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HOUSE BILL 1749

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State of Washington

53rd Legislature

1993 Regular Session

By Representatives Forner, Wineberry, Wood, Zellinsky, Brough, Long, Foreman, Reams and Cooke

Read first time 02/08/93. Referred to Committee on Trade, Economic Development & Housing.

1 AN ACT Relating to permit processing; creating new sections; and  
2 declaring an emergency.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds: (1) That permits are  
5 a necessary part of regulating some public and private activity for the  
6 health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of this state; (2) that  
7 permit processing by state and local agencies should be done timely,  
8 fairly, and as efficiently as possible; (3) that permit processing by  
9 state and local agencies sometimes does not meet reasonable  
10 expectations of the citizens of this state; (4) that many projects  
11 require some regulatory review by several departments in the same  
12 agency or multiple review by different agencies; and (5) that better  
13 coordination of the issuance of permits in and between state and local  
14 agencies will enhance the permit process. Sections 2 through 5 of this  
15 act intend to improve permit processing by state and local agencies by  
16 providing encouragement and technical assistance to establish  
17 coordinated, one-stop permit processes and by encouraging improved  
18 service to the citizens of this state.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    (1) Each county shall review its procedures  
2 for the issuance of permits necessary for building or remodeling one,  
3 two, three, or four-unit residential dwellings. The goal of this  
4 review is to evaluate current policies and practices to establish more  
5 efficient policies and practices for the timely, coordinated, and  
6 efficient review of permit applications. The county shall consider,  
7 as part of this evaluation, the following: (a) Conducting  
8 preapplication conferences with the applicant to facilitate the  
9 application and review process; (b) identifying a lead staff person for  
10 each project to facilitate the review within the agency and to  
11 coordinate with other agencies when permits are required from more than  
12 one agency; (c) establishing a one-stop process where the applicant  
13 completes one application at one agency and where the applicant  
14 receives service from the person or department that took the  
15 application rather than having to complete several applications at  
16 several departments within the agency or at several agencies; (d)  
17 providing a checklist that familiarizes the applicant with the process  
18 and requirements and defines a complete application; and (e)  
19 establishing maximum review time frames for each element of the review  
20 process.

21        (2) Each county may review its procedures for the issuance of  
22 permits necessary for subdivisions or short subdivisions. If the  
23 county undertakes such a review, in addition to the considerations  
24 listed in subsection (1) of this section, the county shall also  
25 consider: (a) Allowing grading of streets and lots at the same time;  
26 (b) allowing grading to proceed on the basis of preliminary drainage  
27 plans and temporary drainage permits relating to the grading; (c)  
28 facilitating necessary permits for the connection of sewer and other  
29 utilities to existing services and the mitigating of resulting  
30 disruption; (d) facilitating fast turnaround on submissions and  
31 resubmissions; (e) allowing multiple uses of areas occupied by storm  
32 and water quality facilities, where possible, without compromising the  
33 function of these facilities; (f) facilitating prompt processing of  
34 approvals for wetlands restoration; (g) facilitating the planning and  
35 approval of relocation of existing power and other utility facilities;  
36 (h) providing administrative review of front yard set-backs within the  
37 plat which do not have off-site impacts; and (i) evaluating the timing  
38 and cost implications of the current approval process.

1 (3) The review required under subsection (1) of this section shall  
2 be completed by July 1, 1994. Each county shall report to the  
3 department of community development by October 1, 1994, summarizing the  
4 review and describing changes made or findings that may be helpful in  
5 other jurisdictions.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) Each city with a population over fifty  
7 thousand on the effective date of this act shall review its procedures  
8 for the issuance of permits necessary for building or remodeling one,  
9 two, three, or four-unit residential dwellings. The goal of this  
10 review shall be to evaluate current policies and practices to establish  
11 more efficient policies and practices for the timely, coordinated, and  
12 efficient review of permit applications. The city shall consider, as  
13 part of this evaluation, the following: (a) Conducting preapplication  
14 conferences with the applicant to facilitate the application and review  
15 process; (b) identifying a lead staff person for each project to  
16 facilitate the review within the agency and to coordinate with other  
17 agencies when permits are required from more than one agency; (c)  
18 establishing a one-stop process where the applicant completes one  
19 application at one agency and where the applicant receives service from  
20 the person or department that took the application rather than having  
21 to complete several applications at several departments within the  
22 agency or at several agencies; (d) providing a checklist that  
23 familiarizes the applicant with the process and requirements and  
24 defines a complete application; and (e) establishing maximum review  
25 time frames for each element of the review process.

26 (2) Each city may review its procedures for the issuance of permits  
27 necessary for subdivisions or short subdivisions. If the city  
28 undertakes such a review, in addition to the considerations listed in  
29 subsection (1) of this section, the city shall also consider: (a)  
30 Allowing grading of streets and lots at the same time; (b) allowing  
31 grading to proceed on the basis of preliminary drainage plans and  
32 temporary drainage permits relating to the grading; (c) facilitating  
33 necessary permits for the connection of sewer and other utilities to  
34 existing services and the mitigating of resulting disruption; (d)  
35 facilitating fast turnaround on submissions and resubmissions; (e)  
36 allowing multiple uses of areas occupied by storm and water quality  
37 facilities, where possible, without compromising the function of these  
38 facilities; (f) facilitating prompt processing of approvals for

1 wetlands restoration; (g) facilitating the planning and approval of  
2 relocation of existing power and other utility facilities; (h)  
3 providing administrative review of front yard set-backs within the plat  
4 which do not have off-site impacts; and (i) evaluating the timing and  
5 cost implications of the current approval process.

6 (3) The review required under subsection (1) of this section shall  
7 be completed by July 1, 1994. Each city shall report to the department  
8 of community development by October 1, 1994, summarizing the review and  
9 describing changes made or findings that may be helpful in other  
10 jurisdictions.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The governor shall convene a task force of  
12 agency directors to recommend or implement changes to the processing of  
13 regulatory permits by state agencies. The goal of these  
14 recommendations or changes shall be to make the process more  
15 coordinated, more timely, more effective, and more service-oriented.  
16 The task force shall include, but not be limited to, the directors of  
17 the department of ecology and the department of community development.  
18 The recommendations or changes shall consider at least the following:  
19 (1) Streamlining state environmental permit processing among natural  
20 resource and regulatory agencies, particularly regarding multiple  
21 agency permit processing and eliminating duplication; and (2)  
22 identifying a staff person in each regional office of regulatory  
23 agencies to coordinate cross-program or multiagency processing and  
24 decisions. The governor shall report to the appropriate legislative  
25 standing committees regarding this section by December 1, 1993.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The department of community development  
27 shall provide technical assistance to counties and cities to carry out  
28 the review required in sections 2 and 3 of this act. The technical  
29 assistance may include model ordinances for counties and cities that  
30 consider: (a) Conducting preapplication conferences with the applicant  
31 to facilitate the application and review process; (b) identifying a  
32 lead staff person for each project to facilitate the review within the  
33 agency and to coordinate with other agencies when permits are required  
34 from more than one agency; (c) establishing a one-stop process where  
35 the applicant completes one application at one agency where the  
36 applicant receives service from the person or department that took the  
37 application rather than having to complete several applications at

1 several departments within the agency or at several agencies; (d)  
2 providing a checklist that familiarizes the applicant with the process  
3 and requirements and defines a complete application; and (e)  
4 establishing maximum review time frames for each element of the review  
5 process.

6 (2) The department shall report to the appropriate standing  
7 committees of the legislature concerning sections 2 and 3 of this act  
8 by January 1, 1995.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
10 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the  
11 state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take  
12 effect immediately.

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