

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6279

As Reported by House Committee On:
Local Government & Housing

Title: An act relating to the clarification of regional transit authority facilities as essential public facilities.

Brief Description: Clarifying regional transit authority facilities as essential public facilities.

Sponsors: Senators Kline, Murray and Haugen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government & Housing: 2/22/10 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds regional transit authority facilities to the list of essential public facilities delineated under the Growth Management Act.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Simpson, Chair; Nelson, Vice Chair; DeBolt, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fagan, Miloscia, Springer, White and Williams.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Angel, Ranking Minority Member; Short and Upthegrove.

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

The Growth Management Act (GMA) is the comprehensive land use planning framework for county and city governments in Washington. Enacted in 1990 and 1991, the GMA establishes numerous requirements for local governments obligated by mandate or choice to fully plan under the GMA (planning jurisdictions) and a reduced number of directives for all other counties and cities.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The GMA directs planning jurisdictions to adopt internally consistent comprehensive land use plans that are generalized, coordinated land use policy statements of the governing body. Comprehensive plans must address specified planning elements, each of which is a subset of a comprehensive plan. The implementation of comprehensive plans occurs through locally adopted development regulations.

Comprehensive plans must include a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities (EPFs). Although not expressly defined in statute, the GMA specifies that EPFs include facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, regional transportation facilities, and state and local correctional facilities. Comprehensive plans and development regulations may not preclude the siting of EPFs.

Two or more contiguous counties each having a population of 400,000 persons or more may establish a regional transit authority to develop and operate a high capacity transportation system. As defined in statute, regional transit authority facilities include land and land interest, vehicles and vessels, passenger waiting areas, and other specified facilities.

Although not delineated in the GMA, the Legislature, in statewide transportation planning provisions, has declared improvements to high capacity transportation systems to be EPFs.

Summary of Bill:

Regional transit authority facilities are added to the delineated list of essential public facilities in the Growth Management Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Essential public facilities (EPFs) are the kind of thing you typically don't want in your neighborhood, although you may benefit from them and may want them in an adjoining neighborhood. Jurisdictions that plan under the Growth Management Act (GMA) must plan for EPFs. This bill will make Sound Transit rail stations, stations that promote transportation and economic development, EPFs under the GMA. This bill is an efficiency measure that will save Sound Transit resources and time. The bill does not affect the regulatory authority of cities and does not expand the authority of Sound Transit. The bill is necessary and will clarify that Sound Transit facilities are EPFs. The current lack of clarity typically delays Sound Transit projects for two to six months.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Kline, prime sponsor; and Desmond Brown, Sound Transit.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.