

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5733

As of February 21, 2025

Title: An act relating to updating comprehensive plans.

Brief Description: Concerning updating comprehensive plans.

Sponsors: Senators Braun, Christian, Cortes and Dozier.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Housing: 2/21/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds the adoption of comprehensive plan amendments or development regulations necessary for the permitting of housing projects to the list of comprehensive plan amendments that may be considered more frequently than once per year.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

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.

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,

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counties and cities must consider various goals set forth in statute.

Comprehensive plan update deadlines for each county, and the cities within those counties, are specified in the GMA. Amendments to a comprehensive plan may occur no more frequently than once per year, with certain exceptions.

Amendments may be considered more frequently than once a year under the following circumstances:

- the initial adoption of a subarea plan;
- the development of an initial subarea plan for economic development located outside of the 100-year floodplain in a county that has completed a state-funded pilot project based on watershed characterization and local habitat assessment;
- the adoption or amendment of a Shoreline Master Program;
- the amendment of the capital facilities element of a comprehensive plan that occurs concurrently with the adoption or amendment of a county or city budget; or
- the adoption of comprehensive plan amendments necessary to enact a planned action under the State Environmental Policy Act.

Summary of Bill: The adoption of comprehensive amendments or development regulations necessary for the permitting of housing projects is added to the list of items for which amendments to the comprehensive plan may be considered more frequently than once per year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 13, 2025.

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: PRO: This is a simple GMA bill. Planning for growth is a good idea, but the long, rigorous planning cycle is not reactive to the housing situation we see today. This bill allows cities and counties to adjust to their changing environment. Developers at times have to wait until comprehensive plans are updated in order to begin a project, delaying the building of housing.

OTHER: There is a complexity to comprehensive plan amendments that require public comment and other process according to the GMA. It is difficult for citizens to track comprehensive plan updates.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator John Braun, Prime Sponsor; Jan Himebaugh, Building Industry Association of Washington.

OTHER: Bryce Yadon, Futurewise.

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