000 square feet.

These minimum parking standards do not apply:

- if a local government submits to the Department of Commerce (Commerce) an empirical study that clearly demonstrates the application of the parking limitations will be significantly less safe for vehicle drivers or passengers, pedestrians, or bicycles; or

- to portions of cities within a one-mile radius of a commercial airport in Washington with at least 9 million enplanements.

Cities and counties that are required or choose to plan under the GMA are subject to the same off-street parking standards when permitting the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). A city may not require the provision of off-street parking for ADUs within one-quarter mile of a major transit stop unless the city has determined the ADU is in an area with a lack of access to street parking capacity, physical space impediments, or other reasons supported by evidence that would make on-street parking infeasible for the ADU.

**Summary of Bill:** Cities and counties must enforce the following land use regulations for residential development:

- garages and carports may not be required as a way to meet minimum parking requirements for residential development;
- parking spaces that count towards minimum parking requirements may be enclosed or unenclosed;
- adjacent on-street parking spaces count towards off-street parking mandates at a rate of one space for each 20 linear feet of uninterrupted curb space;
- parking spaces in tandem count towards meeting minimum parking requirements at a rate of one space for every 20 linear feet;
- parking spaces and driveways may be located in required yard setbacks;
- gravel surfacing may not be prohibited as a parking area material;
- parking areas for residential developments may be designed to allow a vehicle to back out into a street provided that a driveway and parking area complies with all other local regulations, and such design may not be prohibited;
- required parking spaces may be provided off-site and within 2000 feet of pedestrian travel of a site. If any parking is provided on-site, required parking of people with disabilities shall be on-site; and
- parking spaces may not be required to exceed 8 feet by 16 feet, except for required parking for people with disabilities.

**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: Excessive local parking requirements can make housing unaffordable. This bill provides multiple ways for developers to meet local minimum parking requirements without adding significant costs to a project. Parking minimums need to be reasonable. In the City of Kent, 85 percent of current homes would be unable to build ADUs because of minimum parking requirements. Several cities provide

flexible parking configurations. Current parking regulations makes it difficult and expensive for builders and prioritizes vehicles over people.

CON: This bill needs more clarity around counting on-street parking spaces in front of the home as a parking spot associated with the home. We are also concerned about the language regarding gravel, because in many cases the gravel is pulled onto the sidewalk when cars use the driveway and then becomes a hazard for pedestrians that roll.

OTHER: A majority of counties are rural and putting these parking standards into the GMA makes these parking requirements apply to all counties. Portions of counties that fall within UGAs, but outside city limits often do not have curbs and most counties do not have wide shoulders and these regulations do not apply well in these areas.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Sharon Shewmake, Prime Sponsor; Kevin Maas; Angela Rozmyn, Natural and Built Environments; Scott Bonjukian; Catie Gould, Sightline Institute; Erich Armbruster; Bryce Yadon, Futurewise.

CON: Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities.

OTHER: Paul Jewell, Washington State Association of Counties.

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