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**HOUSE BILL 1740**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives McBride, Fey, and Jinkins

AN ACT Relating to using the state environmental policy act to encourage development that is consistent with forward-looking growth plans; and amending RCW 43.21C.420 and 36.70A.490.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 43.21C.420 and 2010 c 153 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Cities with a population greater than five thousand, in accordance with their existing comprehensive planning and development regulation authority under chapter 36.70A RCW, and in accordance with this section, may adopt optional elements of their comprehensive plans and optional development regulations that apply within specified subareas of the cities, that are either:

(a) Areas designated as mixed-use or urban centers in a land use or transportation plan adopted by a regional transportation planning organization; or

(b) Areas within one-half mile of a major transit stop that are zoned to have an average minimum density of fifteen dwelling units or more per gross acre.

(2) Cities located on the east side of the Cascade mountains and located in a county with a population of two hundred thirty thousand or less, in accordance with their existing comprehensive planning and development regulation authority under chapter 36.70A RCW, and in accordance with this section, may adopt optional elements of their comprehensive plans and optional development regulations that apply within the mixed-use or urban centers. The optional elements of their comprehensive plans and optional development regulations must enhance pedestrian, bicycle, transit, or other nonvehicular transportation methods.

(3) A major transit stop is defined as:

(a) A stop on a high capacity transportation service funded or expanded under the provisions of chapter 81.104 RCW;

(b) Commuter rail stops;

(c) Stops on rail or fixed guideway systems, including transitways;

(d) Stops on bus rapid transit routes or routes that run on high occupancy vehicle lanes; or

(e) Stops for a bus or other transit mode providing fixed route service at intervals of at least thirty minutes during the peak hours of operation.

(4)(a) A city that elects to adopt such an optional comprehensive plan element and optional development regulations shall prepare a nonproject environmental impact statement, pursuant to RCW 43.21C.030, assessing and disclosing the probable significant adverse environmental impacts of the optional comprehensive plan element and development regulations and of future development that is consistent with the plan and regulations.

(b) At least one community meeting must be held on the proposed subarea plan before the scoping notice for such a nonproject environmental impact statement is issued. Notice of scoping for such a nonproject environmental impact statement and notice of the community meeting required by this section must be mailed to all property owners of record within the subarea to be studied, to all property owners within one hundred fifty feet of the boundaries of such a subarea, to all affected federally recognized tribal governments whose ceded area is within one-half mile of the boundaries of the subarea, and to agencies with jurisdiction over the future development anticipated within the subarea.

(c) In cities with over five hundred thousand residents, notice of scoping for such a nonproject environmental impact statement and notice of the community meeting required by this section must be mailed to all small businesses as defined in RCW 19.85.020, and to all community preservation and development authorities established under chapter 43.167 RCW, located within the subarea to be studied or within one hundred fifty feet of the boundaries of such subarea. The process for community involvement must have the goal of fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people with respect to the development and implementation of the subarea planning process.

(d) The notice of the community meeting must include general illustrations and descriptions of buildings generally representative of the maximum building envelope that will be allowed under the proposed plan and indicate that future appeals of proposed developments that are consistent with the plan will be limited. Notice of the community meeting must include signs located on major travel routes in the subarea. If the building envelope increases during the process, another notice complying with the requirements of this section must be issued before the next public involvement opportunity.

(e) Any person that has standing to appeal the adoption of this subarea plan or the implementing regulations under RCW 36.70A.280 has standing to bring an appeal of the nonproject environmental impact statement required by this subsection.

(f) Cities with over five hundred thousand residents shall prepare a study that accompanies or is appended to the nonproject environmental impact statement, but must not be part of that statement, that analyzes the extent to which the proposed subarea plan may result in the displacement or fragmentation of existing businesses, existing residents, including people living with poverty, families with children, and intergenerational households, or cultural groups within the proposed subarea plan. The city shall also discuss the results of the analysis at the community meeting.

(g) As an incentive for development authorized under this section, a city shall consider establishing a transfer of development rights program in consultation with the county where the city is located, that conserves county-designated agricultural and forest land of long-term commercial significance. If the city decides not to establish a transfer of development rights program, the city must state in the record the reasons for not adopting the program. The city's decision not to establish a transfer of development rights program is not subject to appeal. Nothing in this subsection (4)(g) may be used as a basis to challenge the optional comprehensive plan or subarea plan policies authorized under this section.

