

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6070

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, March 5, 2001

Title: An act relating to incorporating effective economic development planning into growth management planning.

Brief Description: Incorporating effective economic development planning into growth management planning.

Sponsors: Senators Patterson, Roach, Fairley, Horn, T. Sheldon, Kline, McCaslin, Honeyford, Prentice, Jacobsen, Oke, Snyder, Franklin, Swecker, Zarelli, Rasmussen, McDonald, Sheahan, Johnson, West, Hale, Rossi, Regala, Deccio, Carlson, Hewitt, Gardner, McAuliffe, B. Sheldon, Haugen, Morton, Spanel, Shin, Benton, Stevens, Constantine, Costa, Hochstatter, Eide, Hargrove, Finkbeiner, Parlette and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 2/26/01, 3/5/01 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6070 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Hale, Horn, Kline, McCaslin and T. Sheldon.

Staff: Aaron Jennings (786-7445)

Background: Growth management plans and regulations have been developed or are being developed by many counties, and cities within those counties. Some counties are required to develop a growth management plan and some have undergone the process voluntarily.

The comprehensive plan includes: a land use element, a housing element, a capital facilities element, utilities element, rural element, and a transportation element.

A countywide planning policy must be established to provide a framework from which the county and city comprehensive plans are developed. The planning policy must address the following: (1) the promotion of contiguous and orderly development; (2) the urban growth plan; (3) the siting of capital facilities; (4) affordable housing; (5) joint city and county planning; (6) countywide economic development and employment; and (7) the analysis of fiscal impact.

The county must adopt countywide policies that establish a review and evaluation program. The evaluation component must: determine if there is sufficient suitable land to accommodate population projections; determine the actual density and amount of land developed; and review commercial, industrial, and housing needs.

If the evaluation demonstrates an inconsistency between what has occurred since the adopting of the growth management plan and what was envisioned during the planning, the cities and county must adopt measures to fix any inconsistencies found that relate to the factors specified for the evaluation.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The comprehensive plan includes an additional economic development element and allows for small scale businesses within the rural parts of the county. The county planning policy must also address: (1) the allocation of projected population and employment growth and the number of residential units necessary to accommodate the growth; (2) establishing appropriate densities for rural and urban areas; (3) balancing jobs and housing; and (4) performance measures for annually reviewing progress to accommodating population and employment growth.

Each county or city that has adopted a comprehensive land use plan must review policies and regulations regarding critical areas and natural resource land every five years. A county or city that has adopted a comprehensive land use plan must review the plan and development regulations according to a schedule. The counties, or cities within those counties, that had populations greater than 150,000 people as of 1995, and are located west of the Cascades, must review their comprehensive plans by September 1, 2004, and every five years thereafter. All other counties and cities that have adopted a comprehensive plan must review their plans every ten years, starting September 1, 2006, for a county or city that adopted its comprehensive plan between January 1, 1992, and January 1, 1997, or starting September 1, 2008, if it adopted its plan after January 1, 1997.

A year prior to the county's or city's review, it must submit an evaluation to the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development describing the county's or city's review and evaluation process and schedule. A county or city does not need to review its comprehensive plan, development regulations, or policies and regulations regarding critical areas and natural resource land if it does not receive funding to undertake the review.

If specific funding is not provided for the purpose of the act by the time the county or city is required to review its comprehensive plan according to schedule in the bill, the counties do not have to implement the act.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill added several additional factors to the review and evaluation program of comprehensive plans. First, a report is required regarding regional growth patterns; evaluating zoning and development regulations to see if they are sufficient to meet population and employment projections; and outlining actions adopted to accommodate residential and nonresidential needs. Second, the program must determine: if there is sufficient suitable land to accommodate population projections; the actual density, type and number of residential dwellings; the square footage of nonresidential development; the amount of land developed; the amount of new jobs created; the amount of environmentally sensitive land; and review of commercial, industrial, and housing needs.

Further, the original bill required that if the evaluation demonstrates an inconsistency between what has occurred since the adopting of the growth management plan and what was envisioned during the planning, the cities and county must adopt measures to accommodate the demand for housing and nonresidential growth in order to fix any inconsistencies found that relate to land use designations and densities. If actions to achieve consistency are

necessary, the city must take the actions necessary to ensure sufficient land is available, accommodate sufficient housing for growth, and achieve proper densities within one year of the evaluation. The county or city must demonstrate that it considered land use designations and zoning that are reasonably likely to work with the market. Actions to increase consistency in planning and actual growth may include: incentives, funding of infrastructure and amenities, changing land use designations and zoning, outreach programs, and reducing the time it takes to issue permits.

The provisions described on the above two paragraphs are eliminated from the substitute bill. Along with requirements in the economic element of the comprehensive plan to inventory businesses. The original bill does not contain the schedule for reviewing comprehensive plans.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 16, 2001.

Effective Date: Except for Section 4, the bill takes effect July 1, 2003. Section 4 takes effect 90 days after session.

Testimony For: The revised schedule for reviewing comprehensive plans is more realistic and budget friendly. It allows small communities not within urban growth boundaries to continue to exist. We need to include economic development in growth management.

Testimony Against: The requirements of the bill are too costly. Counties are not the proper entities to plan economic growth, they lack expertise, and already have other entities created to plan economic growth. Many counties and cities are already behind in reviewing or developing the comprehensive plan and the environment is suffering because of it. Extending the deadline for reviewing comprehensive plans would just make things worse.

Testified: PRO: Bob Mitchell, Washington Association of Realtors; Vern Veysey; Doug Kitchens, Reid Real Estate; Ken Spencer, MHCW; Mike Flynn, Realtors; Wes Uhlman, Apartment Association of Seattle and King County; Mark Johnson, NFIB; Marguerite Glover, Sequim Association of Realtors; Ken Opp, President, Washington Apt. Association; CON: Dave Williams, Scott Greenburg, Rob Odle, City Panel AWC, Issaquah, Burien; Dan Cardwell, Pierce County (concerns); Steve Wells, OCD (concerns).