
Local Government Committee

HB 1608

Brief Description: Concerning the accommodation of housing and employment growth under local comprehensive plans.

Sponsors: Representatives Upthegrove, Schindler, Berkey, Mielke, Tom, Ericksen, Romero, Jarrett, Edwards, Linville and Anderson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits jurisdictions planning under the Growth Management Act from reducing capacity to accommodate projected housing and employment growth when adopting amendments to comprehensive plans or development regulations.

Hearing Date: 2/17/03

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Growth Management Act “ Comprehensive Plans

Enacted in 1990 and 1991, the Growth Management Act (GMA) establishes a comprehensive land use planning framework for county and city governments in Washington. Counties and cities meeting specific population and growth criteria are required to conform to the major requirements of the GMA. Counties not meeting these criteria may choose to plan under the GMA. Currently, 29 of 39 counties, and the cities within those 29 counties, are required to or have chosen to conform with the major requirements of the GMA (GMA jurisdictions).

GMA jurisdictions must adopt comprehensive land use plans, which are generalized coordinated land use policy statements of the governing body. Comprehensive plans are required to include provisions for nine specific planning elements, including separate housing and economic development elements. The *housing element* of a comprehensive plan must include:

- an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth;

- a statement of goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, including single-family residences;
- an identification of sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, and group homes and foster care facilities; and
- adequate provisions for existing and projected needs for all economic segments of the community.

The *economic development* element of a comprehensive plan must include:

- a summary of the local economy, such as population, employment, payroll, sectors, businesses, sales, and other information as appropriate;
- a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy defined as the commercial and industrial sectors and supporting factors such as land use, transportation, utilities, work force, housing, and natural/cultural resources; and
- an identification of policies, programs, and projects to foster economic growth and development and to address future needs.

Comprehensive Plan Reviews

Comprehensive land use plans and development regulations are subject to continuing review and evaluation by the adopting county or city. Any amendments or revisions of development regulations must conform to the requirements of the GMA and must be consistent with and implement comprehensive plans. Schedule and criteria information for counties and cities reviewing and/or revising comprehensive plans and development regulations are specified in RCW 36.70A.130.

Urban Growth Areas - Accommodating Projected Growth

GMA jurisdictions also must designate urban growth areas (UGAs) within which growth must be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature.

Using population projections by the Office of Financial Management, GMA jurisdictions must include within their UGAs densities and areas sufficient to permit the urban growth that is projected to occur in the county or city for the succeeding 20-year period. A UGA determination may include a reasonable land market supply factor and must permit a range of urban densities and uses.

Each county designating UGAs must review its designated UGAs and permitted densities in incorporated and unincorporated areas at least once every 10 years. City reviews of permitted densities and other factors must occur in conjunction with county UGA reviews. As a result of county UGA reviews, the county comprehensive plan designating UGAs and the densities permitted in the UGA by the county and cities located within the UGAs must be revised to accommodate the urban growth projected for the succeeding 20-year period.

Summary of Bill:

Local jurisdictions planning under the GMA must ensure that amendments to comprehensive plans and/or development regulations do not result in a reduction in the jurisdiction's capacity to accommodate projected housing and employment growth.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.