

**RCW 36.70A.096 Comprehensive plans—Greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement—Department approval.** (1) A county or city required to complete a greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement may submit the subelement to the department for approval. When submitted to the department for approval, the subelement becomes effective when approved by the department as provided in this section. If a county or city does not seek department approval of the subelement, the effective date of the subelement is the date on which the comprehensive plan is adopted by the county or city.

(2) Notice of intent to apply for approval. (a) Not less than 120 days prior to applying for approval of a subelement, the county or city must notify the department in writing that it intends to apply for approval. The department shall review proposed subelements prior to final adoption and advise the county or city of the actions necessary to receive approval.

(b) The department may consult with other relevant state agencies in making its determination.

(c) The department shall publish notice in the Washington State Register that a city or county has notified the department of its intent to apply for approval and the department shall post a copy of the notice on the department website.

(3) Procedures for an application for approval. (a) After taking final action to adopt a greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement, a city or county may apply to the department for approval of the subelement. A city or county must submit its application to the department within 10 days of taking final action.

(b) An application for approval must include, at a minimum, the following:

(i) A cover letter from the legislative authority requesting approval;

(ii) A copy of the adopted ordinance or resolution taking the legislative action or actions required to adopt the greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement;

(iii) A statement explaining how the adopted subelement complies with the provisions of this chapter; and

(iv) A copy of the record developed by the city or county at any public meetings or public hearings at which action was taken on the greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement.

(c) For purposes of this subsection, the terms "action" and "meeting" have the same definition as in RCW 42.30.020.

(4) Approval procedures. (a) The department shall strive to achieve final action to approve or deny an application within 180 days of the date of receipt of the application.

(b) The department must issue its decision in the form of a written statement, including findings of fact and conclusions, and noting the date of the issuance of its decision. The department's issued decision must conspicuously and plainly state that it is the department's final decision and that there will be no further modifications to the proposed greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement.

(c) The department will promptly publish its decision on the application for approval as follows:

(i) Notify the city or county in writing of its determination;

(ii) Publish a notice of action in the Washington State Register;

(iii) Post a notice of its decision on the agency website; and

(iv) Notify other relevant state agencies regarding the approval decision.

(5) The department shall approve a proposed greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement unless it determines that the proposed greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement is not consistent with the policy of RCW 36.70A.070 and, after they are adopted, the applicable guidelines.

(6) The department's final decision to approve or reject a proposed greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement or amendment by a local government planning under RCW 36.70A.040 may be appealed according to the following provisions:

(a) The department's final decision to approve or reject a proposed greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement or amendment by a local government planning under RCW 36.70A.040 may be appealed to the growth management hearings board by filing a petition as provided in RCW 36.70A.290.

(b) A decision of the growth management hearings board concerning an appeal of the department's final decision to approve or reject a proposed greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement or amendment must be based solely on whether or not the adopted or amended greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement, any adopted amendments to other elements of the comprehensive plan necessary to carry out the subelement, and any adopted or amended development regulations necessary to implement the subelement, comply with the goal set forth in RCW 36.70A.020(14) as it applies to greenhouse gas emissions reductions, RCW 36.70A.070(9) excluding RCW 36.70A.070(9)(e), the guidelines adopted under RCW 70A.45.120 applicable to the greenhouse gas emissions reduction subelement, or chapter 43.21C RCW. [2023 c 228 s 6.]