
Environment & Energy Committee

HB 1742

Brief Description: Concerning environmentally sustainable urban design.

Sponsors: Representatives Dye, Doglio, Fitzgibbon, Zahn, Parshley, Duerr and Pollet.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Center for Environmentally Sustainable Urban Design in the Department of Ecology for the purpose of awarding grants for building design projects within an urban area that promote health and sustainability benefits through the use of architectural and landscape design.
- Requires the first design competition to be for a priority project that is located on a specific site near the Capitol Campus.

Hearing Date: 2/3/25

Staff: Matt Sterling (786-7289).

Background:

First-Class Cities.

First-class cities are cities that have a population of 10,000 or more at the time of organization or reorganization and have adopted a charter under the state constitution. There are 10 first-class cities in Washington, and no cities have organized or reorganized as first-class since 1973, and include: Aberdeen, Bellingham, Bremerton, Everett, Richland, Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver, Spokane, and Yakima.

State Building Code.

The State Building Code (Code) establishes minimum performance standards and requirements

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for construction and construction materials in the state, consistent with accepted standards of engineering, fire, and life safety. The Code comprises a number of model codes and standards, developed and published by international and national organizations, which are adopted by reference in the State Building Code Act (Act). Model codes and standards adopted in the Act include the International Building Code and the Energy Code.

Environmentally Sustainable Urban Design Standards.

The United States Green Building Council (USGBC) provides the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Rating System, which provides national design guidelines and a third-party certification tool. There are four ranks of LEED certification: (1) Certified; (2) Silver; (3) Gold; and (4) Platinum. In order to achieve any level of LEED certification, a project must earn a certain number of points that are allotted for a variety of elements.

The International Green Construction Code (IGCC) is a model code that provides minimum requirements to safeguard the environment, public health, safety and general welfare. The IGCC aims to do this through the establishment of requirements that are intended to reduce the negative impacts and increase the positive impacts of the built environment on the natural environment and building occupants.

Summary of Bill:

Center for Environmentally Sustainable Urban Design.

The Center for Environmentally Sustainable Urban Design (Center) is created in the Department of Ecology (Ecology) for the purpose of encouraging the use of architectural and landscape design to promote health and sustainability in built environments within first-class cities and other urban areas and may be demonstrated through application of the USGBC rating system or the IGCC.

The duties of the Center include:

- identifying priority projects;
- coordinating a biennial design competition for a designated priority project;
- awarding grants on a competitive basis for priority projects that implement environmentally sustainable urban design;
- providing recommendations on potential priority projects to state agencies and local government entities;
- advocating for environmentally sustainable urban design;
- coordinating with elected leaders and the private sector to achieve renewed urban spaces that improve public health and environmental outcomes;
- encouraging workforce development for related fields; and
- studying, exploring, developing, and promoting ideas that could inform improvements in design by incorporating the values of reintegrating urban living within the greater ecosystem.

Advisory Council on Environmentally Sustainable Urban Design.

The Advisory Council on Environmentally Sustainable Urban Design (Advisory Council) is created and consists of 10 members appointed by the Director of Ecology. The members of the Advisory Council must have experience in urban planning, green building design, sustainable architecture, or similar subject areas and be from each Washington congressional district. The Advisory Council must review and recommend applicants for grants or competitions coordinated or awarded by the Center and provide advice and guidance on the annual work plan of the Center. The Advisory Council must meet at least quarterly and members of the Advisory Council serve without compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses.

Priority Projects.

Priority projects are designated as parcels within an urban area with significant potential for improvement in ecological benefits or public health measures due to:

- dilapidation by being in a state of disrepair, disuse, or neglect; or
- falling within an area of the environmental health disparities map that is experiencing higher than the median environmental health disparities.

The Center must establish criteria for the selection of successful applicants for design competitions and grants. The Center considers any recommendations by the Advisory Council established in the final selection of awardees or grantees. The criteria for a successful applicant should at a minimum include:

- providing compelling vision to the public and elected leaders of how investment in the parcel could provide health, ecological, and aesthetic benefits consistent with the purposes of the center's mission;
- demonstrating the specific health and sustainability benefits achievable in that location through environmentally sustainable urban design; and
- documenting the basis of claims regarding specific outcomes for health and the environment.

The first design competition must be for a priority project that:

- is located on a multiacre parcel within three miles of the state Capitol Campus;
- was previously used for commercial purposes in the beverage processing or manufacturing industry;
- has not been inhabited or used for commercial purposes for at least 20 years; and
- has experienced damage from a fire.

The Environmentally Sustainable Urban Design Account is created in the state treasury. All funds for competitions and grants are deposited into the account and moneys in the account may be used only for design competition and grant awards.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 01/30/2025.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.