(5)(a) Until July 1, ((~~2018~~)) 2028, a proposed development that meets the criteria of (b) of this subsection may not be challenged in administrative or judicial appeals for noncompliance with this chapter as long as a complete application for such a development that vests the application or would later lead to vested status under city or state law is submitted to the city within a time frame established by the city, but not to exceed the following time frames as follows:

(i) Eighteen years from the date of issuance of the final environmental impact statement, for projects that are consistent with an optional element adopted by a city as of the effective date of this section; or

(ii) Ten years from the date of issuance of the final environmental impact statement, for projects that are consistent with an optional element adopted by a city after the effective date of this section;

(b) A proposed development may not be challenged consistent with (a) of this subsection as long as the development:

(i) Is consistent with the optional comprehensive plan or subarea plan policies and development regulations adopted under subsection (1) or (2) of this section;

(ii) Sets aside or requires the occupancy of at least twenty percent of the dwelling units within the development for low-income households at a sale price or rental amount that is considered affordable by a city's housing programs; and ((~~that~~))

(iii) Is environmentally reviewed under subsection (4) of this section ((~~may not be challenged in administrative or judicial appeals for noncompliance with this chapter as long as a complete application for such a development that vests the application or would later lead to vested status under city or state law is submitted to the city within a time frame established by the city, but not to exceed ten years from the date of issuance of the final environmental impact statement~~)).

((~~(b)~~)) (c) After July 1, ((~~2018~~)) 2028, the immunity from appeals under this chapter of any application that vests or will vest under this subsection or the ability to vest under this subsection is still valid, provided that the final subarea environmental impact statement is issued by July 1, ((~~2018~~)) 2028. After July 1, ((~~2018~~)) 2028, a city may continue to collect reimbursement fees under subsection (6) of this section for the proportionate share of a subarea environmental impact statement issued prior to July 1, ((~~2018~~)) 2028.

(6) It is recognized that a city that prepares a nonproject environmental impact statement under subsection (4) of this section must endure a substantial financial burden. A city may recover or apply for a grant or loan to prospectively cover its reasonable expenses of preparation of a nonproject environmental impact statement prepared under subsection (4) of this section through access to financial assistance under RCW 36.70A.490 or funding from private sources. In addition, a city is authorized to recover a portion of its reasonable expenses of preparation of such a nonproject environmental impact statement by the assessment of reasonable and proportionate fees upon subsequent development that is consistent with the plan and development regulations adopted under subsection (5) of this section, as long as the development makes use of and benefits ((~~[from]~~)) from, as described in subsection (5) of this section, ((~~from~~)) the nonproject environmental impact statement prepared by the city. Any assessment fees collected from subsequent development may be used to reimburse funding received from private sources. In order to collect such fees, the city must enact an ordinance that sets forth objective standards for determining how the fees to be imposed upon each development will be proportionate to the impacts of each development and to the benefits accruing to each development from the nonproject environmental impact statement. Any disagreement about the reasonableness or amount of the fees imposed upon a development may not be the basis for delay in issuance of a project permit for that development. The fee assessed by the city may be paid with the written stipulation "paid under protest" and if the city provides for an administrative appeal of its decision on the project for which the fees are imposed, any dispute about the amount of the fees must be resolved in the same administrative appeal process.

(7) If a proposed development is inconsistent with the optional comprehensive plan or subarea plan policies and development regulations adopted under subsection (1) of this section, the city shall require additional environmental review in accordance with this chapter.

**Sec.**  RCW 36.70A.490 and 2012 1st sp.s. c 1 s 309 are each amended to read as follows:

The growth management planning and environmental review fund is hereby established in the state treasury. Moneys may be placed in the fund from the proceeds of bond sales, tax revenues, budget transfers, federal appropriations, gifts, or any other lawful source. Moneys in the fund may be spent only after appropriation. Moneys in the fund shall be used to make grants or loans to local governments for the purposes set forth in RCW 43.21C.240, 43.21C.031, or 36.70A.500, and to cover costs associated with the adoption of optional elements of comprehensive plans consistent with RCW 43.21C.420. Any payment of either principal or interest, or both, derived from loans made from this fund must be deposited into the fund.

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