

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6152

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs, January 30, 2024

**Title:** An act relating to requiring certain counties to measure the gap between estimated existing housing units and existing housing needs to meet local housing demands.

**Brief Description:** Requiring certain counties to measure the gap between estimated existing housing units and existing housing needs.

**Sponsors:** Senators Cleveland, Shewmake, Rivers, Frame, Salomon, Trudeau, Nguyen, Keiser, Lias, Pedersen, Kuderer, Nobles, Saldaña and Valdez.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs: 1/23/24, 1/30/24 [DPS-WM].

**Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill**

- Requires the Washington Center for Real Estate Research to include, as part of its October 2026 report and every biannual report thereafter, an analysis of each county's progress in closing the gap between estimated existing housing units and existing housing needs.
- Authorizes the Public Works Board to consider whether a project encourages infill development or any other increase in affordable housing units when prioritizing applications for grants and loans to cities and counties.

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

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6152 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

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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.*

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

**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, 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. When developing their comprehensive plans, counties and cities must consider various goals set forth in statute, including a housing element.

Mandatory Housing Element. Comprehensive plans must include a housing element that ensures the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods. The housing element must include the following:

- an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth, as provided by the Department of Commerce;
- a statement of goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing;
- identification of sufficient capacity of land for various housing; adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community;
- identification of local policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion of housing;
- identification and implementation of policies and regulations to address and begin to undo racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion of housing;
- identification of neighborhoods that may be at higher risk of displacement from market forces; and
- establishment of anti-displacement policies.

Public Works Assistance Account. The Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA) provides a source of funding to assist local governments with infrastructure projects. Eligible infrastructure systems include domestic water, roads and streets, bridges, sanitary sewer, stormwater, solid waste, recycling, and organics.

The Public Works Board (Board) is responsible for developing a process to prioritize applications and funding of loans and grants for public works projects submitted by local

governments. Applications for funding may be prioritized based upon several factors, including whether the project meets certain objectives, including whether the project is critical in nature and would affect the health and safety of many people.

A city or county planning under the GMA must have adopted its comprehensive plan and development regulations and be in compliance with the GMA at the time of application submission to be eligible for funding. A city or county not planning under the GMA must have adopted a capital facilities plan for all systems they own before the application deadline to be eligible for funding.

Washington Center for Real Estate Research. The Washington Center for Real Estate Research (WCRER) is responsible for publishing biannual reports that include housing supply and affordability metrics for each fully planning city with a population of 10,000 or more.

The October 2024 report, and every biannual report thereafter, must include:

- criteria relating to income, employment, housing and rental prices, housing affordability by housing tenure, and other metrics relevant to assessing housing supply and affordability for all income segments;
- city-specific median income data for cities implementing the multifamily tax exemption program;
- analysis of the private rental housing market for each area outlining the number of units, vacancy rates, and rents by unit type, where possible;
- data from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission on subsidized housing in the area;
- data relating to actions taken to increase urban residential building capacity, as well as detailed information on development regulations, levies and fees, and zoning related to housing development; and
- data relating to buildable lands reports and updates to comprehensive plans.

**Summary of Bill:** The bill as referred to committee not considered.

**Summary of Bill (First Substitute):** The Washington Center for Real Estate Research must also include, as part of its October 2026 report and every biannual report thereafter:

- an analysis of the estimated existing housing units and existing housing needs within each county at certain income levels;
- each county's progress in closing the gap between estimated existing housing units within the county and existing housing needs; and
- each county's progress in meeting emergency housing, emergency shelters, and permanent supportive housing needs within the county.

An additional factor is added to the list of factors that the Public Works Board (Board) may consider when prioritizing projects. The Board may consider whether the project encourages infill development or any other increase in affordable housing units.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on January 26, 2024.

**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 on First Substitute:** PRO: This bill will be beneficial to GMA planning jurisdictions that are working on housing policy and need more measurement and data of how they are meeting the housing element goals. Cities and counties are trying to increase housing production at all income levels and need better data to track the existing gaps. This bill ensures that all communities are contributing to the solution.

OTHER: The original reports commissioned by WCRER was created before the major housing element provisions were adopted. This proposed substitute bill provides update reports that are already done to include the targets that we now have, reflecting the updated housing element requirements.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Annette Cleveland, Prime Sponsor; Anne McEnery-Ogle, Mayor of Vancouver; Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities.

OTHER: Dave Andersen, Washington Department of Commerce.

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